

**EMBARGOED until 2:00 p.m.  
on Thursday, March 24, 2016**

**Media contact:**  
Michael Healey (401) 462-8090

## **Rhode Island-Based Jobs Up 300 from January; February Unemployment Rate Unchanged at 5.4 Percent**

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for February 2016 remained unchanged from the revised January rate of 5.4 percent. Over the year, the unemployment rate is down one percentage point from the February 2015 rate. Along with last month, this remains the lowest unemployment rate since August 2007.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in February 2016, unchanged from the previous month and down six-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 29,700, up 100 from the January figure of 29,600. This represents the first over-the-month increase in the unemployment level since July 2013. Over the year, the number of unemployed dropped by 5,900.

A total of 15,262 individuals collected Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in February 2016,\* down from 17,453 a year ago. This month, UI claimants accounted for 44.8 percent of the total unemployed.

The number of **employed RI residents** was 522,400, down 100 from the January figure of 522,500. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was up 2,900 from February 2015.

The RI labor force totaled 552,100 in February 2016, unchanged from January 2016 and down 3,000 from February 2015.

**JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:** Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 488,200 in February, reflecting a gain of 300 jobs from the January estimate of 487,900. Over the past three months, Rhode Island has averaged a gain of 300 jobs. Over the year, employment is up 7,400 jobs.

Employment in Educational Services rebounded in February, adding 1,600 jobs following the 1,100 job loss posted in January. Over the year, employment in Educational Services is down 300.

Retail Trade added 500 jobs in February, the first reported job gain within this sector since September 2015. Over the year, the number of jobs in the Retail Trade sector is up by 400.

The Health Care & Social Assistance and Mining & Logging sectors each added 100 jobs in February. Employment in Health Care & Social Assistance is up 300 from a year ago, while Mining & Logging employment is up by 100 jobs.

(Continued)

	<u>Feb 16</u>	<u>Jan 16</u>	<u>Feb 15</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	5.4%	5.4%	6.4%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.9%	4.9%	5.5%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	488.2	487.9	480.8
<b>Highlights:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RI unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.4%, remaining at its lowest level since August 2007.</li> <li>• The number of RI-based jobs is up 300 from January and up 7,400 from a year ago.</li> <li>• The number of employed RI residents decreased by 100 over the month.</li> <li>• There were 15,262 individuals collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits in February.*</li> </ul>			

**Monthly Employment February 2016, page 2 of 2**

The Manufacturing, Transportation & Utilities and Other Services sectors each reported a loss of 400 jobs in February. This is the first time that the Manufacturing sector reported a job loss during the past eight months, dating back to June 2015. It's also been 12 months since a job loss was reported in the Other Services sector. Employment in each of these three sectors is up 100 from February 2015.

Employment in Accommodation & Food Services is down 300 since January, marking three consecutive months of job losses, totaling 600 jobs. However, employment in Accommodation & Food Services is up 1,200 over the year. Government employment fell by 200 in February and is down 500 over the year.

A loss of 100 jobs was reported in the Professional & Business Services, Financial Activities and Information sectors. Employment in Professional & Business Services and Financial Activities is up 3,200 and 600, respectively, from a year ago, while the number of jobs in the Information sector is up 100.

In February, employment in Construction, Wholesale Trade and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation remained unchanged.

**MANUFACTURING:** In February 2016, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$17.62 per hour, up four cents from January 2016 but down 42 cents from February 2015. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.4 hours per week in February, up one-half of an hour from January and up one-tenth of an hour over the year.

<b>SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND</b>					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Feb-16	Jan-16	Feb-15	Net Change From	
				Jan-16	Feb-15
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>488.2</b>	<b>487.9</b>	<b>480.8</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>428.1</b>	<b>427.6</b>	<b>420.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>7.9</b>
Mining & Logging	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
Construction	18.8	18.8	16.4	0.0	2.4
Manufacturing	41.2	41.6	41.1	-0.4	0.1
Wholesale Trade	16.3	16.3	17.1	0.0	-0.8
Retail Trade	48.0	47.5	47.6	0.5	0.4
Transportation & Utilities	11.4	11.8	11.3	-0.4	0.1
Information	8.5	8.6	8.4	-0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	33.3	33.4	32.7	-0.1	0.6
Professional & Business Services	65.6	65.7	62.4	-0.1	3.2
Educational Services	24.3	22.7	24.6	1.6	-0.3
Health Care & Social Assistance	80.7	80.6	80.4	0.1	0.3
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	9.3	9.3	8.9	0.0	0.4
Accommodation & Food Services	47.5	47.8	46.3	-0.3	1.2
Other Services	22.9	23.3	22.8	-0.4	0.1
Government	60.1	60.3	60.6	-0.2	-0.5

**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 [www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm](http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm). BLS will be releasing all states' February labor force data and job counts on March 25, 2016. DLT is scheduled to release the March 2016 labor force figures and job counts on Thursday, April 14, 2016, 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.