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Employment Bulletin

Rhode Island
Department of
Labor & Training

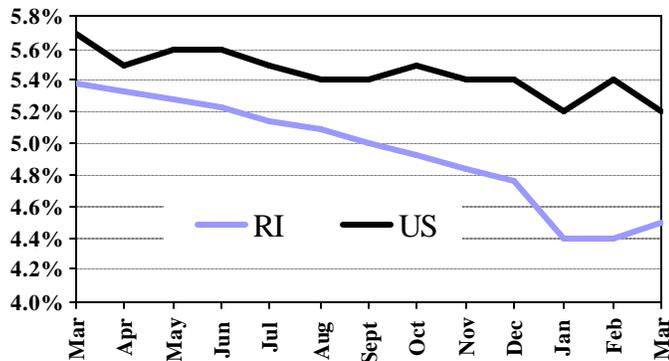
April 2005

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Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Shows Little Change in March

Rhode Island's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was 4.5 percent, up slightly from February's estimate of 4.4 percent. The number of employed Rhode Island residents climbed by 1,700 over the month, while the number of unemployed increased by 600 to 25,400 in March. A year ago, the unemployment rate was 5.4 percent, and the number of unemployed stood at 30,300. Nationally, the unemployment rate for March dipped to 5.2 percent, down from 5.4 percent in February and 5.7 percent a year ago. Rhode Island's unemployment rate has remained below the national average since August 2001.

**RI & US Unemployment Rates
Seasonally Adjusted 2004 - 2005**



"Labor market conditions in Rhode Island showed little change in March as our unemployment rate inched up only a tenth of a percentage point," said DLT Director Adelita S. Orefice. "Although the job market stalled a bit in March, we are optimistic that hiring will pick up again over the next several months."

Private Sector, DLT, State House, and Nonprofits Come Together to Encourage Adoption

At any given time in Rhode Island, at least two hundred children are waiting in state foster care for a family who will provide a loving, stable home. Last year, in an effort to increase the number of children adopted in Rhode Island, the General Assembly created a special commission to study the issue. This commission, which was convened in January 2005 and is chaired by Senator Rhoda Perry of Providence, will identify ways that Rhode Island and its employers can assist parents who may be considering adoption and recommend other ways the state can improve services for adoptive families. Commission members include representatives of the Department of Labor and Training, the Chambers of Commerce, Lifespan, Hasbro, Department of Children, Youth and Families, adoption agencies, and others from the adoption community.

As part of the work of the commission, Lifespan is gathering information on adoption benefits currently offered by Rhode Island's employers. Once this information is collected, the commission will highlight the best examples of these employee benefits. If you would like to participate in the survey, please log on to: www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=96926939317. The survey will only take a few moments to complete. Look for updated information on the survey results in next month's newsletter.

If you would like more information about the survey, the work of the commission, or how your company could host an adoption and foster care recruitment party, please contact Darlene Allen, Executive Director of Adoption Rhode Island at 401-724-1910.

Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics

(in thousands)

	Rhode Island			United States		
	Mar 05	Feb 05	Mar 04	Mar 05	Feb 05	Mar 04
Civilian Labor Force	564.0	561.7	562.7	148,157	148,132	146,737
Resident Employment	538.6	536.9	532.5	140,501	140,144	138,408
Unemployment	25.4	24.8	30.3	7,656	7,988	8,330
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	4.4%	5.4%	5.2%	5.4%	5.7%

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Rhode Island Job Highlights

Jobs at Rhode Island businesses were down 100 (-0.02%) last month, bringing the March job count to 491,900 (seasonally adjusted). Although job growth was reported in several sectors, including Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+400), Leisure & Hospitality (+400), and Educational & Health Services (+400), the job losses in Manufacturing (-500) and Construction (-100), along with declines in sectors that are not seasonally adjusted, led to an overall reduction in total nonfarm employment. Government employment remained unchanged over the month.

March's slight loss of 100 jobs marks the first monthly employment decline since September. Two Private sector industries - Manufacturing and Construction - experienced a one-month downturn. Three sectors reported continued growth, as Professional & Business Services, Educational & Health Services and Financial Activities each reported successive monthly job gains of six months, five months and four months, respectively. Trade, Transportation & Utilities, as well as Leisure & Hospitality, each reported a one-month job gain. Government employment remained stable in March following two months of job increases.

Over the year, employment was up 5,100 (+1.0%) from the 486,800 jobs reported in March 2004. The largest gains were noted in Educational & Health Services (+2,600); Professional & Business Services (+2,500); Leisure & Hospitality (+2,200); and Financial Activities (+1,300). The largest private sector employment losses occurred in Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-1,700) and Manufacturing (-900). Government employment decreased by 100 jobs.

Establishment Employment in Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted

	Employment (in thousands)		Net Change
	Mar 05	Feb 05	
Total Nonfarm	491.9	492.0	-0.1
Construction	21.0	21.1	-0.1
Manufacturing	56.0	56.5	-0.5
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	79.0	78.6	0.4
Financial Activities	35.3	35.2	0.1
Professional & Business Services	55.3	55.2	0.1
Educational & Health Services	95.0	94.6	0.4
Leisure and Hospitality	51.2	50.8	0.4
Government	65.7	65.7	0.0

Hours and Earnings

In March 2005, the \$12.99 average hourly wage earned by the Manufacturing sector's production workers remained even over the year, but reflected a monthly loss of one cent per hour. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 37.9 hours per week in March, unchanged over the month, but down 1.9 hours from last year.

