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	<u>Feb 09</u>	<u>Jan 09</u>	<u>Feb 08</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	<b>10.5%</b>	10.3%	6.5%
US Unemployment Rate	<b>8.1%</b>	7.6%	4.8%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	<b>467.3</b>	469.6	488.0

Highlights:

- The February RI jobless rate rose 2/10<sup>th</sup> of point to reach 10.5 percent.
- Last month, the number of unemployed RI residents increased 1,900 over the month to reach 59,700.

**Unemployment Rate Climbs to 10.5 percent**

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate climbed two-tenths of a percent over January’s unemployment rate, reaching 10.5 percent in February.

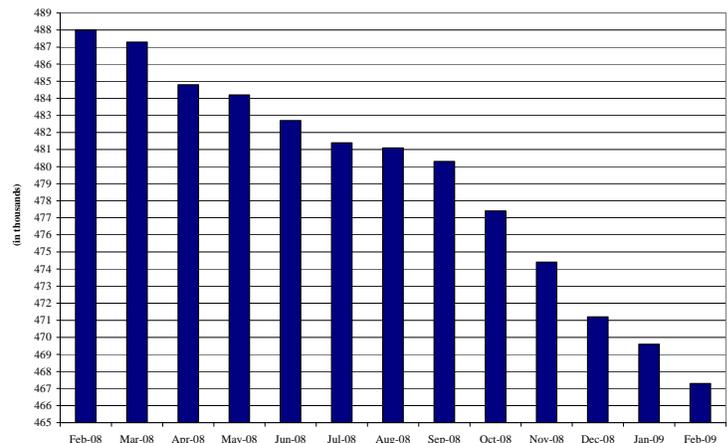
From January 2009 to February 2009, the U.S. unemployment rate rose five-tenths of a percent to reach 8.1 percent, its highest rate since December 1983. The monthly unemployment rate is calculated through an estimating process that compares the number of unemployed residents to the total labor force.

In February, the number of unemployed RI residents—those residents who classify themselves as available for and actively seeking employment—increased by 1,900 over the month to reach 59,700. From February 2008 to February 2009, the number of unemployed RI residents increased 22,500.

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 February was 40,640.

On a related note, the number of employed RI residents totaled 506,700 in February 2009, reflecting an increase of 1,800 from the previous month, the first over-the-month increase since September 2007 and the largest over-the-month increase since January 2007 (+2,000). Over the year, the number of employed RI residents fell 24,500 between February 2008 and February 2009.

**Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted Establishment Employment**  
February 2008 - February 2009



**JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:** Total nonfarm payroll employment in Rhode Island continued to fall as the February job count totaled 467,300, a decline of 2,300 jobs from January’s employment level of 469,600. February marks the thirteenth straight month of job losses for Rhode Island, and fourteen consecutive months of job declines for the US. Since an employment peak in January 2007 (496,400), the local economy has lost over 29,000 jobs.

From January to February 2009, the Manufacturing sector reported a loss of 1,200 jobs, due mainly to declines in several durable goods industries. The Construction sector lost 700 jobs over the month, with both the residential

**(continued)**





# Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

## MEDIA ADVISORY



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and nonresidential components of the industry shedding jobs. Also in February, job losses were reported in Professional & Business Services (-400), Retail Trade (-300), Financial Activities (-200), Government (-200), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-200), Transportation & Utilities (-100) and Other Services (-100).

However, from January to February 2009, job growth occurred in Accommodation & Food Services (+500) as full services restaurants reported employment gains in February. Health Care & Social Assistance (+400) and Educational Services (+200) also added jobs during this period. Employment in Information, Wholesale Trade and Natural Resources & Mining remained unchanged between January 2009 and February 2009.

From February 2008 to February 2009, RI jobs declined 20,700 (-4.2 %) due to job losses in nearly all economic sectors. The largest annual employment declines was reported in Manufacturing (-4,800), followed by Retail Trade (-3,500), Construction (-3,400), Professional & Business Services (-3,400), Financial Activities (-1,500) and Government (-1,400). Smaller, but still significant losses were noted in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-800), Other Services (-700), Information (-600), Transportation & Utilities (-500) and Wholesale Trade (-500). Employment in Accommodation & Food Services is down one hundred jobs over the year.

Health Care & Social Assistance and Educational Services reported employment increases over the year, with gains of 400 and 100 jobs, respectively.

**MANUFACTURING:** In February 2009, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$14.09 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up ten cents from January and up twenty-one cents from a year ago February. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 37.0 hours per week in February, down four-tenths of an hour over the month and down an hour and three-tenths since February 2008.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Feb-09	Jan-09	Feb-08	Net Change From	
				Jan-09	Feb-08
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>467.3</b>	<b>469.6</b>	<b>488.0</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>-20.7</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	17.9	18.6	21.3	-0.7	-3.4
Manufacturing	44.3	45.5	49.1	-1.2	-4.8
Wholesale Trade	16.6	16.6	17.1	0.0	-0.5
Retail Trade	46.9	47.2	50.4	-0.3	-3.5
Transportation & Utilities	10.6	10.7	11.1	-0.1	-0.5
Information	10.3	10.3	10.9	0.0	-0.6
Financial Activities	32.5	32.7	34.0	-0.2	-1.5
Professional & Business Services	52.1	52.5	55.5	-0.4	-3.4
Educational Services	23.5	23.3	23.4	0.2	0.1
Health Care & Social Assistance	77.0	76.6	76.6	0.4	0.4
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.6	7.8	8.4	-0.2	-0.8
Accommodation & Food Services	43.1	42.6	43.2	0.5	-0.1
Other Services	22.3	22.4	23.0	-0.1	-0.7
Government	62.4	62.6	63.8	-0.2	-1.4

*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 US 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). The March labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, April 17, 2009.*

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).

