

STATE AGENCY COVID-19 UPDATES

May 11, 2020

Critical need for African American blood donors

- The Red Cross has a critical need for African American blood donors to help patients, especially those battling sickle cell disease following a significant decrease in diverse donors in the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic environment.
- Across the nation since mid-March, the number of African Americans donating blood with the Red Cross has dropped by more than half. This low donor turnout is largely due to blood drive cancellations at businesses, churches and schools and the disproportionate COVID-19 infection rates for African Americans compared to other ethnicities.
- Despite the steep decline in blood donations, the need for blood products for patients with sickle cell disease has remained relatively steady.
- The Red Cross is reaching out to partners, community influencers and organizations that could help raise awareness about the need for diverse blood donors, especially African American blood donors during this COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Red Cross is encouraging eligible donors from communities of color to keep their scheduled donation appointments and to look for open appointments at redcrossblood.org, especially in the weeks ahead as blood drives are added.

MDVA recognizes Minnesota Veterans Homes Week

- May 10 - 16 is Minnesota Veterans Homes Week when the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs recognizes the more than 1,200 staff who care for 800 Residents in five Veterans Homes' locations across the state.
- Governor Walz has issued a Proclamation commending "the quality care delivered by the ... Veterans Homes (that) is rooted in hiring and retaining a skilled, compassionate, and well-trained staff at every level. The care teams at MDVA seek to not just meet but to exceed the expectations of residents and their families..."
- Veterans' organizations and local communities will recognize Veterans Homes' staff this week with expressions of gratitude that model social distancing such as outdoor signs, food trucks and thank you notes.

SEOC Working with MDH, FEMA on Several Fronts

The SEOC remains fully activated and staffed either physically or virtually by all state agencies and several volunteer organizations.

- Staff in the SEOC is working with officials from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) on several efforts including increased testing and tracking of available hospital resources.
- The SEOC is working with FEMA on their effort to deliver PPE directly to Medicaid and Medicare certified nursing homes. The effort began last week and continues.
- The SEOC continues supporting the state hotline, which received 48 calls on Friday. Call volume was down over the weekend with 11 calls on Saturday and six on Sunday. Employees are answering calls at 651-297-1304 or 800-657-3504. The hotline is currently operating from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

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COVID-19 lab-confirmed cases top 11,000

- 591 reported deaths — an increase of 13 since May 10; 9 of the 13 deaths were people in long-term care facilities.
- 11,799 lab-confirmed cases in Minnesota — an increase of 528 cases since May 10.
- 452 patients are currently hospitalized with 194 in intensive care units (ICU). The number of ICU patients is down 4 from May 10; 7,536 patients have been released from isolation.
- Learn more about the latest lab-diagnosed cases on the [COVID-19 public dashboard](#).

Traffic volumes remain below May 2019 averages

MnDOT continues to monitor [traffic volumes](#) statewide.

- Metro area: Traffic volumes on Saturday, May 9, were down 26 percent compared to Saturday averages for May 2019.
- Traffic volumes in the Metro area on Sunday, May 10, were down 29 percent compared to Sunday averages for May 2019.
- Statewide: Traffic volumes on Saturday, May 9, were down 30 percent compared to Saturday averages for May 2019.
- Traffic volumes statewide on Sunday, May 10, were down 31 percent compared to Sunday averages for May 2019.