

Red Cross

Have you ever wondered about our support to blood drives sponsored by the American National Red Cross? Recently, an employee in HQ AMC asked about this, and wondered whether the Red Cross has some special status. I did some research, and it seems that the Red Cross does enjoy a special status that is reflected in JER 3-212f. However, this status is different that you might think.

Here is my response.

You asked if the Red Cross enjoys any special status. The answer is yes. Below are a number of relevant statutory and regulatory citations. But, this status, and support that comes with the status, is in direct relationship to the Red Cross mission to carry out activities supplementing and otherwise assisting the Army in its programs relating to the health, welfare, recreation, and morale of military personnel and their dependents. It is our policy to facilitate the accomplishment of this mission and to tender to the Red Cross the services, facilities and privileges whenever the Army has accepted the cooperation and assistance of the Red Cross. So, when the Red Cross sets up shop on our installations to provide support, or when the Red Cross deploys to war zones, etc., we are expected to provide various types of support to the Red Cross and Red Cross personnel.

But, when the Red Cross is out fundraising, or seeking donations of blood, they do not have a special status. In such situations, the Red Cross is treated like anyone else. When the Red Cross seeks support for its blood drives, we can provide some support, such as providing space and informing (not soliciting or coercing or promoting) our personnel that the event is taking place and where, as long as we are willing to do such for similar types of organization events (there probably are no other organizations other than local hospitals). Like any other non-Federal entity event, this support is subject to the criteria set out in JER 3-211a (DoD 5500.7-R), i.e.: it cannot interfere with duty performance or readiness; community relations or other local DoD/Army/AMC or community interests are served; it is appropriate to associate ourselves with the event; there is no law or regulation that prohibits the support, and there is no charge (there are some exceptions to the latter factor).

Finally, JER 3-300d permits "agency designees" (supervisors/commanders) to permit excused absences for reasonable periods of time for their employees to voluntarily participate in community service activities, such as blood donations. This time off is not an award or inducement for participating, rather it is the time necessary for the employee to participate.

Accordingly, I see no objection if the CG wishes to support periodic Red Cross blood drives.

Mike Wentink

36 U.S.C. Sec. 300102: Purposes. <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=4932314895+16+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>

10 U.S.C. Sec. 2602: American National Red Cross; cooperation and assistance <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=482112064+0+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>

10 U.S.C. Sec. 2670 Licenses: military installations <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=4932314895+20+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>

10 U.S.C. Sec. 711a: American National Red Cross: detail of commissioned officers <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=4932314895+4+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>

36 U.S.C. Sec 300110: Annual report and audit <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=4932314895+13+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>
(instead of 36 U.S.C. Chapter 1 that is referenced in the DoDD and the AR).

DoDD 1330.5, American National Red Cross <http://web7.whs.osd.mil/pdf/d13305p.pdf>

DoD 5500.7-R, Section 3-212f (Relationships Governed by Other Authorities) <http://web7.whs.osd.mil/html/55007r.htm>

See also JER 3-211 (Logistical Support of Non-Federal Entity Events) and JER 3-300c (Community Support Activities).

AR 930-5, American National Red Cross Service Program and Army Utilization ftp://pubs.army.mil/pub/epubs/pdf/r930_5.pdf