

The numbers of active covid-19 cases, hospitalizations and patients on ventilators in Arkansas all rose on Sunday, even as the Arkansas Department of Health reported 549 new confirmed cases, a decrease compared with recent days.

The confirmed-case total for Sunday was the lowest single-day tally since Sept. 14, when 399 confirmed cases were reported in the state.

The Department of Health's confirmed-case total since the start of the pandemic increased to 73,690 on Sunday. Of the newly reported confirmed cases, 47 were in correctional facilities.

Health officials' tally of confirmed cases -- defined as covid-19 cases verified using a polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, test -- combined with the department's count of 2,033 probable cases brought the cumulative case total since March to 75,723.

The probable-case count rose by 14 on Sunday from 2,019 the day before.

No additional deaths were reported on Sunday, leaving the confirmed death toll in Arkansas at 1,033. The confirmed and probable death toll associated with the covid-19 outbreak stood at 1,181, according to the Department of Health.

Sunday's new-case total marked a decline compared with the preceding days last week, when Arkansas reported more than 700 new confirmed and probable cases for five days in a row.

Nevertheless, in an interview, state epidemiologist Dr. Jennifer Dillaha said, "I think that may be more a function of it being on the weekend and fewer testing being done."

She added, "So I think we're still at a place in our state where we're having a lot of community spread."

Dillaha also expressed concern about recent social gatherings that have contributed to transmission of the virus in the community.