

Arkansas added 27 deaths due to COVID-19 to its total, a daily record, while the total number of cases in the state has surpassed 62,000.

Data from the Department of Health show the state added 615 new cases today (Wednesday), bringing the total number of cases to 62,112. The state conducted 4,773 in the past 24 hour period. The number of antigen tests conducted on September 1 is a total of 590. Of those tests, 156 or 26.4% of them were positive.

Hospitalizations increased by 12 for a total of 435. Though the state saw its highest ever number of daily recorded deaths with 27, according to the Department of health, almost half of them were delayed reports. The death toll is now 841.

Washington county had the highest number of new cases today (Wednesday) with 67. Pulaski county added 62, while Benton county added 60.

While Arkansas schools are in the second week of instruction since returning back to classrooms, the state announced the state Department of Education has opted in for a waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that will allow districts to meals to students until the end of the year.

Speaking during the daily briefing on the pandemic, Education Secretary Johnny Key spoke on the program.

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“...their children”

“These waivers create flexibilities that allow our school districts to serve meals to all students at no cost. They permit meals to be served outside of the normally required group settings and mealtimes. They are also waiving the meal pattern requirements as necessary and allowing parents and guardians to pick up meals for their children,” Key said.

According to Key, parents who wish to participate in these programs must still complete and turn in applications to their local schools. According to Key, the department anticipates an \$80 million cost, which would be reimbursed through December.