

Arkansas' count of coronavirus cases rose Wednesday by 982, the largest increase since Saturday, according to the state Department of Health's online dashboard of covid-19 information.

The increase on Wednesday included 874 infections confirmed through polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, tests, and 108 probable cases, which include those identified through less-sensitive antigen tests.

The state's death toll from the virus, as tracked by the Health Department, rose by 20, to 1,299.

All the deaths added Wednesday were of confirmed cases, bringing the total number of deaths among such cases to 1,080.

The state's count of virus deaths also includes 149 among probable cases.

The state's cumulative count of coronavirus cases rose to 77,963, including 75,646 confirmed cases and 2,317 probable ones.

Despite the different classifications, the Health Department has said it treats confirmed and probable cases the same for the purposes of its contact-tracing efforts.

The categories are mutually exclusive: People initially classified as probable cases become confirmed cases if they have a positive PCR test.

The number of probable and confirmed cases that were considered active rose 194, to 6,777, as 768 Arkansans were newly classified as having recovered.

After a spike of 1,078 cases that were added on Saturday, the count of confirmed and probable case grew by smaller amounts earlier this week: 563 on Sunday, 641 on Monday and 617 on Tuesday.

With Wednesday's increase, the average number of confirmed or probable cases added to the state's count each day over a rolling seven-day period rose to 821.

That was the largest average daily growth in cases over seven days since the Health Department began publicly reporting information on probable cases on Sept. 2.

