



**FOR RELEASE**

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## Rhode Island Employers Add Jobs in February The Unemployment Rate Edges Up

Adelita S. Orefice, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, announced today that Rhode Island's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February was 5.1 percent. The February jobless rate is up 0.4 of a percentage point from January's estimate of 4.7 percent. The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents increased by 1,800 over the month to 29,000 in February. A year ago, the jobless level was 28,300 and the State's unemployment rate stood at 5.0 percent. Nationally, the unemployment rate for February inched up 0.1 of a percentage point to 4.8 percent. Compared to last year, the national jobless rate is down 0.6 of a percentage point. Rhode Island's unemployment rate for February was above the national average.

	<u>Feb. 06</u>	<u>Jan. 06</u>	<u>Feb. 05</u>
Rhode Island	5.1%	4.7%	5.0%*
United States	4.8%	4.7%	5.4%*

\* Revised

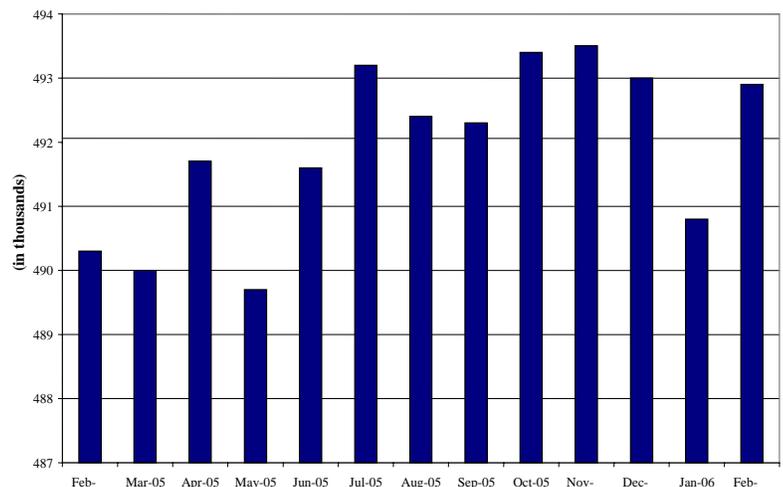
The Rhode Island job count (seasonally adjusted) was up 2,100 (+0.4%) in February, the largest over-the-month increase since May 2004. Following two consecutive months of job losses, employment in the state rebounded due to gains in several economic sectors, bringing the February job total to 492,900. The largest employment gains were reflected in Educational & Health Services (+1,100), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+500), Professional & Business Services (+500) and Financial Activities (+400). Small monthly losses were noted in Manufacturing (-200) and Leisure & Hospitality (-100).

"The February jobs report is very encouraging as Rhode Island businesses added 2,100 jobs over the month. With increases reported in most major industry sectors, this is the largest monthly job gain in the last 21 months," said Director Orefice. "The improvement in the job market provides a lift to individuals entering the labor force looking for work. We're hopeful that this momentum will continue over the next several months."

Educational & Health Services added 1,100 jobs, due to the return of student workers and staff at local colleges and universities following the winter recess. Trade, Transportation & Utilities posted a gain of 500 jobs, the first over-the-month increase since August 2005. Increased employment in Professional & Business Services is the result of a gain in Professional, Scientific & Technical jobs. The gain in Financial Activities is attributed to increases in Insurance Carriers & Related Activities.

Over the year, total employment was up 2,600 (+0.5%) from the 490,300 jobs reported in February 2005. Most of the increase was in the private sector (+2,500) with Government employment adding 100 jobs. The largest gains occurred in the Educational & Health Services (+2,300), Professional & Business Services (+2,100), Financial Activities (+1,500), and Construction (+1,300) sectors, offsetting over-the-year losses in Manufacturing (-2,200), Leisure & Hospitality (-900), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-600), and Other Services (-600).

**Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted Establishment Employment**  
*February 2005 to February*



-More-

**SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND**

(in thousands)

	<u>Feb-06</u>	<u>Jan-06</u>	<u>Feb-05</u>	Net Change From	
				<u>Jan-06</u>	<u>Feb-05</u>
<b>Total Non-Farm</b>	<b>492.9</b>	<b>490.8</b>	<b>490.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.6</b>
Construction	22.8	22.6	21.5	0.2	1.3
Manufacturing	53.8	54.0	56.0	-0.2	-2.2
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	79.7	79.2	80.3	0.5	-0.6
Financial Activities	35.5	35.1	34.0	0.4	1.5
Professional & Business Services	56.8	56.3	54.7	0.5	2.1
Educational & Health Services	96.3	95.2	94.0	1.1	2.3
Leisure & Hospitality	49.8	49.9	50.7	-0.1	-0.9
Other Services	22.8	22.6	23.4	0.2	-0.6
Government	65.2	65.0	65.1	0.2	0.1

*Note: Data may not be additive due to the exclusion of certain industry sectors from the seasonal adjustment process.*

**Hours and Earnings**

In February 2006, the \$13.30 average hourly wage earned by the Manufacturing sector's production workers represented a monthly loss of one cent per hour and an over-the-year gain of thirty cents per hour. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.6 hours per week in February, up 0.2 of an hour over the month and 0.7 of an hour since February 2005.

*Note: Current month figures are preliminary; prior month and year are revised. Data may not be additive and 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 on our web site 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 21, 2006.**

***Equal Opportunity Employer/Program***

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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