New Customer Portal FAQs

Overview:

We are introducing a new online blood product ordering service June 25, 2018. You may remember Bonfils Blood Center has joined Blood Systems and is now part of a national blood services organization that serves hospitals across the country. To best serve all of our health care partners, we are coming together on one computer system. Our new online ordering service is part of that.

Whether you and your team have been using our current online ordering system or ordering manually (by phone or fax), we will help you make the transition to the new system. If you've ever shopped online, the new online ordering service will feel familiar.

You will be able to order blood products and request returns and credits in the online service. In the coming months, the service will expand to handle reference laboratory services requests and to search your on-site inventory for antigen-negative units. We will keep you posted on our progress with this.

What does my facility need to do to be able to use the online ordering service?

We will make sure your hospital account is in the portal, along with ordering and inventory preferences that are unique to your facility. There are no set-up forms for you to complete. Your organization has complete control over how you use the service, including setting up your users for the account. You will select a superuser/administrator to manage your team’s access, then we will coach and support that person as they set up and manage your users right in the app. Your superuser can add new users with a unique username and password and to delete those who no longer need access.

A couple of weeks before you begin using the service, we will provide specific information about system requirements, including the most compatible web browsers, and ask that you work with your local IT teams to insure there are no internal obstacles to accessing this web-based application.

These are the browser requirements:

- IE 10 and 11
- MS Edge (all versions)
- Google Chrome 22 to current
- Mozilla Firefox 31 to current.
User Security: Do we have to have unique identifiers for our users? I currently have one log-in for my team.

We strongly recommend providing a unique log-in for each user. It is a best practice for interactive websites like our online ordering system. Unique user accounts are easy to set up and provide an auditable record for you and your administration. They also help assure the security of your account and your data when an employee within your team leaves your organization. If that person has a unique log-in, your administrator simply closes that person’s account to prevent unauthorized ordering or access to your organization’s data. If that person has used a team log-in, your administrator will have to issue a new log-in and your entire team will have to make that transition. Unique user log-ins help assure patient privacy. This will take on additional importance as we continue to expand our capabilities to provide hospitals the opportunity to electronically place patient-specific orders (with HIPAA-protected information).

Each hospital customer will have Customer Portal administrators who can easily manage and support their own users. We will train them in our simple processes for adding and removing users, resetting passwords and providing general assistance for their team.

For your convenience, here is the user guide list of requirements for Customer Portal user accounts:

- User names must be a minimum of 6 characters.
- All user accounts must have an active email address. Some choose to use an email address as a user name.
- Passwords must be a minimum of 8 characters.

Do we have to order online? We like the direct contact with the blood center staff.

We like the direct contact with you, too. And using the online service actually frees us up to provide more of that direct contact and personal service. There are some other important benefits to using the service. For example, you’ll be able to see your order history and product in your inventory any time you want. And there aren’t any forms to fill out when you want to request a return or credit. (Please talk with your blood center representative if you have questions about returns or credits.) One important benefit to your organization is that using the online service streamlines our ability to manage the regional and national blood inventory. Better management of the inventory will help us improve our service and blood availability for your patients.

We like the system we have, and we lose some functionality/features with the new system. Why are you making this change?

We’re always working to improve our service to you. We are bringing all of our blood centers together to truly provide you with national resources at the touch of a button. To do that, we are making the transition to one computer system, and we need an online ordering service that is compatible with that system. So, we’ll temporarily give up some of the features you’re used to—and we’ll be working to bring those back as quickly as we can.
Can I still call in or fax my order?

The online service is the primary and preferred method for ordering blood products and services. Phone and fax will be our back-ups. And, of course, if you’re faced with a significant emergency like a catastrophic event or a patient who unexpectedly needs a lot of blood, pick up the phone. We are here and ready to help.

Can I order 24/7?

Yes. We monitor the ordering system 24/7. The great thing about the online ordering system is that your team can order when it’s most convenient and they can see what’s been ordered so there’s no duplication. You can also pick up the phone any time and our round-the-clock team will be ready to help.

Can I see my order and track it? Can I see when you’ve received it and it’s ready to ship/deliver?

You will be able to see your order in the app from the moment you place it until it is delivered. Here’s the process, along with the descriptions you will see when you use the system:

- **Submitted** – You have submitted the order, but we have not yet retrieved it in our system
- **Under Approval** – We have received your order, but we have not yet accepted/approved it (this is the first step to begin working on it)
- **Approved** – We have accepted/approved your order in our system
- **Under Preparation** – We are filling your order
- **Order Filled** – We have finished processing your order and it is ready to go out the door
- **Delivered** – You have received the order and have gone into the app and marked it as received.

Will you send alerts when the order is received, when it’s ready to ship and when it’s on its way?

