

**EMBARGOED until 2:00 p.m.  
on Thursday, October 15, 2015**

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## September Unemployment Rate Drops to 5.4 Percent; Rhode Island-Based Jobs Down 1,800 from August

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for September 2015 dropped to 5.4 percent, down three-tenths of a percentage point from the revised August 2015 rate of 5.7 percent. Over the year, the unemployment rate is down one and eight-tenths percentage points from the September 2014 rate. This is the lowest unemployment rate since August 2007.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 5.1 percent in September 2015, unchanged 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—was 30,400, down 1,300 from the August figure of 31,700. This represents the lowest unemployment level since July 2007. Over the year, the number of unemployed dropped by 9,400.

A total of 7,698 individuals collected Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in September 2015,\* down from 9,081 a year ago. This month, UI claimants accounted for 29.3 percent of the total unemployed.

The number of **employed RI residents** was 527,800, down 500 from the August figure of 528,300. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was up 15,500 from September 2014.

The RI labor force totaled 558,200 in September 2015, down 1,800 from August 2015 and up 6,100 from September 2014.

**JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:** Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 482,100 in September, reflecting a loss of 1,800 jobs from the revised August estimate of 483,900. Over the past three months, Rhode Island has averaged a loss of 300 jobs, but has added 3,000 jobs over the year. Since the start of the year, jobs are up 2,800. Thus far in 2015, job growth has averaged 300 per month, compared with an average monthly gain of 600 jobs during the same period in 2014.

Employment in the Professional & Business Services sector fell by 1,200 in September, marking two consecutive months of declines totaling 1,500 jobs. Despite this significant job loss, employment in Professional & Business is up 2,900 in 2015 and up 2,100 from a year ago.

Jobs in Health Care & Social Assistance continued to trend down as 700 jobs were wiped from the September payroll. Jobs within this sector are down 1,000 in 2015, down 1,200 over the year and the sector has averaged a loss of 500 over the past three months. Financial Activities reported a loss of 500 jobs in September, following a loss of 100 jobs in August, erasing the gain of 600 jobs reported earlier in July.

	<u>Sept 15</u>	<u>Aug 15</u>	<u>Sept 14</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	5.4%	5.7%	7.2%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.1%	5.9%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	482.1	483.9	479.1
<b>Highlights:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RI unemployment rate declined to 5.4%, its lowest level since August 2007.</li> <li>• The number of RI-based jobs is down 1,800 from August but up 3,000 from a year ago.</li> <li>• The number of employed RI residents decreased by 500 over the month.</li> <li>• There were 7,698 individuals collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits in September.*</li> </ul>			

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Government employment dropped by 300 over the month and is down by 500 over the year. Another loss of 300 jobs was also reported in Wholesale Trade, marking the sector's first job loss since April of this year.

Construction employment fell again, shedding 200 jobs from August. This sector has experienced four consecutive months without reporting a job gain, the last one being in May in which 100 jobs were added. Between September 2014 and September 2015, Construction jobs are down 1,800.

The Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Transportation & Utilities and Educational Services sectors each reported an over-the-month loss of 100 jobs, while employment in Information, Other Services and Mining & Logging remained unchanged.

Accommodation & Food Services and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation were the only sectors to report over-the-month job gains adding 1,600 and 200 jobs, respectively. Employment in Accommodation & Food Services is up 1,700 since the start of the year and up 2,300 from a year ago. Arts, Entertainment & Recreation employment is up 100 over the year.

**MANUFACTURING:** In September 2015, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$17.26 per hour, down 19 cents from August 2015 and down 60 cents from September 2014. Manufacturing production employees worked an average of 39.5 hours per week in September, up one hour from August but down half an hour 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 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' September labor force data and job counts on October 20, 2015. DLT is scheduled to release the October 2015 labor force figures and job counts on Thursday, November 19, 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.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND <i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Sep-15	Aug-15	Sep-14	Net Change From	
				Aug-15	Sep-14
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>482.1</b>	<b>483.9</b>	<b>479.1</b>	<b>-1.8</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>422.4</b>	<b>423.9</b>	<b>418.9</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Mining & Logging	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	14.7	14.9	16.5	-0.2	-1.8
Manufacturing	41.9	42.0	40.9	-0.1	1.0
Wholesale Trade	16.6	16.9	16.8	-0.3	-0.2
Retail Trade	47.4	47.5	47.2	-0.1	0.2
Transportation & Utilities	11.4	11.5	11.0	-0.1	0.4
Information	8.5	8.5	8.8	0.0	-0.3
Financial Activities	32.5	33.0	32.7	-0.5	-0.2
Professional & Business Services	63.5	64.7	61.4	-1.2	2.1
Educational Services	24.8	24.9	24.3	-0.1	0.5
Health Care & Social Assistance	79.7	80.4	80.9	-0.7	-1.2
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	8.8	8.6	8.7	0.2	0.1
Accommodation & Food Services	48.7	47.1	46.4	1.6	2.3
Other Services	23.7	23.7	23.1	0.0	0.6
Government	59.7	60.0	60.2	-0.3	-0.5