

Around 27 thousand pandemic unemployment assistance claims and approximately 10 thousand unemployment insurance claims in the state of Arkansas are currently on hold due to what could be fraud, according to the state. These holds come as the state added more than 780 new coronavirus cases today, (Tuesday).

According to the Arkansas Department of Health, the state recorded 784 new cases of COVID-19. That brings the total number of cases to 45,381. Of those cases, 6,891 are considered active. Hospitalizations increased 13 for a total of 526, the highest amount yet in the state's history. Deaths also increased by double digits. 15 more Arkansans have died, for a death toll of 490.

Speaking during his daily briefing on the pandemic today (Tuesday), Gov. Asa Hutchinson said any fraudulent claims filed to the state will be turned over to law enforcement and the FBI.

NEWS08**:24****“...fraudulent purposes”**

According to Arkansas's Secretary of Commerce Mike Preston, the state does not know the exact number of fraudulent claims for pandemic unemployment assistance in the state and they are flagging more claims than they normally would.

NEWS09**:07****“...that payment”**

According to Preston, in terms of pandemic unemployment assistance payments, the state has paid around 500 million dollars.