

**EMBARGOED until 2:00 p.m.  
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## January Unemployment Rate Drops to 6.5 Percent; Jobs up 2,400 from December

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for January 2015 dropped to 6.5 percent, down three-tenths of a percentage point from the December 2014 rate and down two and one-tenth percentage points from the January 2014 rate. This is the lowest unemployment rate since February 2008.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 5.7 percent in January 2015, up one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous month and down nine-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—was 35,700, down 1,500 from the December figure of 37,200. This represents the lowest unemployment level since December 2007. Over the year, the number of unemployed dropped by 11,800.

	<u>Jan 15</u>	<u>Dec 14</u>	<u>Jan 14</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	6.5%	6.8%	8.6%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.7%	5.6%	6.6%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	481.7	479.3	475.1

**Highlights:**

- The RI unemployment rate declined to 6.5%, its lowest level since February 2008.
- The number of RI-based jobs is up 2,400 from December 2014 as Other Services and Educational Services added 600 and 500 jobs, respectively.
- The number of employed RI residents increased by 1,500 over the month.
- There were 15,579 individuals collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits in January.\*

A total of 15,579 individuals collected Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in January 2015,\* down from 17,423 a year ago. This month, UI claimants accounted for 38.8 percent of the total unemployed.

The number of **employed RI residents** was 513,100, up 1,500 from the December figure of 511,600. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was up 5,500 from January 2014.

The RI labor force totaled 548,800 in January 2015, unchanged from December 2014 and down 6,300 from January 2014.

**JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:** Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 481,700 in January, reflecting a gain of 2,400 jobs from the revised December estimate of 479,300. The January employment level marks the highest level since June 2008 (482,800). The number of Rhode Island-based jobs is up 6,600 since January 2014.

The Other Services sector (industries within this sector include repair and maintenance services, personal and laundry services, and religious, civic and professional organizations) added 600 jobs over the month, the largest gain among all fifteen industry sectors. Jobs in the Other Services sector are up 1,100 from a year ago.

Employment in Educational Services rose by 500 since December, as local schools returned to work from the holiday break. A gain of 400 jobs was reported in both the Transportation & Utilities and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation sectors. In all, the number of jobs within the Transportation & Utilities sector has increased by 800 since January 2014.

Also in January, payrolls in the Construction (+300) and Accommodation & Food Services (+200) sectors continued to rise as both sectors experienced three consecutive months of payroll growth. Construction employment is up 700

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**Monthly Employment January 2015, page 2 of 2**

since November 2014, while Accommodation & Food Services employment is up 800 during these three months.

Finally, the Manufacturing, Financial Activities and Retail Trade sectors each added 100 jobs in January.

Small job losses in January were reported in three employment sectors. The Health Care & Social Assistance, Information and Wholesale Trade sectors each lost 100 jobs from December, while employment remained unchanged in the Professional & Business Services, Government and Mining & Logging sectors.

As referenced earlier, total nonfarm employment increased by 6,600 over the year, as job gains appeared in 12 economic sectors, including Accommodation & Food Services (+1,500), Professional & Business Services (+1,100), Other Services (+1,100), Manufacturing (+900), Transportation & Utilities (+800) and Construction (+600). Also since January 2014, jobs were up in Retail Trade (+300), Financial Activities (+200), Educational Services (+200), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+100), Health Care & Social Assistance (+100) and Wholesale Trade (+100) sectors.

Employment in two sectors — Information (-300) and Government (-100) — was down over the year. Employment in Mining & Logging remained unchanged since January 2014.

**MANUFACTURING:** In January 2015, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$18.39 per hour, up 33 cents from December 2014 but down 75 cents from January 2014. Manufacturing production employees worked an average of 38.0 hours per week in January, down three hours and two-tenths over the month and down an hour and six-tenths from a year ago.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND (in thousands)					
	Jan-15	Dec-14	Jan-14	Net Change From	
				Dec-14	Jan-14
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>481.7</b>	<b>479.3</b>	<b>475.1</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>421.6</b>	<b>419.2</b>	<b>414.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>6.7</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	16.9	16.6	16.3	0.3	0.6
Manufacturing	41.5	41.4	40.6	0.1	0.9
Wholesale Trade	16.9	17.0	16.8	-0.1	0.1
Retail Trade	47.1	47.0	46.8	0.1	0.3
Transportation & Utilities	11.8	11.4	11.0	0.4	0.8
Information	8.7	8.8	9.0	-0.1	-0.3
Financial Activities	32.6	32.5	32.4	0.1	0.2
Professional & Business Services	60.6	60.6	59.5	0.0	1.1
Educational Services	24.7	24.2	24.5	0.5	0.2
Health Care & Social Assistance	80.6	80.7	80.5	-0.1	0.1
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	9.0	8.6	8.9	0.4	0.1
Accommodation & Food Services	47.2	47.0	45.7	0.2	1.5
Other Services	23.8	23.2	22.7	0.6	1.1
Government	60.1	60.1	60.2	0.0	-0.1

**Note:** Released on March 3, 2015, the seasonally adjusted jobs have been revised back to 2010 and unemployment data has been revised back to 1976. A summary of the 2014 Benchmark Results is available at: <http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/pdf/2014bmk.pdf>.

**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 of employment figures is 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 Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates is available on the BLS web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>. The February 2015 labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Thursday, March 26, 2015, at 2:00 p.m.

**ABOUT DLT:** The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunities 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).

\* Refers to the number of new and reopened claims filed by UI beneficiaries and claims filed by those already collecting UI in the week that includes the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month.