

Helping Others

Around the Clock, Around the World: How the American Red Cross Helps Military Families

(NAPS)—In November 2022, Jim Cheatham was stationed across the country from his family when his grandmother's health began to quickly decline.

Help From The Red Cross

"It became very obvious that she was not going to make it to the end of the year," said Beth Cheatham, Jim's mother. "My son had leave planned and approved for Christmas and I became very afraid that he would not be able to say goodbye, so we reached out to the American Red Cross Hero Care Network to bring him home early."

One of the many ways the American Red Cross supports U.S. service members is through the Hero Care Network, which is available 24 hours a day. When a service member or their family member initiates an emergency message, as Beth did on behalf of her son, Red Cross staff work with the family and appropriate professionals, such as doctors and nurses, to verify the emergency. Emergencies include the illness/injury or death of an immediate family member, as well as birth messages. Once initiated, this verified message is provided to the command, enabling the service member's commander to make an informed decision regarding emergency leave.

"Within 24 hours, I had put in the request, talked to someone from the American Red Cross and my son was on a plane the next day," said Beth. "We knew time was of the essence, and my son knew time was of the essence, and for it to move that quickly gave us comfort that he was going to get home in time."

U.S. military service members and their families can initiate a request for Red



Jim Cheatham was able to see his beloved grandmother before it was too late.

Cross emergency assistance and track its progress from anywhere in the world.

A Grateful Mother

"I would do anything to get the word out about the Hero Care Network. Having my son home to have special memories with his grandmother and to hold her hand and get this opportunity to say goodbye. It's something that he and I will always treasure."

Learn More

For more information on the Hero Care Network and how you can help, or to initiate an emergency message, you can call the Red Cross at 1-877-272-7337, visit www.redcross.org/ecm, or download the Hero Care app.