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Media contacts:

Laura Hart (401) 462-8090 lhart@dlt.ri.gov
 Nicole Romeo (401) 462-8744 nromeo@dlt.ri.gov

Rhode Island outperforms 2012 employment estimates

- **Unemployment rate in December dipped below 10 percent for the first time in 46 months, according to annually benchmarked data**
- **RI-based jobs 6,800 higher than originally estimated**

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today revised labor force statistics indicating that the RI unemployment rate for December 2012 fell to 9.9 percent—three-tenths of a percentage point lower than the 10.2 percent originally estimated. This marks the first time the state’s unemployment rate has dropped to single digits since February 2009.

	Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates												
	11- Dec	12- Jan	12- Feb	12- Mar	12- Apr	12- May	12- Jun	12-Jul	12- Aug	12- Sep	12- Oct	12- Nov	12- Dec
Benchmarked Previously Published	10.9%	10.8%	10.7%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.5%	10.4%	10.2%	10.1%	10.0%	9.9%
Published	11.0%	10.9%	11.0%	11.1%	11.2%	11.0%	10.9%	10.8%	10.7%	10.5%	10.4%	10.4%	10.2%

While estimates of the RI monthly unemployment rate originally indicated an uptick in spring 2012, the revised rates show a consistent month-to-month decline in the RI unemployment rate over the year, from a high of 10.8 percent in January to a low of 9.9 percent in December. In a similar vein, the number of unemployed RI residents for December 2012 was 55,600, a decrease of 2,200 from the original estimate.

The revised statistics also indicate the number of RI-based jobs for the end of 2012 was 465,600, up 6,800 from original December 2012 estimates. In all, ten industry sectors experienced upward revisions as a result of the benchmark process with the largest gains being reported in the Professional & Business Services (+1,900), Other Services (+1,700), Accommodation & Food Services (+1,600), Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,500), Retail Trade (+1,500), Financial Activities (+1,000) and Government (+800) sectors. Smaller but still positive gains were noted in the Wholesale Trade (+400), Transportation & Utilities (+200) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+200) sectors. Offsetting the upward revisions were downward revisions reported in four industry sectors; Educational Services (-1,300), Information (-1,100), Manufacturing (-1,000) and Construction (-600).

Nonfarm Employment in Rhode Island				
Seasonally Adjusted Benchmark Revision				
December 2012 (in thousands)				
Industry	Benchmark	Published	Revision	
Total Nonfarm	465.6	458.8	6.8	1.5%
Construction	14.7	15.3	-0.6	-4.1%
Manufacturing	40.2	41.2	-1.0	-2.5%
Wholesale Trade	16.7	16.3	0.4	2.4%
Retail Trade	46.1	44.6	1.5	3.3%
Transportation & Utilities	10.9	10.7	0.2	1.8%
Information	9.2	10.3	-1.1	-12.0%
Financial Activities	32.1	31.1	1.0	3.1%
Professional and Business Services	57.6	55.7	1.9	3.3%
Educational Services	24.8	26.1	-1.3	-5.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	79.1	77.6	1.5	1.9%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	7.6	7.4	0.2	2.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	44.0	42.4	1.6	3.6%
Other Services	22.7	21.0	1.7	7.5%
Government	59.7	58.9	0.8	1.3%
<i>Revision figures are averages and may not be additive.</i>				

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RI outperforms 2012 estimates, continued

Benchmarking Process

This latest information comes from the department's annual benchmarking process, in which sample-based job counts were replaced with actual tax records from all RI employers for the period of July 2011 to September 2012. Because the tax records use information drawn from approximately 32,000 employers rather than the smaller 1,600 employers used in the monthly samples, the resulting benchmarked data is more reliable than sample-based estimates.

Employment estimates for October through December 2012 were also recalculated based on the new benchmark data. As part of the benchmarking process, unadjusted establishment employment for 2011 and 2012 and seasonally adjusted employment counts for 2008 to 2012 are also revised, as are labor force statistics. This data is available through the Labor Market Information online data center at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi.

Related statistics

While sample data for December 2012 overestimated the number of employed Rhode Islanders by 800, during the whole of 2012, it underestimated the number of employed for ten out of twelve months.

Rhode Island's labor force was overestimated an average of 1,400 each month. In January 2012, it reached 558,100, its lowest level of the recession and recovery period.

Because tax records from the last quarter of 2011 are also used in the annual benchmarking process, significant changes were detected in that quarter's job numbers. In December 2011, DLT originally estimated the number of RI-based jobs to be 457,900. December 2011 tax data, however, indicated 462,400 RI-based jobs for that month, an increase of 4,500. When the revised December 2011 data is compared to the revised December 2012 data, it shows an over-the-year increase of 3,200 new jobs in Rhode Island.

	Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment (in thousands)												
	11- Dec	12- Jan	12- Feb	12- Mar	12- Apr	12- May	12- Jun	12- Jul	12- Aug	12- Sep	12- Oct	12- Nov	12- Dec
Benchmarked	61.0	60.2	59.6	59.2	59.1	59.2	59.2	58.9	58.3	57.6	56.8	56.1	55.6
Previously Published	62.1	61.3	61.7	62.1	62.2	61.4	60.3	59.9	59.2	58.7	58.7	58.7	57.8

	Seasonally Adjusted Employment (in thousands)												
	11- Dec	12- Jan	12- Feb	12- Mar	12- Apr	12- May	12- Jun	12- Jul	12- Aug	12- Sep	12- Oct	12- Nov	12- Dec
Benchmarked	497.4	497.9	498.6	499.3	499.8	500.2	500.7	501.6	502.9	504.3	505.7	506.7	507.6
Previously Published	499.9	498.8	497.4	496.1	494.1	495.4	495.0	494.9	495.5	499.5	504.7	506.2	508.4

	Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force (in thousands)												
	11- Dec	12- Jan	12- Feb	12- Mar	12- Apr	12- May	12- Jun	12- Jul	12- Aug	12- Sep	12- Oct	12- Nov	12- Dec
Benchmarked	558.3	558.1	558.2	558.5	558.9	559.4	559.9	560.5	561.2	561.9	562.4	562.8	563.2
Previously Published	562.0	560.1	559.0	558.2	556.3	556.8	555.2	554.8	554.7	558.1	563.4	564.9	566.2

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RI outperforms 2012 estimates, continued

The five-year revision of employment data has changed some of the high and low points of Rhode Island's recession. The highest unemployment rate of the recession occurred in January and February of 2010, when Rhode Island hit 11.9 percent unemployment. February 2010 also marked the highest count of unemployed residents, at 68,100. The lowest number of RI-based jobs has been recalculated at 456,800, occurring in August 2009.

The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunity to both individuals and employers. DLT protects Rhode Island's workforce by enforcing labor laws, prevailing wage rates and workplace health and safety standards. The department also provides temporary income support to unemployed and temporarily disabled workers. For more information on the programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.

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