

Bonfils Blood Drives as Eagle Scout Service Projects

Bonfils Blood Center (a Blood Systems Blood Center and 501c3 not for profit organization) will work with Scouts to coordinate Eagle Scout Service Project blood drives.

Bonfils working with the council advancement committee has selected one Bonfils employee that will be the Blood Drive Coordinator for all Eagle Scout Service Project blood drives in Colorado. This contact person will schedule the blood drive and sign the Project Proposal as beneficiary before the project and sign the Project Report as beneficiary when the project is complete. This will give Scouts a consistent predictable experience. The Bonfils coordinator will monitor progress and help with any questions or challenges Scouts may have. The coordinator will coach scouts on how to setup and use the Bonfils online systems.

The Bonfils coordinator commits to responding to phone calls and email within 24 hours on business days.

Scouts should meet with their unit leader and unit committee and get their approval before contacting Bonfils to schedule a date, time and location. Scouts can use this information to learn how to choose possible dates, what facilities are needed, how many donors will be needed and other requirements for a successful blood drive. Scouts and leaders should use this information when they meet with the person responsible for the location they plan to use for the blood drive. The Scout then contacts the Bonfils coordinator to complete booking the blood drive and get beneficiary approval and a signature from the Bonfils coordinator on their Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook. The Scout will then take the project proposal to their district advancement committee for approval and signature.

Unit leaders, parents and Scouts should understand the process and requirements for a successful Eagle Scout Service Project blood drive by reading this document. This information and process has been approved by district and council advancement administrators.

There is no standard answer for questions regarding scheduling a blood drive. Bonfils has 20 to 25 teams that do blood drives during the week and 3 to 5 teams working weekends. The number of available dates, times and locations Bonfils can service depends on the number and size of the drives already scheduled. When Scouts have the approval of their unit leaders, they should secure a location and choose possible dates before contacting Bonfils. Finding an available future date generally requires planning four to eight weeks in advance for weekdays and two to eight months in advance for weekends. Drives can be scheduled in the morning, afternoon or early evening with the last appointment being 6:30pm. It is not possible to identify times of the year or specific days that are harder to schedule. Some blood drives, like the BSA Scout Show, happen the same Saturday every year and are scheduled a year in advance. To avoid disappointment, all Scouts that have less than six months before their eighteenth birthday should contact the Bonfils coordinator first, before starting the planning process, to determine if a blood drive in the time available is feasible.

The blood drive goal for Scouts is thirty donors. If more donors are confirmed far enough in advance, Bonfils will do their best to send more staff for the same donation period, but this is not always possible. The Bonfils coordinator will work with each Scout to monitor donor commitments and plan accordingly. Typically, donors are scheduled during a four to five-hour period. The Bonfils staff will arrive one hour before to set up and it will take one and a half hours for them to pack, clean and depart.

The space for a blood drive location is a minimum of 800 square feet of indoor space that is heated or air conditioned depending on the season. The location must be handicap accessible meaning no stairs or a working elevator. There must be clean restrooms, adequate parking and additional space to serve refreshments. In addition to the location the Scout will need to provide tables and chairs for registration, and supplies and equipment for refreshments. The number of tables and chairs will depend on the number of donors scheduled. The Bonfils coordinator will provide detailed information during the project approval process.

The minimum number of volunteers, not including the Scout, is two for the whole day but four to six at any time is much better. If appropriate, the Scout could consider supplying baby sitters to care for small children while their parents donate. This would require adults to supervise if youth volunteer baby sitters are recruited. If babysitting is provided, additional space appropriate for looking after small children must be available.

Scouts will need to provide refreshments for each of their donors and volunteers. They can ask for donations of food and beverages from family and friends. They can approach local businesses to donate food or they can hold fund raising activities and use the funds to purchase refreshments. If asking for donations from businesses, Scouts must fill out the fundraising application that is part of the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.

Scouts will not be penalized for confirmed donors that don't keep their appointment. Bonfils does not cancel drives if the number of donors is a little less than thirty. They will work with the Scout to complete the best drive possible by adjusting the number of staff assigned or by opening donor registration to the public.

