

More than 1,200 coronavirus cases confirmed in Massachusetts over the weekend

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Public health officials reported more than 1,200 additional COVID-19 cases and 20 confirmed deaths in Massachusetts over the weekend, further adding to the state's caseload amid a steady uptick in transmission.

The Department of Public Health confirmed 600 new cases on Saturday from 13,813 individuals newly tested, a positive test rate of about 4.3 percent. On Sunday, the department reported 626 new cases from 18,981 individuals tested, a positive rate of about 3.3 percent. Saturday's report counted 17 confirmed fatalities and Sunday's added another three, bringing the state's total number of deaths among confirmed COVID-19 cases to 9,295. When counting both confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths, the toll stood at 9,510 as of Sunday.

The number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients dropped by five in Saturday's report and then increased by 22 in Sunday's to 438, which is 30 more than one week earlier. DPH does not specify how many were hospitalized for the highly infectious virus, but Gov. Charlie Baker said last week that an unspecified number were hospitalized for other health reasons and then tested positive.

The seven-day weighted average positive test rate, which DPH calculates based on all tests that come back positive and not the number of individuals who test positive, remained at 1.1 percent Sunday, where it has been since last week. Amid the

increases, Massachusetts communities deemed “lower-risk” based on incidence rates of the highly infectious virus can proceed Monday into the next phase of economic reopening, which includes allowing indoor performance venues to reopen and increasing some business capacity limits.

Twenty-nine municipalities, including the state’s four largest cities, are not permitted to advance and must continue to operate under current restrictions.