



# Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

## MEDIA ADVISORY



**EMBARGOED UNTIL FRIDAY, JAN. 18, 2008**

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	<u>Dec. 07</u>	<u>Nov. 07</u>	<u>Dec. 06</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	<b>5.5%</b>	5.2%	5.1%
US Unemployment Rate	<b>5.0%</b>	4.7%	4.4%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	<b>499.2</b>	499.3	495.9

**Highlights:**

- RI's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for December climbed 0.3 of a percentage point in a month to reach 5.5 percent.
- The number of unemployed RI residents in December increased 1,800 from the previous month.

## RI's Job Count Relatively Unchanged; Unemployment Rate Climbs

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that Rhode Island's monthly job count declined by 100 in December 2007, reducing the number of jobs to 499,200. This is the second consecutive monthly employment decrease in Rhode Island and follows nine months of stable or increased job growth.

Additionally, the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose 0.3 of a percentage point for the second month in a row, reaching 5.5 percent in December. This marks the highest RI unemployment

rate since February 1996. The national unemployment rate also rose 0.3 of a percentage point last month, growing to 5.0 percent in December.

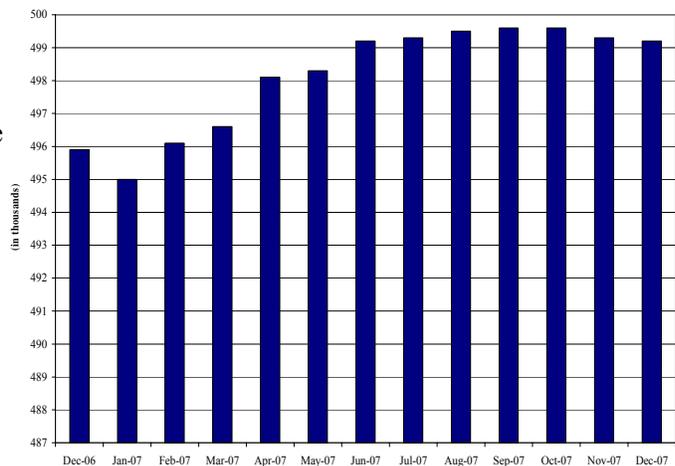
In December 2007, the number of unemployed Rhode Island residents—those residents who classify themselves as available for and actively seeking employment—increased to 31,800, a jump of 1,800 from November 2007 and a year-over-year increase of 2,400 from the previous December. This figure represents the highest level of unemployed RI residents since June 1995.

On a related note, the number of employed RI residents totaled 547,800 in December 2007, representing a decline of 3,200 over the previous month. On a year-over-year basis, the number of employed RI residents dropped 1,400 between December 2006 and December 2007.

From November to December of 2007, employment losses were reported in the Professional & Business Services (-200) and Other Services (-200) sectors. Smaller losses of 100 each were noted in the Manufacturing, Transportation & Utilities, Health Care & Social Assistance, and Accommodation & Food Services sectors.

The majority of job losses in Professional & Business Services sector employment could be attributed to reductions in Temporary Help and Landscaping. Within the Other Services sector, losses were noted in Personal Care Services.

Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted Establishment Employment  
December 2006 to December 2007



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### Monthly Employment December 2007, page 2 of 2

The month's employment decreases were partially offset by a job gain of 200 in the Construction sector, along with gains of 100 jobs each in the Wholesale Trade; Information; Educational Services; Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation; and Government sectors.

From December 2006 to December 2007, RI jobs grew 3,300, a 0.7 percent increase. The largest annual employment gains in Rhode Island occurred in the Professional & Business Services (+1,400); Construction (+1,000); Information (+600); Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+600); Transportation & Utilities (+500); and Educational Services (+500) sectors. The national growth rate for this same period totaled 1.0 percent.

Manufacturing employment experienced the largest over-the-year loss (-1,400), followed by Financial Activities (-500), Government (-300) and Wholesale Trade (-200).

### Hours and Earnings

In December 2007, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$13.98 per hour. The average hourly production wage was down one cent from November and up 59 cents per hour from a year ago. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 39.4 hours per week in December, down 0.2 of an hour over the month and 0.5 of an hour since December 2006.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND <i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Dec-07	Nov-07	Dec-06	Net Change From	
				Nov-07	Dec-06
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>499.2</b>	<b>499.3</b>	<b>495.9</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>3.3</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0
Construction	24.5	24.3	23.5	0.2	1.0
Manufacturing	50.2	50.3	51.6	-0.1	-1.4
Wholesale Trade*	16.6	16.5	16.8	0.1	-0.2
Retail Trade	52.0	52.0	51.8	0.0	0.2
Transportation & Utilities	11.5	11.6	11.0	-0.1	0.5
Information	11.4	11.3	10.8	0.1	0.6
Financial Activities	35.8	35.8	36.3	0.0	-0.5
Professional & Business Services	58.9	59.1	57.5	-0.2	1.4
Educational Services	23.0	22.9	22.5	0.1	0.5
Health Care & Social Assistance	75.8	75.9	75.5	-0.1	0.3
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	8.8	8.7	8.2	0.1	0.6
Accommodation & Food Services	42.8	42.9	42.6	-0.1	0.2
Other Services	23.3	23.5	22.9	-0.2	0.4
Government	64.3	64.2	64.6	0.1	-0.3

\* State Calculated Estimate

*Note: Current month figures are preliminary; prior month and year are revised. Data are subject to revision. 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. 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). The January labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, February 29, 2008.*

### About the RI Department of Labor and Training

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 on the programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders, 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).

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