



**EMBARGOED until  
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	<u>Jan 12</u>	<u>Dec 11</u>	<u>Jan 11</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	10.9%	11.0%	11.4%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.3%	8.5%	9.1%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	457.7	457.9	459.1

**Highlights:**

- The RI unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point over the month, representing the fifth consecutive month of rate decreases.
- The number of RI unemployed residents dropped to 61,300, its lowest level since June 2009.
- RI-based jobs dropped 200 over the month, with greatest losses reported in the Construction sector.

### Unemployment Rate Drops to 10.9 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for January 2012 was 10.9 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the December 2011 revised rate. This marks the fifth consecutive monthly decrease in the unemployment rate.

The January 2012 rate was down five-tenths of a percentage point from the previous January, representing the fifteenth consecutive month of year-over-year decreases in the state's unemployment rate.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 8.3 percent in January, down two-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month and down eight-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—decreased by 800 over the revised December figure, dropping to 61,300 in January, the lowest level since June 2009. Over the year, the number of unemployed RI residents dropped by 3,100.

Due to numerous eligibility requirements, the number of unemployed RI residents differs from the number of **RI Unemployment Insurance recipients**. The average weekly claim load for RI Unemployment Insurance benefits in January was 35,738, up 3,057 (+9.4%) from the December average of 32,682 but down 4,128 (-10.4%) from the January 2011 average of 39,866.

The number of **employed RI residents** was down 1,000 over the revised December figures, dropping to 498,900 in January. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was down 2,200 from January 2011.

The RI labor force totaled 560,200 in January 2012, down 1,800 from December and down 5,300 from January 2011 estimates. The labor force decrease was due to decreases in both the number of unemployed residents and the number of employed residents. This is the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive month that the RI labor force has decreased, according to recently revised data.

**JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:** Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 457,700 in January, reflecting a loss of 200 jobs from the revised December employment estimate of 457,900. This marks the fifth monthly decline over the last six months.

The Construction sector reported a loss of 900 jobs in January due to reported cutbacks in specialty trade contractors. The Financial Activities sector lost 700 jobs over the month, with reported declines in credit intermediation and financial investments. The Accommodation & Food Services sector also reported an over-the-month loss of 700 jobs, due mainly to declines in the special food services and full service restaurants. Lesser job declines were reported in the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-200), Health Care & Social Assistance (-100) and Mining & Logging (-100) sectors. Employment in the Government sector and Information sector remained unchanged.

**(continued)**



### Monthly Employment January 2012, page 2 of 2

Seven sectors added jobs in January, including Retail Trade (1,000), Manufacturing (400), Other Services (400), Educational Services (200), Professional & Business Services (200) and Transportation & Utilities (200). Because the Retail sector had not met seasonal hiring expectations for the end of 2011, it experienced less than normal layoffs in January; the 1,000 increase in seasonally adjusted numbers reflects this change in hiring patterns. Gains in Manufacturing occurred in the durable goods subsector.

Over the year, total nonfarm employment decreased by 1,400. Job losses were reported in eight economic sectors, including Accommodation & Food Services (-1,500), Retail Trade (-800), Government (-800), Other Services (-700), Health Care & Social Assistance (-600), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-500), Financial Activities (-400) and Construction (-300).

Educational Services employment posted the largest over-the-year increase in January, with a gain of 1,700 jobs, followed by Information (+700), Wholesale Trade (+600), Manufacturing (+500), Professional & Business Services (+400), and Transportation & Utilities (+300). Mining & Logging employment remained even over the year.

	Jan-12	Dec-11	Jan-11	Net Change From	
				Dec-11	Jan-11
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>457.7</b>	<b>457.9</b>	<b>459.1</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>-1.4</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.1	0.2	0.1	-0.1	0.0
Construction	15.5	16.4	15.8	-0.9	-0.3
Manufacturing	41.0	40.6	40.5	0.4	0.5
Wholesale Trade	16.6	16.5	16.0	0.1	0.6
Retail Trade	45.6	44.6	46.4	1.0	-0.8
Transportation & Utilities	10.9	10.7	10.6	0.2	0.3
Information	10.5	10.5	9.8	0.0	0.7
Financial Activities	30.3	31.0	30.7	-0.7	-0.4
Professional & Business Services	54.5	54.3	54.1	0.2	0.4
Educational Services	26.2	26.0	24.5	0.2	1.7
Health Care & Social Assistance	77.4	77.5	78.0	-0.1	-0.6
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.1	7.3	7.6	-0.2	-0.5
Accommodation & Food Services	40.6	41.3	42.1	-0.7	-1.5
Other Services	21.4	21.0	22.1	0.4	-0.7
Government	60.0	60.0	60.8	0.0	-0.8

**MANUFACTURING:** In January 2012, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$17.75 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up 16 cents from December 2011 and up \$2.83 from January 2011. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 40.6 hours per week in January, up one-tenth of an hour over the month and up two hours and five-tenths over the year.

**METHODOLOGY:** The unemployment figures are based largely on a survey of households in Rhode Island and measure the unemployment status of people who live in the state. Unemployment rates prior to 1976 are not recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as official since the methodology used at that time is not comparable to today's methods. The establishment employment figures are derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state. Rhode Island labor market information is available at [www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi). Additional information on procedures for producing CES estimates is available on the BLS web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>. The February labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, March 23, 2012.

**ABOUT DLT:** 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, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at [www.dlt.ri.gov](http://www.dlt.ri.gov).