



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

J.B. Gaskins  
Vice President of Donor Systems  
Office: (727) 568-2146  
Cellular: (727) 656-8441

**DEFERRAL PERIOD FOR CANCER CHANGES**

(St. Petersburg, FL: November 6, 2006): Florida Blood Services (FBS) blood donors provide many lifesaving blood products to cancer patients in hopes of saving their lives. Many of our platelet donors know someone with cancer or they are cancer survivors themselves. Being a cancer survivor used to mean donors would have to wait five years until they were able to donate again. Now cancer survivors seeking to donate blood again may only have to wait 12 months from their last treatment or removal of the cancer.

"We are pleased to announce the change in the deferral time for a cancer survivor to come back and donate blood," said J.B. Gaskins, FBS Vice President of Donor Systems. "Going from five years to one year is a significant difference in the length of time a donor has to wait. Currently some prospective donors are deferred for many reasons, so it is nice to be able to welcome some donors back sooner rather than later." said Gaskins.

As part of the donor screening process, a medical history review is conducted on prospective donors. Cancer survivors will be asked what type of cancer they had, whether the cancer was removed (including the date of removal) and/or the date of the last treatment (i.e. radiation, chemotherapy, or radioactive seed implant). There are some types of cancer that are still permanent deferrals, such as, Leukemia, Lymphoma, including Hodgkin's disease and Kaposi's Sarcoma. Cancer survivors who wish to donate blood and want to verify their eligibility are encouraged to call 1-800-68-BLOOD (25663) and asked to be referred to a member of our medical team for a confidential interview.

Donors 17 years old or older may donate blood (16 years old with parental consent), weigh a minimum of 110 lbs. and be in good health. Florida Blood Services provides for the blood needs of patients at 38 hospitals in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas Counties through the participation of volunteer blood donors. Approximately 750 donations are required daily, due to the high quality of medical care in Tampa Bay that serves the most critically ill patients throughout West Central Florida.

**Additional blood supply information can be found at [www.fbsblood.org](http://www.fbsblood.org)**

**###**