



News Release

**FORT CARSON
Public Affairs Office**

(719) 526-4143/7525

FAX (719) 526-1021

*'The Best Hometown in the Army.
The Home of America's Best.'*

September 22, 2020

Release 20-063

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Opportunity

Fort Carson, ASBP host annual blood drive

FORT CARSON, Colo. – Fort Carson and the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) will host a blood drive today through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Elkhorn Conference Center.

ASBP, which is based out of Fort Bliss, Texas, is the official military blood program and is a tri-service organization comprised of donor centers from the Army, Air Force and Navy.

ASBP's first priority is providing blood for wounded warriors in overseas operations. All donations directly support military service members and their families worldwide to include military hospitals, ships, combat support hospitals and medics on the front line. They are the sole provider of blood to Iraq, Afghanistan or any location where there are contingency operations.

This year due to the pandemic the ASBP will test all donated blood for COVID - 19 antibodies and any personnel who test positive will be notified and encouraged to donate convalescent plasma. The plasma collected through the department's COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Program will be used to treat critically ill patients, support the development of an effective treatment against the disease, and maintain mission readiness.

When a person contracts SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, their immune system creates antibodies to fight the virus. These antibodies are found in the plasma, the liquid part of the blood. According to the Food and Drug Administration, convalescent plasma transferred to a patient still suffering from the disease could help speed the recovery process.

Respiratory viruses are not known to be transmitted by blood transfusions, and there have been no reported cases of transfusion-transmitted coronavirus. All blood donations are also screened for diseases, such as hepatitis or HIV.

All personnel wishing to donate will be thoroughly screened for COVID - 19 symptoms prior to donating.

Most healthy individuals can donate to the ASBP; however, there are some reasons a person may be deferred from donating temporarily, indefinitely or permanently. In general, a person must weigh at least 116 pounds, be at least 17-years old, have a valid form of identification, have not been ill for at least three days beforehand, be well hydrated and have eaten something prior to donating.

Because of installation access requirements, only those with normal access to military facilities are eligible for this program. Eligible donor groups include Active Duty Service members, their family members, military retirees, and civil service employees.

Those who are interested in donating or would like to learn more about the program, should visit http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil/Donors/donor_faq.aspx.

For more information on the Convalescent Plasma Program you can go to:

<https://health.mil/ConvalescentPlasma>

Militaryblood.dod.mil

Facebook: militaryblood

Twitter: @militaryblood

Media with questions or those who are interested in covering this event should RSVP by 4 p.m. today to the Fort Carson Public Affairs Office at (719) 526-7525.

For more information contact the Fort Carson Public Affairs Office at (719) 526-4143/7525. After hours please contact the 24-hour Fort Carson Operations Center at (719) 526-5500 and ask for the On-Call Public Affairs Officer.