Manufacturing Employment in Rhode Island Not Seasonally Adjusted

	Employment					Production Worker Averages					
	(in thousands)			Net Change From:		Weekly Hours			Hourly Earnings		
	Mar 05	Feb 05	Mar 04	Feb 05	Mar 04	Mar 05	Feb 05	Mar 04	Mar 05	Feb 05	Mar 04
Manufacturing	56.0	56.3	56.8	-300	-800	37.9	37.9	39.8	12.99	13.00	12.99
Durable Goods	36.9	37.1	37.5	-200	-600	38.6	38.8	39.1	12.96	13.00	13.01
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	7.7	7.8	7.9	-100	-200	38.2	37.5	39.4	11.73	11.76	11.60
Computer & Electronic Product Mfg.	5.0	5.2	5.3	-200	-300	38.9	39.5	36.6	14.05	14.00	13.76
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	10.5	10.5	10.9	0	-400	37.6	38.5	37.4	10.96	10.91	10.78
Jewelry and Silverware	7.6	7.6	7.8	0	-200	36.6	37.5	38.3	10.28	10.23	10.11
Non-Durable Goods	19.1	19.2	19.3	-100	-200	36.6	36.2	40.9	13.06	13.00	12.95
Chemical Manufacturing	4.3	4.2	4.3	100	0	39.6	40.0	39.5	15.37	15.30	15.37
Plastics & Rubber Products Mfg.	3.0	3.1	3.1	-100	-100	38.0	38.6	41.2	14.71	14.65	14.65

The employment figures in the "Rhode Island Job Highlights" section are derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state. Unadjusted total nonfarm employment data is available at: www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/ces.htm. Current month's figures are preliminary and subject to change.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed

In March 2005, approximately 56 percent of Rhode Island's unemployed workers were eligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits. Numbering 16,434 people, these "insured unemployed" accounted for 3.4 percent of the state's establishment employment (unadjusted). More than 21 percent (3,541) of the Ocean State's insured unemployed faced long-term unemployment, defined as collecting unemployment benefits for more than fourteen weeks.

Just over 27 percent (4,490) of the people receiving unemployment insurance benefits were between the ages of 35 and 44, while an additional 23 percent (3,811) were 25 to 34 years old. Concentrations of long-term unemployment generally increased with age, due, in part, to the difficulties workers face in finding new jobs as they grow older. For example, more than 36 percent (234) of insured unemployed workers 65 years and older had been collecting benefits for at least fourteen weeks, whereas, 14 percent (83) of those under 22 and 21 percent (217) of 22 to 24 year olds were considered long-term unemployed.

In March, approximately 48 percent (7,912) of those collecting unemployment insurance benefits had just a high school diploma. An additional 3,021 people (18.4%) had less than a high school diploma, while 7.4 percent (1,221) of the insured unemployed had at least a bachelor's degree. The highest concentrations of long-term unemployment were noted among people with college educations. Roughly a quarter of insured unemployed workers with a bachelor's degree or higher had been collecting benefits for a minimum of fourteen weeks.

On an industry basis, more than 23 percent (3,870) of the state's insured unemployed workers came from the Construction sector, partially attributable to the continued cold weather. There were also 2,275 individuals with an attachment to the Manufacturing sector, accounting for 13.8 percent of the statewide total. An additional 13.3 percent (2,179) of those collecting unemployment insurance benefits had worked in the Administrative & Waste Services sector. Large numbers of insured unemployed were also reported in Retail Trade (1,314) and Accommodation & Food Services (1,286).

More than 13 percent of the state's insured unemployed previously worked in Construction & Extraction occupations, accounting for 2,184 people. A large number of workers previously employed in Office & Administrative Support occupations also collected unemployment insurance benefits. Of these 1,859 people, 31.6 percent faced long-term unemployment. Other occupational groups reporting a high number of insured unemployed workers included Production (1,417), Transportation & Material Moving (1,310), and Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance (1,301). Numerous occupational groups, including Computer & Mathematical (43.8%), Protective Service (41.9%), Life, Physical & Social Science (41.2%), and Business & Financial Operations (37.1%), reported concentrations of long-term unemployment above the state average.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed - March 2005

