

**EMBARGOED until
Friday, April 15, 2011**

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	<u>Mar 11</u>	<u>Feb 11</u>	<u>Mar 10</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	11.0%	11.2%	11.8%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.8%	8.9%	9.7%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	460.2	459.2	458.3

Highlights:

- The March 2011 unemployment rate dropped two-tenths of a percentage point from February.
- The number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 1,100 over the month, while the number of employed RI residents decreased by 900.
- RI-based jobs increased by 1,000 over the month, marking two consecutive months of job gains.

Unemployment Rate Drops to 11.0 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for March 2011 was 11.0 percent, down two-tenths of a percentage point from the February rate of 11.2 percent.

The U.S. unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point over the month, dropping to 8.8 percent.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking

employment—decreased by 1,100 over the February figures, falling to 63,000 in March. This represents the 12th consecutive over-the-month decrease in the number of unemployed RI residents, and the lowest count since July 2009. Over the year, the number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 4,800.

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 39,341, down 1,633 (-4.0%) from the February average of 40,975 and down 6,118 (-13.5%) from the March 2010 average of 46,405.

The number of **employed RI residents** decreased 900 over the February figures, totaling 508,900 in March. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents increased by 1,400, the 12th consecutive over-the-year increase.

The Rhode Island labor force totaled 571,900 in March 2011, a decrease of 1,900 from February 2011 figures and down 3,400 from March 2010 figures. The over-the-month decreases in the numbers of employed and unemployed residents caused the March labor force to drop to its lowest level since December 2009.

JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 460,200 in March, reflecting a gain of 1,000 jobs from the revised February employment figure of 459,200. Several economic sectors reported over-the-month gains, with the largest occurring in Accommodation & Food Services (+600) and Financial Activities (+400). Job gains in Accommodation & Food Services can be attributed to increases at both full- and limited-service restaurants. Within the Financial Activities sector, job gains were attributed to increases in rental and leasing services, while finance and insurance employment remained stable. Other sectors adding jobs included Other Services (+300), Wholesale Trade (+200), Health Care & Social Assistance (+200), Information (+100), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+100) and Natural, Resources & Mining (+100).

On the negative side, the Educational Services sector lost 500 jobs from February, mainly due to cut backs at private colleges, universities and schools. A loss of 300 jobs in Professional & Business Services is attributed to

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administrative and waste services. Small over-the-month losses occurred in the Construction (-100) and Government (-100). Employment in Retail Trade, Manufacturing and Transportation & Utilities was unchanged.

Over the year, employment was up 1,900 (+0.4%) from March 2010, with job gains reported in eight economic sectors. Accommodation & Food Services (+2,100), Retail Trade (+1,200), Wholesale Trade (+900), Professional & Business Services (+800), Information (+600), Manufacturing (+600), Transportation & Utilities (+100) and Natural Resources & Mining (+100) all reported annual employment gains.

Educational Services employment was down 1,500 over the year due to cut backs at private colleges and universities, while Government employment was down 1,100 due to cut backs at the local level. Construction (-600), Financial Activities (-500), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-400), Other Services (-300) and Health Care & Social Assistance (-100) all reported job declines over the year.

MANUFACTURING: In March 2011, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$15.12 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up sixteen cents from February 2011 and up fifty-four cents from March 2010. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 39.4 hours per week in March, up seven-tenths of an hour over the month, and up and six-tenths of an hour over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND <i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Mar-11	Feb-11	Mar-10	Net Change From	
				Feb-11	Mar-10
Total Nonfarm	460.2	459.2	458.3	1.0	1.9
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Construction	15.5	15.6	16.1	-0.1	-0.6
Manufacturing	40.8	40.8	40.2	0.0	0.6
Wholesale Trade	16.8	16.6	15.9	0.2	0.9
Retail Trade	48.7	48.7	47.5	0.0	1.2
Transportation & Utilities	10.3	10.3	10.2	0.0	0.1
Information	10.5	10.4	9.9	0.1	0.6
Financial Activities	30.2	29.8	30.7	0.4	-0.5
Professional & Business Services	53.9	54.2	53.1	-0.3	0.8
Educational Services	22.5	23.0	24.0	-0.5	-1.5
Health Care & Social Assistance	77.7	77.5	77.8	0.2	-0.1
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.1	7.0	7.5	0.1	-0.4
Accommodation & Food Services	43.6	43.0	41.5	0.6	2.1
Other Services	21.7	21.4	22.0	0.3	-0.3
Government	60.7	60.8	61.8	-0.1	-1.1

METHODOLOGY: Beginning with this month's release of the March 2011 employment estimates, the production of state and metropolitan area estimates has transferred from individual State Workforce Agencies to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Concurrent with this transition, BLS has implemented several methodological changes to standardize the estimation approach across states. While these changes may reduce the potential for statistical bias in state and metropolitan area estimates, they may increase the month-to-month variability of the estimates, especially in smaller areas and states. The RI Department of Labor and Training's Labor Market Information Unit will continue to provide the BLS with information on local events that may affect the estimates, such as large layoffs or expansions at businesses not covered by the survey, and to disseminate and analyze the CES estimates for local data users. More detailed information on the changes to procedures for producing CES estimates is available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>.

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. The April labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 20, 2011.

ABOUT DLT: 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.