

The cumulative total of COVID-19 cases in Arkansas has surpassed 62,000 as the state added more than 600 new cases today. (Wednesday)

According to numbers from the Arkansas Department of Health, the state saw 615 new cases, bringing the state's total to 62,112. The state recorded 4,773 tests in the past 24 hours. Hospitalizations increased by 12 for a total of 435.

The state saw its highest ever number of recorded deaths with 27. However, according to Health Secretary Dr. José Romero, 13 of those deaths were delayed reports, with one from May and four each from June, July and August. Of the newly reported deaths, five of them came from nursing homes. The death toll is now 841.

Speaking during the daily briefing on the pandemic today (Wednesday), Romero urged college students to practice social distancing and taken other precautions to avoid being exposed to or spread COVID-19 on campus.

NEWS06**:18****“...under control”**

“Part of college life is the socialization that goes on, but in today's environment that it's important that you keep in mind the social responsibility that you bear to the entire society and without your help, we cannot bring this pandemic under control,” Romero said.

Washington county, which houses the University of Arkansas Fayetteville, saw the highest number of new cases today (Wednesday) with 67. Pulaski county had the second highest with 62, while Benton county added 60.

In addition to the daily coronavirus numbers, Gov. Asa Hutchinson also spoke on the moratorium on evictions due to the nonpayment of rent that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued yesterday, saying it does not relieve tenants from eventually making said payments and urged those affected to look for aid from various agencies.

NEWS07**:20****“...COVID reasons”**

“Rather than get behind in your rent, which is still owed, it just puts problems more for you down the road, utilize these community action agencies, these nonprofits, the assistance that is out there to help you get over a tough time if you're having a lost income because of COVID reasons, Hutchinson said.

According to Hutchinson, the moratorium is supposed to take effect beginning September 4.