CIVIL AIR PATROL'S
OPERATION PULSE LIFT

Civil Air Patrol is chartered by Congress for three programs: Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs, and Emergency Services. The Emergency Services program includes search and rescue, drug interdiction, and disaster relief. One crucial disaster relief operation is blood collection and transport, known as Operation Pulse Lift**.** It's CAP's largest mission since World War II and longest-running disaster relief/humanitarian mission ever. In 2023 Operation Pulse Lift received the President of the United States Volunteer Service Award and in 2024 the Headquarters First Air Force-AFNORTH /AFSPACE Commander's Award for the Most Meritorious CAP Mission of 2023.

From April 12, 2017, to the end of 2019, Operation Pulse Lift provided facilities and blood support teams, hosting 12 blood donor centers and collecting 527 blood units from two Arizona sites.

On March 17, 2020, at the urging of the U.S. surgeon general, Operation Pulse Lift mobilized to support CAP's COVID-19 response because the nation had lost 80% of its donor sites because of precautionary COVID closures. The first blood donor center was operational April 15, 2020, at the 388th Composite Squadron in Glendale, Arizona, collecting 35 units of blood. During the initial nine-month surge response of 2020, CAP hosted 42 blood donor centers at seven sites.

Operation Pulse Lift also supported individual member collection of 1,530 units, making it one of the nation's largest blood donation programs. This resulted in Outstanding Service recognitions from the president/CEO of the American Red Cross. By 2021 results quintupled, with 7,493 units collected in all 52 wings and at 23 sites, along with 372 blood transport missions. This blood went to hospitals responding to Pacific Coast wildland fires, hurricanes along the Gulf of Mexico, and a southwest winter storm, Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic operations more than 22,000 public encounters occurred during 378 blood donor center events with stringent adherence to both safety and infectious disease protection protocols, enforced by CAP safety officers. Not a single CAP member experienced COVID cross-infection.

In April 2021 OPL began supporting the Armed Services Blood Program, hosting 82 blood donor centers at Dyess Air Force Base and Joint Base San Antonio, Texas; the Air Force Academy, Fortt Carson, and Peterson AFB, Colorado; Fort Huachuca and Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona; West Point, New York; Fort Knox, Kentucky; Eielson AFB, Fort Wainwright, and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; and F.E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. On Aug. 28 the operation went international, expanding to support collection of 230 units of blood for transport to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and Landstuhl Army Medical Center, Germany, for casualties from the Kabul Airport suicide bombing two days earlier. In September 2024 the New York Wing supported the four-day blood donor center operations at West Point, with 1,701 units collected, including 553 on one record-breaking day.

The Kansas Wing has conducted 72 blood transports in fiscal 2025 and 1,949 since Operation Pulse Lift's beginning. In December 2023 the wing received the Lifetime Hero Award for 50 years of support to the American Red Cross. In addition, the Iowa

Wing has completed a memorandum of understanding with blood collection agencies in its state and will begin transports soon.

A major tornado outbreak Dec. 11-12, 2021, in the quad-state region — Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma — left more than 90 dead and hundreds injured. At the American Red Cross, Operation Pulse Lift supported the collection of 222 units of blood from members in 31 CAP wings and National Headquarters staff. On Sept. 28, 2022, after Hurricane Ian generated a 1,000-blood-unit shortfall across Florida, CAP responded with 404 units. In October 2024, during the response to hurricanes Helene and Milton, members collected and donated 366 units. On Jan. 11, the Arizona Wing hosted two blood donor centers for hospitals responding to major Los Angeles wildfires.

By May 11, 2023, the last day of the COVID-19 presidential disaster declaration, CAP pandemic collections totaled 21,171 units, with transports, potentially saving 63,902 lives.

For six straight years, 2020-2025, CAP has been awarded national Premier Blood Partner Award status by the American Red Cross. In 2022 the Red Cross' Ironman Award recognized CAP for nationwide blood support efforts. In 2023 CAP received the International Association of Emergency Managers' Business and Private Sector Integration and Public Sector Partnership Award, recognizing excellence in the integration of public and private emergency management partnerships.

The Operation Pulse Lift mission has supported 637 blood donor center events at 75 sites in 28 states, collecting 45,480 blood units, and conducted 1,949 blood transports since 2017. It has supported responses to nearly a dozen nationwide disasters, resulting in a potential 143,787 lives saved — more than 17 times the total for all other combined missions in CAP's 83-year history.

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