

**EMBARGOED until  
Friday, June 17, 2011**

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	<u>May 11</u>	<u>Apr 11</u>	<u>May 10</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	10.9%	10.9%	11.7%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	9.1%	9.0%	9.6%
RI Job Count ( <i>in thousands</i> )	463.8	462.5	459.6

**Highlights:**

- The May 2011 unemployment rate was unchanged from April.
- The number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 100 over the month and 5,300 over the year.
- RI-based jobs increased by 1,300 over the month, marking four consecutive months of job gains.

### Unemployment Rate Remains at 10.9 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for May 2011 was 10.9 percent, unchanged from the previous month and down 8/10<sup>th</sup> of a percentage point from May 2010.

The U.S. unemployment rate reach 9.1 percent in May, up 1/10th of a percentage point from the previous month but down 5/10<sup>th</sup> of percentage point from May 2010.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those

residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—decreased by 100 over the April figures, falling to 62,000 in May, the 14th consecutive over-the-month decline. Over the year, the number of unemployed RI residents dropped by 5,300, a decrease of 7.9 percent.

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 May was 32,113, down 3,817 (-10.6%) from the April average of 35,930 and down 6,432 (-16.7%) from the May 2010 average of 38,545.

The number of **employed RI residents** decreased 1,400 over the April figures, totaling 507,700 in May. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was down 1,500 from May 2010.

The Rhode Island labor force totaled 569,700 in May 2011, down 1,400 from April figures and down 6,800 from May 2010 figures. The over-the-month decrease in the number of unemployed residents, combined with the decrease in the number of employed residents, caused the May labor force to drop to its lowest level since November 2009.

### JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 463,800 in May, reflecting a gain of 1,300 jobs from the revised April employment estimate of 462,500. The April to May payroll increase marks four consecutive months of job gains in Rhode Island.

In May, the Professional & Business Services sector added 1,000 jobs, due to increases in professional services, temporary help and landscaping. The Other Services sector, driven by gains in the personal care services and civic & social organizations/industry groups, added 700 jobs. Employment in the Educational Services and Retail Trade sectors increased by 600 and 500, respectively. Smaller gains were reported in Health Care & Social Assistance (+100) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+100).

On the negative side, Accommodation & Food Services lost 600 jobs over the month, due to reduced hiring among full-service restaurants. Construction also reported a loss of 600 jobs, resulting from cutbacks among specialty trade

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contractors. Smaller over-the-month declines were reported in the Financial Activities (-200), Information (-100), Transportation & Utilities (-100) and Government (-100) sectors.

Employment in Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade and Natural Resources & Mining was unchanged over the month.

Over the year, employment was up 4,200 (+0.9%) from May 2010, with job gains reported in nine economic sectors. Retail Trade (+4,200) Accommodation & Food Services (+2,100), Information (+700), Health Care & Social Assistance (+600), Manufacturing (+600), Professional & Business Services (+600), Wholesale Trade (+500), Other Services (+300) and Transportation & Utilities (+100) all reported over-the-year gains. Educational Services and Natural Resources & Mining employment remained even over the year.

Government employment was down 3,000 over the year, due to cutbacks among municipal government workers and the loss of Census workers. Construction employment was down 1,600 from May 2010, due to decreased employment of specialty trade contractors. Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-500) and Financial Activities (-400) also reported over-the-year job losses.

**MANUFACTURING:** In May 2011, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$15.74 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up 32 cents from April 2011 and up 98 cents from May 2010. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 39.4 hours per week in May, down one-tenth of an hour over the month, but up a half-hour over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND <i>(in thousands)</i>					
				Net Change From	
	May-11	Apr-11	May-10	Apr-11	May-10
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>463.8</b>	<b>462.5</b>	<b>459.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	14.4	15.0	16.0	-0.6	-1.6
Manufacturing	40.9	40.9	40.3	0.0	0.6
Wholesale Trade	16.4	16.4	15.9	0.0	0.5
Retail Trade	50.5	50.0	46.3	0.5	4.2
Transportation & Utilities	10.2	10.3	10.1	-0.1	0.1
Information	10.5	10.6	9.8	-0.1	0.7
Financial Activities	30.1	30.3	30.5	-0.2	-0.4
Professional & Business Services	54.2	53.2	53.6	1.0	0.6
Educational Services	23.9	23.3	23.9	0.6	0.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	78.9	78.8	78.3	0.1	0.6
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.2	7.1	7.7	0.1	-0.5
Accommodation & Food Services	43.9	44.5	41.8	-0.6	2.1
Other Services	22.4	21.7	22.1	0.7	0.3
Government	60.1	60.2	63.1	-0.1	-3.0

**METHODOLOGY:** Beginning with the release of the March 2011 employment estimates, the production of State and metropolitan area estimates transferred from individual State Workforce Agencies to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Concurrent with the transition, the BLS implemented several methodological changes to standardize the estimation approach across states. While these changes will 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 Rhode Island 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 Current Employment Statistics (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](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi). The June labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, July 22, 2011.

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).