



**EMBARGOED until  
Friday, May 18, 2012**

**Media contacts:**

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

	<u>Apr 12</u>	<u>Mar 12</u>	<u>Apr 11</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	11.2%	11.1%	11.2%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.1%	8.2%	9.0%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	457.8	457.7	462.1

**Highlights:**

- The RI unemployment rate increased one-tenth of a percentage point over the month.
- The number of employed RI residents dropped to 494,100, its lowest level since September 1996.
- RI-based jobs increased 100 over the month, with the greatest gain reported in the Retail Trade sector.

### Unemployment Rate Rises to 11.2 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for April 2012 rose slightly to 11.2 percent, up one-tenth of a percentage point from the March 2012 rate.

The April 2012 rate was unchanged from the previous April, marking the first time since October 2010 that the unemployment rate has not been lower than the same month a year ago.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in April, down 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—increased by 100 over the March figure to reach 62,200 in April. Over the year, the number of unemployed RI residents dropped by 900.

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 April was 30,617, down 3,796 (-11.0%) from the March average of 34,413 and down 5,312 (-14.8%) from the April 2011 average of 35,929.

The number of **employed RI residents** was down 2,000 over the revised March figures, dropping to 494,100 in April, the lowest employment level since September 1996. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was down 6,900 from April 2011.

The RI labor force totaled 556,300 in April 2012, down 1,900 from March 2012 and down 7,800 from April 2011 estimates. This is the lowest labor force level since February 2005. The labor force decrease reflected losses in employed residents outweighing the gains in unemployed residents. This is the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive month that the RI labor force has decreased.

**JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:** Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 457,800 in April, adding 100 jobs from the March employment estimate of 457,700.

The Retail Trade sector added 500 jobs in April as job gains were reported within several industry groups, including motor vehicle and parts dealers, building material and garden equipment stores and food and beverage stores. The Construction sector and Financial Activities sector each added 300 jobs over the month.

Also in April, positive job gains were reported in the Educational Services (+200), Professional & Business Services (+200), Government (+200) and Wholesale Trade (+100) sectors.

(continued)

**Monthly Employment April 2012, page 2 of 2**

Employment within the Information and Mining & Logging sectors remained unchanged over the month.

Offsetting the April job gains were losses reported in the Health Care & Social Assistance (-500) and Accommodation & Food Services (-500) sectors. Losses in Health Care & Social Assistance can be attributed to cutbacks among ambulatory health care services while job declines in Accommodation & Food Services sector were mainly due to smaller gains among food services & drinking places than typically occur in April.

Job declines from March were also reported in the Manufacturing (-200), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-200), Transportation & Utilities (-200) and Other Services (-100) sectors.

Over the year, total nonfarm employment decreased by 4,300. Job losses were reported in eight economic sectors, including Health Care & Social Assistance (-1,500), Accommodation & Food Services (-1,400), Retail Trade (-1,200), Other Services (-1,000), Government (-900), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-500), Transportation & Utilities (-100) and Manufacturing (-100).

Educational Services employment posted the largest over-the-year increase in April, with a gain of 1,000 jobs, followed by Professional & Business Services (+500), Wholesale Trade (+500) and Information (+400).

Employment in Construction, Financial Activities and Mining & Logging remained unchanged over the year.

**MANUFACTURING:** In April 2012, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$18.14 per hour. The average hourly production wage was down 4 cents from March 2012 and up \$2.72 from April 2011. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 40.0 hours per week in April, up one-tenth of an hour over the month and up five-tenths of an hour from a year ago.

<b>SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND</b>					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	<u>Apr-12</u>	<u>Mar-12</u>	<u>Apr-11</u>	Net Change From	
				<u>Mar-12</u>	<u>Apr-11</u>
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>457.8</b>	<b>457.7</b>	<b>462.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>-4.3</b>
Mining & Logging	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	15.5	15.2	15.5	0.3	0.0
Manufacturing	40.7	40.9	40.8	-0.2	-0.1
Wholesale Trade	16.6	16.5	16.1	0.1	0.5
Retail Trade	46.2	45.7	47.4	0.5	-1.2
Transportation & Utilities	10.6	10.8	10.7	-0.2	-0.1
Information	10.5	10.5	10.1	0.0	0.4
Financial Activities	30.8	30.5	30.8	0.3	0.0
Professional & Business Services	54.4	54.2	53.9	0.2	0.5
Educational Services	26.1	25.9	25.1	0.2	1.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	77.0	77.5	78.5	-0.5	-1.5
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.1	7.3	7.6	-0.2	-0.5
Accommodation & Food Services	40.9	41.4	42.3	-0.5	-1.4
Other Services	21.2	21.3	22.2	-0.1	-1.0
Government	60.0	59.8	60.9	0.2	-0.9

**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 May labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, June 15, 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).