The only reason Bonfils would cancel a drive is if there is a serious accident involving the staff on the way to the donation site or if bad weather would endanger the donors or staff. That decision would be made by Bonfils early in the morning on the day of the drive. If the weather becomes dangerous during the event, Bonfils may end the drive early to make sure everyone is able to return home safely. Scouts would not be penalized or required to make up donations for a drive that ends early for safety reasons.

If the blood drive is cancelled, depending on Bonfils scheduled commitments, it could take between four and eight weeks to reschedule during the week. For Scouts that are not about to turn eighteen, it is hoped that everyone involved, the Scout, his donors and volunteers will be willing to reschedule and complete the drive on another date.

An older Scout who is unable to reschedule before his eighteenth birthday would be given credit for a completed project and the Bonfils contact person would sign the Scout's project final report. Bonfils understands and agrees that an older Scout who successfully completes the planning, organizes and recruit's volunteers and donors and prepares for a blood drive that does not happen, due to no fault of the Scout, will receive final project approval and the beneficiary's signature.

There is no requirement that any Scout recruit additional donors to complete a required number of units of blood. If a Scout has the ability to recruit more donors than can be accommodated at his location, additional donors may be asked to donate at a local Bonfils center using the Scout's blood drive number giving him credit for the additional donations.

Scouts will work with the Bonfils coordinator to plan, develop and organize their own plan for their blood drive including a plan for how they will recruit and organize donors and volunteers and provide refreshments. Some of these details will be included in the Scouts project proposal. If needed, they can request resources Bonfils has available.

Donors must be 16 years or older. Donor names, email address and phone number will be needed to sign up. There are several ways for Scouts to manage their donors. 1. Scouts that do not have computer access can sign up donors and keep all the donor information themselves, checking with the Bonfils coordinator on a regular basis. 2. The Scout can enter the donor information, name, email address and phone number, in the Bonfils computer system. If the Scout or the donors enters an email address in the Bonfils computer system and check the appropriate boxes to receive reminders, Bonfils can send appointment reminders. It is the Scouts responsibility to give leadership to others in a service project so it is expected that the Scout will recruit, train and lead others to help with the process of recruiting, informing, and communicating with his donors before, during and after the drive. The Scout will need to provide donor qualification requirements to each donor before they sign up. He will need to call each of his donors three to five days before the drive to remind them of their appointment and provide information

about eating and hydrating before the donation appointment and to bring their ID. If the Scout's drive is listed on the Bonfils web site as public, he would not contact the donors he does not know or did not recruit.

Scouts will be able to access their donor list on the Bonfils web site. It is helpful for Bonfils to have donor information on their computer. It is important for donors to receive and check the eligibility requirements before traveling to the donation location. If the Scouts chooses to allow the public to participate, it is necessary that all appointments to be online so available donation appointments will be known.

Each Scout will be in regular communication with the Bonfils coordinator reporting on the progress of donor appointments, volunteer assignments and arrangements for refreshments. He will be asked to confirm the location and other details for the blood drive. If the Scout is struggling to recruit donors, the Bonfils coordinator will help them find new approaches, new communities to ask and if necessary, adjust the time and staff assigned based on the anticipated number of donors.

It should be clear to Scouts and leaders that a commitment to complete a blood drive as an Eagle Scout Service Project is a serious undertaking. The Scout and his Scouting family need to be prepared to invest the time and effort to make the blood drive successful. Having all the donor appointments filled is very important. As with all Eagle Projects, if the Scout doesn't do what he promised he should not expect to receive credit for a project he didn't do his part to successfully complete. Bonfils has limited resources with which to provide a dependable supply of blood to save lives in Colorado. All Scouts that undertake a blood drive as an Eagle Project should remember the Candidate's Promise, "I promise to be the leader of this project, and to do my best to carry it out for the maximum benefit to the religious institution, school, or community I have chosen as beneficiary."

After meeting with unit leaders and working with the person in charge of the planned location for the blood drive, Scouts should contact the Bonfils Eagle Scout Blood Drive Coordinator, Amy Russell. Her phone number is 720 363 0450. Her email address is amy_russell@bonfils.org. If you have questions, contact her or your BSA district advancement committee.