

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Trump Administration Grants Waiver of European Travel Ban to Be The Match® to Continue Delivering Life-Saving Bone Marrow to U.S. Patients**

MINNEAPOLIS – March 19, 2020 – Amid the stringent travel bans the United States and European Union governments have enacted to slow the spread of COVID-19, there are some critical exceptions that need to be made, in order to save lives.

National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)/Be The Match®, the global leader in unrelated bone marrow transplantation, secured a waiver on the travel ban for couriers coming into the U.S. from Europe. The waiver, issued by Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, allows couriers to transport life-saving bone marrow from donors to patients. It is critical patients receive their life-saving cells without delay. Before their transplant, the patient's immune system is weakened by high doses of chemotherapy, which means that the healthy donor cells are their only chance for survival.

NMDP/Be The Match worked with Vice President Mike Pence, the Centers for Disease Control, Department of Homeland Security, and the State Department to get this exception to the European travel ban so that patients in the U.S. could receive the bone marrow transplants they need. NMDP is continually monitoring domestic and international travel restrictions in an attempt to ensure all patients who are scheduled to receive a transplant receive life-saving bone marrow during this uncertain time.

“With the uncertainties each of us face during these unprecedented times, the needs of our patients remain starkly the same. For those awaiting bone marrow transplant, their very survival depends on the life-saving cells delivered to them by our couriers. We are grateful to the administration for acting to ensure that the travel ban does not interrupt or delay the urgent transplant each of those patients desperately need, as we are likewise grateful to those who have so swiftly and actively advocated on those patients' behalf,” said NMDP/Be The Match Chief Policy Officer Brian Lindberg.

NMDP/Be The Match has facilitated over 100,000 bone marrow transplants since 1987 to deliver cures for patients battling blood cancers and blood disorders. More than 50 percent of those transplants involve international donors or recipients.

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About Be The Match®

For people with life-threatening blood cancers—like leukemia and lymphoma—or other diseases, a cure exists. Be The Match connects patients with their donor match for a life-saving marrow or umbilical cord blood transplant. People can contribute to the cure as a member of the Be The Match Registry®, financial contributor or volunteer. Be The Match provides patients and their families one-on-one support, education, and guidance before, during and after transplant.

Be The Match is operated by the National Marrow Donor Program® (NMDP), a nonprofit organization that matches patients with donors, educates health care professionals and conducts research through its research program, CIBMTR® (Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research®), so more lives can be saved. To learn more about the cure, visit [BeTheMatch.org](https://www.BeTheMatch.org) or call 1 (800) MARROW-2.