



# Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

## MEDIA ADVISORY



**Embargoed until  
Friday, April 16, 2010**

### 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>Mar 10</u>	<u>Feb 10</u>	<u>Mar 09</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	12.6%	12.7%	10.2%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	9.7%	9.7%	8.6%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	452.5	452.4	463.6

**Highlights:**

- The March RI jobless rate was 0.1 of a percentage point less than the February 2010 rate of 12.7 percent.
- The number of employed RI residents grew for the third consecutive month, reporting an increase of 300 employed residents from February to March.
- The number of jobs in RI increased by 100 over the month and 600 over the quarter.

### Unemployment Rate Drops to 12.6 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for March 2010 was 12.6 percent, a decrease of 0.1 of a percentage point from the state's February 2010 rate. This is the first over-the-month decrease in the state's unemployment rate since August 2006. The U.S. unemployment rate in March remained at 9.7 percent, unchanged from the previous month.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—decreased by 600 over February figures, dropping to 72,600. This decline marks the second straight over-the-month decrease in the number unemployed. Over the year,

the number of unemployed RI residents increased by 15,500.

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 March was 45,640, down 944 (-2.0%) from the February average of 46,404.

The number of **employed RI residents** increased 900 over the February figures, totaling 505,800 in March. This is the third consecutive month in which the number of employed RI residents increased. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents increased by 300, the first over-the-year increase since July 2007.

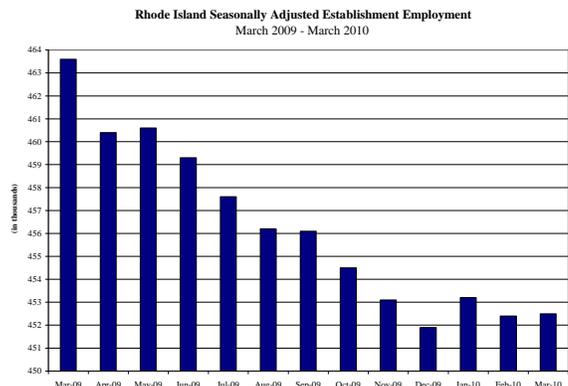
The monthly increase in the number of employed residents outweighed the decrease in the number of unemployed residents, resulting in a **total Rhode Island labor force** of 578,400, an increase of 400 over February and an increase of 15,800 over March 2009 figures.

### JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

Rhode Island nonfarm payroll employment totaled 452,500 in March, a gain of 100 jobs, following a revised loss of 800 jobs in February. During the first quarter of 2010, employment increased by 600 jobs.

In March, the Manufacturing sector experienced a significant employment gain of 700 jobs, due to reported increases in Durable Goods employment, including Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing and Jewelry & Silverware Manufacturing.

(continued)





# Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

## MEDIA ADVISORY



### Monthly Employment March 2010, page 2 of 2

Large employment gains were also reported in the Retail Trade (+600) and Health Care & Social Assistance (+400) sectors. Payrolls within Department Stores and Building Material & Supplies Dealers rose, contributing to the retail growth. Three components of the Health Care & Social Assistance sector— Ambulatory Health Care Services, Nursing & Residential Care Facilities and Social Assistance—all added jobs. Government (+200), Wholesale Trade (+100) and Natural Resources & Mining (+100) also reported over-the-month gains. Employment in Construction, Transportation & Utilities and Information remained even.

The Professional & Business Services sector reported a large employment loss in March, shedding 1,000 jobs. Losses within the sector were reported in Administrative & Support Services, Computer Systems Design Services and Architectural & Engineering Services. Smaller over-the-month losses were reported in other sectors, including Accommodation & Food Services (-400), Other Services (-200), Financial Activities (-200), Educational Services (-100) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-100).

March 2010 employment was down 11,100 (-2.4%) from March 2009, with job declines reported in several economic sectors, including Professional & Business Services (-3,100), Manufacturing (-1,900), Retail Trade (-1,500), Construction (-1,400), Financial Activities (-1,200), Government (-900) and Wholesale Trade (-900). Smaller over-the-year losses were noted in Transportation & Utilities (-400), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-400), Information (-300), Educational Services (-300) and Other Services (-300).

Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,400) and Accommodation & Food Services (+100) added jobs over the year. Employment in Natural Resources & Mining remained even.

**MANUFACTURING:** In March 2010, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$14.58 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up 17 cents from February 2010 and up 78 cents from March 2009. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.8 hours per week in March, up 1.6 hours over the month, and up 1.4 hours over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND <small>(in thousands)</small>					
	Mar-10	Feb-10	Mar-09	Net Change From	
				Feb-10	Mar-09
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>452.5</b>	<b>452.4</b>	<b>463.6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>-11.1</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0
Construction	16.5	16.5	17.9	0.0	-1.4
Manufacturing	40.6	39.9	42.5	0.7	-1.9
Wholesale Trade	15.4	15.3	16.3	0.1	-0.9
Retail Trade	46.0	45.4	47.5	0.6	-1.5
Transportation & Utilities	9.9	9.9	10.3	0.0	-0.4
Information	9.9	9.9	10.2	0.0	-0.3
Financial Activities	30.6	30.8	31.8	-0.2	-1.2
Professional & Business Services	50.0	51.0	53.1	-1.0	-3.1
Educational Services	23.5	23.6	23.8	-0.1	-0.3
Health Care & Social Assistance	78.0	77.6	76.6	0.4	1.4
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.2	7.3	7.6	-0.1	-0.4
Accommodation & Food Services	41.3	41.7	41.2	-0.4	0.1
Other Services	22.0	22.2	22.3	-0.2	-0.3
Government	61.4	61.2	62.3	0.2	-0.9

*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). The April labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 21, 2010.*

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).

