



# Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

## MEDIA ADVISORY



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	<u>Mar 09</u>	<u>Feb 09</u>	<u>Mar 08</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	<b>10.5%</b>	10.5%	6.8%
US Unemployment Rate	<b>8.5%</b>	8.1%	5.1%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	<b>465.3</b>	467.2	487.3

Highlights:

- The March RI jobless rate remained at the February level of 10.5 percent.
- Last month, the number of unemployed RI residents increased 100 over the month to reach 59,500.

### Unemployment Rate Remains at 10.5 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for March remained at 10.5 percent, the same unemployment rate recorded in February.

However, the U.S. unemployment rate rose four-tenths of a percent over the month to reach 8.5 percent in March. Both the RI and U.S. unemployment rates are calculated through an estimating process that compares

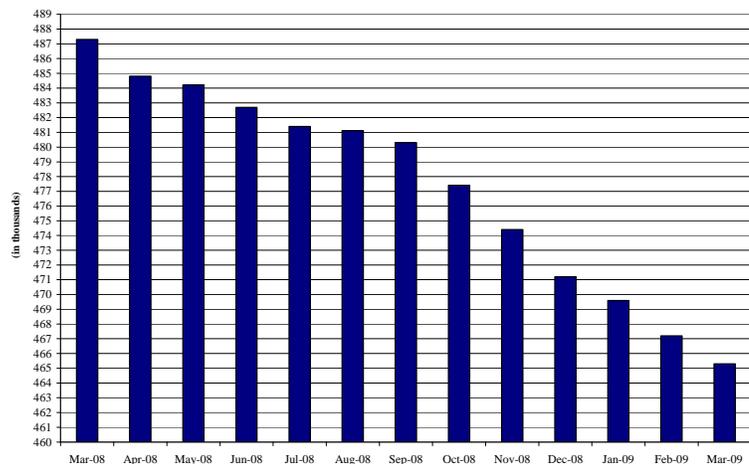
the number of unemployed residents to the total labor force.

In March, the number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—increased by 100 over the month to reach 59,500. From March 2008 to March 2009, the number of unemployed RI residents increased by 20,800.

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 45,964.

The number of **employed RI residents** totaled 504,900 in March, reflecting a decrease of 1,700 from the previous month. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents fell 25,400.

Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted Establishment Employment  
March 2008 - March 2009



### JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

In March, employment in Rhode Island totaled 465,300, a decline of 1,900 jobs from February's revised employment level of 467,200. Health Care & Social Assistance lost 400 jobs in March, with declines occurring in hospitals and ambulatory health care services. Also in March, monthly job losses were reported in Construction (-300), Wholesale Trade (-300), Government (-300), Professional & Business Services (-200), Information (-100), Financial Activities (-100), Other Services (-100) and Manufacturing (-100).

(continued)





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There were no industries reporting over-the-month job growth in March; however, employment in several industries remained unchanged, including Retail Trade, Transportation & Utilities; Educational Services; Accommodation & Food Services; Arts, Entertainment & Recreation; and Natural Resources & Mining.

From March 2008 to March 2009, RI jobs declined 22,000 (-4.5 %). Job declines occurred in nearly all economic sectors, with the most significant annual employment declines reported in Manufacturing (-4,900), Construction (-3,700), Retail Trade (-3,400), Professional & Business Services (-3,400), Government (-2,000) and Financial Activities (-1,300). Smaller losses were noted in Wholesale Trade (-800), Information (-700), Other Services (-700), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-600), Transportation & Utilities (-500) and Health Care & Social Assistance (-200).

Educational Services (+200) was the lone industry to report an over-the-year employment gain. Accommodation & Food Services and Natural Resources & Mining employment remained unchanged over the year.

**MANUFACTURING:** In March 2009, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$13.80 per hour. The average hourly production wage was down 29 cents from February 2009 and down 13 cents from March 2008. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 37.4 hours per week in March, up four-tenths of an hour over the month, but down nine-tenths over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND <i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Mar-09	Feb-09	Mar-08	Net Change From	
				Feb-09	Mar-08
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>465.3</b>	<b>467.2</b>	<b>487.3</b>	<b>-1.9</b>	<b>-22.0</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	17.6	17.9	21.3	-0.3	-3.7
Manufacturing	44.2	44.3	49.1	-0.1	-4.9
Wholesale Trade	16.3	16.6	17.1	-0.3	-0.8
Retail Trade	46.9	46.9	50.3	0.0	-3.4
Transportation & Utilities	10.6	10.6	11.1	0.0	-0.5
Information	10.2	10.3	10.9	-0.1	-0.7
Financial Activities	32.4	32.5	33.7	-0.1	-1.3
Professional & Business Services	51.9	52.1	55.3	-0.2	-3.4
Educational Services	23.5	23.5	23.3	0.0	0.2
Health Care & Social Assistance	76.5	76.9	76.7	-0.4	-0.2
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.6	7.6	8.2	0.0	-0.6
Accommodation & Food Services	43.1	43.1	43.1	0.0	0.0
Other Services	22.2	22.3	22.9	-0.1	-0.7
Government	62.1	62.4	64.1	-0.3	-2.0

*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 April labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 22, 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).