You can track the order from start to finish in the app. We don’t send text or email alerts to the person who ordered because that person may have gone off-shift or may be busy with other important work. Any of your users can go into the app and track the progress of each order.

Can I request reference lab services in the online system?

To request reference lab services, please complete a Reference Laboratory Request form and fax or scan/email the request as directed. Results will not be available in the online service. You will receive your results report via fax. You can place special product orders and order antigen-negative units in our online service.
Do I have to put my inventory into the system?

No, we aren’t asking you to put your inventory into the system. When we set up your organization in the system, your profile will include your working stock level for each component by blood type. We work with you to set your working stock level based on historical and projected usage. When you place an order, you order the number of units you need to return to that working stock level. You do not need to enter your current inventory. Once your order is delivered, both your staff and ours will be able to see the DIN and component codes of the units you’ve received.

Do we have to enter our inventory daily? What is the benefit to us?

It’s optional, and won’t affect the system’s performance. However, entering daily inventory can be useful. When customers enter their daily inventory, it gives the blood center important information about the total blood supply throughout the local area, the region and even the country. This helps the blood center manage the blood supply every day, and it can be lifesaving should there be a significant emergency or disaster here at home or anywhere in the country. For some hospitals, there’s a direct benefit if they are part of a local or regional system and don’t have a shared LIS: they can finally see their system’s inventory to facilitate sharing. For system-affiliated hospitals that have a shared LIS, entering the daily inventory into our online ordering system may be a duplicated effort that doesn’t carry that system benefit.

Can I make online payments through the app?

Not yet. Your invoices will include information about how to send in payment.

Will we be able to see if a credit is approved?

Our finance team moves quickly to process requests for credits. Once a credit is approved, it is immediately recorded in our billing system. While we are not currently able to provide a view of approvals in real time, they are easy to identify and reconcile in our twice-a-month invoices. If you have an urgent question about a particular credit, please contact your Bonfils Blood Center representative and we will investigate it for you.

What happens if your system goes down?

In the unlikely event of interruption to the online ordering system, we will know about it and be ready to receive your order by phone or fax, process it and get it on its way to you. We’ve taken extraordinary steps to assure system uptime, redundancy and uninterrupted service. Here’s the technical explanation: Our system is on a Tier 5 facility on the West Coast and has redundancy at a Tier 5 backup location in the Midwest. The network and server equipment is state of the art with N+2 redundancy. We implement HIPAA security standards for administrative, physical and technical specifications.
If I’m part of a system, can I see my sister hospital’s inventory?

You will be able to see each other’s order history, so you will know what has been ordered, but our online ordering system cannot show you what has been transfused. You can contact your sister hospital for unit availability and can then transfer units using the online system. We can work with you to help you move blood within your hospital system.

How do we transfer modified components in the customer portal?

If you modify a product after you receive it from us, you can use the Customer Portal to transfer that modified product to a hospital within your system. The Customer Portal will automatically credit the sending hospital and bill the receiving hospital only for the original, unmodified, product.

That’s because the Customer Portal is configured to recognize the DINs and component codes of specific products that have been received by your team into your inventory. If you modify a blood component in a way that changes the product code (i.e. irradiation), the Customer Portal will not be able to recognize this product.

To transfer any component to another hospital in your system, simply enter the original DIN and component code so the Customer Portal can “see” the component and perform the automatic credit and bill procedure. If you are transferring a modified component, use the Comments section to add a note to provide more detail to the receiving hospital, such as “Irradiated, new product code is EXXY.”

Can I see the blood center’s on-call physician or a directory of other experts in the blood center?

Not yet. We will be sure you have a current directory to post in your facility.

What if we have technical trouble? Do you have a help desk?

Most technical issues for systems like this have to do with setting up users and resetting passwords. The superuser you appoint at your location will be well-trained and well-supported for those activities. If things get more complicated, our center has an experienced superuser who works with all of the hospitals in the area. That person will be able to solve most issues. If necessary, our blood center’s superuser can elevate complex issues to our national service desk, with its system administrator and IT experts. We will get you the help you need.

How do I suggest improvements?

Please share your feedback with your main contact at the blood center and they will pass that information to our apps team. We welcome your feedback and suggestions. We have a system to track suggestions, evaluate them and, if they will help most users, include them in future software updates.
Since the online ordering service is part of the one computer system for the blood center’s entire national organization, can I see inventory at your other locations, and even order from there if the local distribution center doesn’t have what I need?

We’ll handle that for you. We have frequent inventory management and planning meetings and reports, and have the most current information about availability and logistics to provide you with the most prompt and efficient service.

If you are part of a multi-hospital system, you will be able to see each other’s order history, so you will know what has been ordered, but our online ordering system cannot show you what has been transfused. You can contact your sister hospital for unit availability and can then transfer units using the online system. We can work with you to help you move blood within your hospital system.