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## **America's Blood Centers Highlights the Need for Diverse Blood Donors Ahead of Juneteenth and World Sickle Cell Awareness Day**

*Less than 20 percent of all blood donations come from communities of color, yet one in three African-American donors are a match for a sickle cell patient*

**Washington, DC** – America's Blood Centers (ABC), the national organization of community-based, independent blood centers that supply 60 percent of the nation's blood supply, today recognizes the importance of Juneteenth and World Sickle Cell Awareness Day on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. In the spirit of these meaningful events, we highlight the need for increased diversity in the blood supply. [Less than 20 percent](#) of all blood donations currently come from communities of color, yet one in three African-American donors are a match for a sickle cell patient. Those interested in donating can find the local community blood center near them online [here](#).

“Sickle cell patients often rely on regular blood transfusions from blood donors of a similar race or ethnicity. In America today, less than twenty percent of all blood donations come from minority donors, a percentage that must increase to meet patient needs. This is a critical time for more people to become life-long donors to ensure we have a blood supply that is as diverse as the country that depends on it,” said Kate Fry, Chief Executive Officer at America's Blood Centers.

World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed annually on June 19<sup>th</sup> to raise awareness about the disease and its impact on patients, their families, and caregivers. Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder impacting an estimated 100,000 Americans. Patients are often in a chronic state of anemia and require frequent blood transfusions more closely matched to their own over time. After many transfusions, the best match for a sickle cell patient is often blood from an African-American donor. This reality is one of many reasons why we need a diverse and available blood supply.

The Juneteenth federal holiday recognizes June 19, 1865, the date when federal officials arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation.

ABC recently released [a first of its kind guide](#) that highlighted how just 19.5 percent of all blood donations come from racial or ethnic minority donors. Increasing that amount of one of the best ways to support those living with diseases like sickle cell since one in three African-American blood donors are a match for a sickle cell patient.

This guide also highlighted that although a blood transfusion is needed every two seconds in the United States, just three percent of the U.S. population donates blood each year. A single donation can help two or more patients in need, and each donation can be separated into more than one blood product, including red blood cells, plasma, and platelets.

Founded in 1962, America's Blood Centers is the national organization bringing together community-based, independent blood centers. Its member organizations operate more than 600 blood collection sites providing close to 60 percent of the U.S., and a quarter of the Canadian, blood supply. These blood centers serve more than 150 million people and provide blood products and services to more than 3,500 hospitals and healthcare facilities across North America. All ABC U.S. members are licensed and regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. For more information, visit [www.AmericasBlood.org](http://www.AmericasBlood.org).

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