



Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

MEDIA ADVISORY



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	<u>May 08</u>	<u>Apr. 08</u>	<u>May 07</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	7.2%	6.1%	5.0%
US Unemployment Rate	5.5%	5.0%	4.5%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	482.9	484.7	494.2

Highlights:

- The RI monthly job count declined by 1,800 from April to May of this year.
- At 482,900, the May 2008 RI job count is the lowest since April 2003.
- The May RI jobless rate jumped to 7.2 percent, the highest point since January 1994.

RI Jobs Decline by 1,800; Unemployment Rate Climbs to 7.2 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's May 2008 monthly job count totaled 482,900, a decline of 1,800 from April's revised employment level of 484,700. May marks the fifth consecutive month of job losses for both Rhode Island and the United States.

The RI seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in May climbed 1.1 percentage points over the month to 7.2 percent, the highest jobless rate since January 1994 (7.3 %). The national jobless rate also increased over the

month, from 5.0 percent in April to 5.5 percent in May.

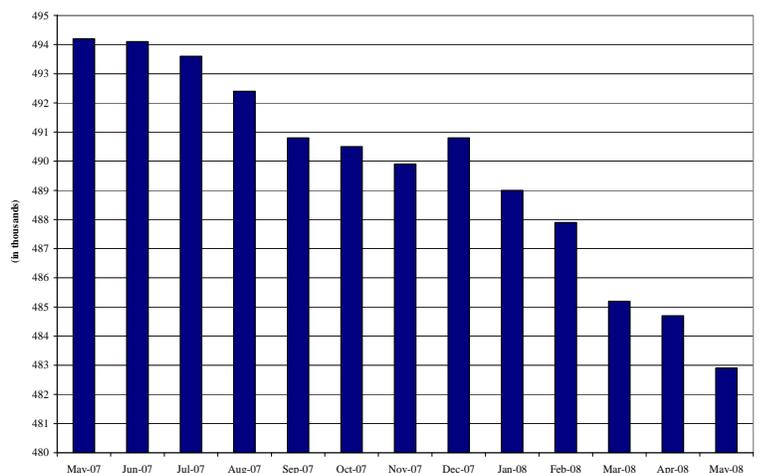
In May, the number of unemployed Rhode Island residents—those residents who classify themselves as available for and actively seeking employment—rose to 41,100, representing an unprecedented monthly increase of 6,200 and the highest jobless level since July 1993 (41,400). On a year-over-year comparison, the number of unemployed residents increased 12,500 from May 2007 to May 2008.

On a related note, the number of employed RI residents totaled 530,400 in May 2008, reflecting a drop of 8,000 from the previous month. On a year-over-year basis, the number of employed RI residents fell 18,700 between May 2007 and May 2008.

Over the month, employment losses were reported in a number of industry sectors with the largest in the Retail Trade (-600), Manufacturing (-300), Transportation & Utilities (-300), Accommodation & Food Services (-300) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-200) sectors. Job losses of 100 each were reported in the Wholesale Trade, Professional & Business Services, Educational Services, and Government sectors.

This month's employment loss was slightly offset by gains of 100 each in the Construction, Information, and Health Care & Social Assistance sectors. Employment remained unchanged in the Natural Resources & Mining, Financial Activities, and Other Services sectors.

Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted Establishment Employment
May 2007 to May 2008





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Job losses in the Retail Trade sector were the result of reductions in department store and drug store employment. Reductions in Manufacturing employment were reported in the durable goods segment. The Accommodation & Food Services sector experienced declines in both hotel and restaurant employment.

From May 2007 to May 2008, RI jobs declined 11,300, a 2.3 percent decrease. The largest annual employment losses in Rhode Island occurred in the Manufacturing (-2,900), Professional & Business Services (-2,300), Retail Trade (-1,700), Financial Activities (-1,700), and Construction (-1,200) sectors. Smaller losses were noted in Other Services (-700); Government (-700); Wholesale Trade (-500), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-500); Transportation & Utilities; (-200); Accommodation & Food Services (-100) and Natural Resources & Mining (-100).

Educational Services employment experienced the largest over-the-year gain (+500). Other gains were noted in Information (+400) and Health Care & Social Assistance (+400).

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND (in thousands)

	May-08	Apr-08	May-07	Net Change From	
				Apr-08	May-07
Total Nonfarm	482.9	484.7	494.2	-1.8	-11.3
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	-0.1
Construction	21.0	20.9	22.2	0.1	-1.2
Manufacturing	48.1	48.4	51.0	-0.3	-2.9
Wholesale Trade*	16.7	16.8	17.2	-0.1	-0.5
Retail Trade	50.0	50.6	51.7	-0.6	-1.7
Transportation & Utilities	10.8	11.1	11.0	-0.3	-0.2
Information	10.9	10.8	10.5	0.1	0.4
Financial Activities	33.7	33.7	35.4	0.0	-1.7
Professional & Business Services	54.3	54.4	56.6	-0.1	-2.3
Educational Services	23.8	23.9	23.3	-0.1	0.5
Health Care & Social Assistance	76.3	76.2	75.9	0.1	0.4
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.6	7.8	8.1	-0.2	-0.5
Accommodation & Food Services	42.9	43.2	43.0	-0.3	-0.1
Other Services	22.5	22.5	23.2	0.0	-0.7
Government	64.1	64.2	64.8	-0.1	-0.7

* State Calculated Estimate

In May 2008, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$13.93 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up one cent from April and up 18 cents per hour from a year ago. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.6 hours per week in May, up 0.4 of an hour over the month and down one hour since May 2007.

Note: Current month figures are preliminary; prior month and year are revised. 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 at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi. The June labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, July 18, 2008.

About the RI Department of Labor and Training

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.

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Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities / TDD (401) 462-8006