	Total	Long-Term	Percent Long-Term
Total	16,434	3,541	21.5%
Male	10,813	1,964	18.2%
Female	5,621	1,577	28.1%
Age	16,434	3,541	21.5%
Under 22	591	83	14.0%
22 - 24	1,033	217	21.0%
25 - 34	3,811	815	21.4%
35 - 44	4,490	882	19.6%
45 - 54	3,707	783	21.1%
55 - 59	1,330	296	22.3%
60 - 64	831	231	27.8%
65 or over	641	234	36.5%
Education	16,434	3,541	21.5%
Less than 9th Grade	966	200	20.7%
9th to 12th, no diploma	2,055	349	17.0%
High School Graduate	7,912	1,599	20.2%
Some College	3,820	1,049	27.5%
Bachelor's Degree	657	167	25.4%
Beyond Bachelor's	564	138	24.5%
Selected Industries	16,434	3,541	21.5%
Construction	3,870	333	8.6%
Manufacturing	2,275	619	27.2%
Wholesale Trade	540	151	28.0%
Retail Trade	1,314	356	27.1%
Transportation & Warehousing	356	64	18.0%
Information	161	66	41.0%
Finance & Insurance	715	321	44.9%
Real Estate	250	77	30.8%
Professional & Tech. Services	513	142	27.7%
Administrative & Waste Services	2,179	323	14.8%
Educational Services	103	47	45.6%
Health Care & Social Assistance	877	294	33.5%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	594	138	23.2%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,286	303	23.6%
Other Services	428	113	26.4%
Public Administration	108	39	36.1%
Selected Occupations	16,434	3,541	21.5%
Business & Financial Operations	364	135	37.1%
Computer & Mathematical	130	57	43.8%
Architecture & Engineering	243	75	30.9%
Life, Physical & Social Science	68	28	41.2%
Community & Social Services	86	30	34.9%
Legal	45	9	20.0%
Education, Training & Library	151	49	32.5%
Arts, Design, Ent., Sports & Media	237	62	26.2%
Healthcare Practitioner & Technical	155	50	32.3%
Healthcare Support	210	65	31.0%
Protective Service	86	36	41.9%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	946	212	22.4%
Bldg. & Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	1,301	235	18.1%
Personal Care & Service	129	40	31.0%
Sales & Related	815	219	26.9%
Office & Administrative Support	1,859	587	31.6%
Construction & Extraction	2,184	188	8.6%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	551	131	23.8%
Production	1,417	335	23.6%
Transportation & Material Moving	1,310	245	18.7%

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers

				% Change
	Mar 05	Feb 05	Mar 04	Prev. Year
All Items	193.3	191.8	187.4	3.1%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

DLT Annual Report

Under the guidance of our new Director, 2004 was a transition year for our department as we worked to implement cost-saving measures identified through the Governor's Fiscal Fitness efforts. We continued to strive to be a model of state service that would inspire the confidence of the public we serve through the many programs administered by Department of Labor and Training (DLT). We took pride in the courteous, prompt and efficient provision of services that protect and advance our workforce and support our employer community. We also maintained close working relationships with an array of state agencies, nonprofits, and private organizations to offer our customers a choice of quality programs and services. To view this report, visit www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/publications/annreport.htm

City & Town Unadjusted Unemployment Rates for March

	2005	2004		2005	2004
Barrington	3.3	3.9	Newport	5.5	6.4
Bristol	5.0	6.0	North Kingstown	4.4	5.0
Burrillville	5.2	5.6	North Providence	5.0	5.9
Central Falls	7.4	9.2	North Smithfield	4.8	5.5
Charlestown	5.4	5.9	Pawtucket	6.1	7.3
Coventry	4.8	5.6	Portsmouth	4.2	4.9
Cranston	5.1	6.0	Providence	5.9	7.0
Cumberland	4.9	5.6	Richmond	3.2	4.1
East Greenwich	4.6	5.8	Scituate	5.3	6.8
East Providence	5.8	6.5	Smithfield	4.6	5.4
Exeter	4.9	5.8	South Kingstown	4.7	5.4
Foster	6.3	7.7	Tiverton	6.4	7.2
Glocester	4.5	5.0	Warren	5.5	6.6
Hopkinton	5.5	6.0	Warwick	4.7	5.5
Jamestown	4.4	5.0	West Greenwich	4.9	5.7
Johnston	6.0	7.0	West Warwick	6.1	6.9
Lincoln	4.4	5.4	Westerly	4.8	5.7
Little Compton	5.7	6.1	Woonsocket	6.0	7.0
Middletown	5.2	5.8			
Narragansett	3.7	4.6	State of R.I.	5.3	6.2
New Shoreham	11.5	14.9	United States	5.4	6.0

Annual Average New England Wages for 2003

Rhode Island's private sector employed more than 407,700 workers in 2003 and paid over \$14.2 billion in wages. Private sector employees earned an annual average wage of \$34,865 in 2003. Although this represented a 4.9% (+\$1,639) over-the-year increase for Ocean State workers, it ranked as just the fourth highest average wage in New England and was below the national average of \$37,508. At \$48,935, Connecticut reported the highest annual average private sector wage in the northeast, followed by Massachusetts (\$46,569) and New Hampshire (\$37,685). Private industry in Vermont (\$31,572) and Maine (\$30,229) paid the lowest annual average wages in New England.

Generally, annual average wages on the industry sector level were higher in Connecticut and Massachusetts, while private industry wages in Maine and Vermont lagged behind the Ocean State. There were some exceptions. For instance, Rhode Island reported the lowest annual average wage among the six New England states in both Manufacturing (\$39,152) and Administrative & Waste Services (\$23,041).

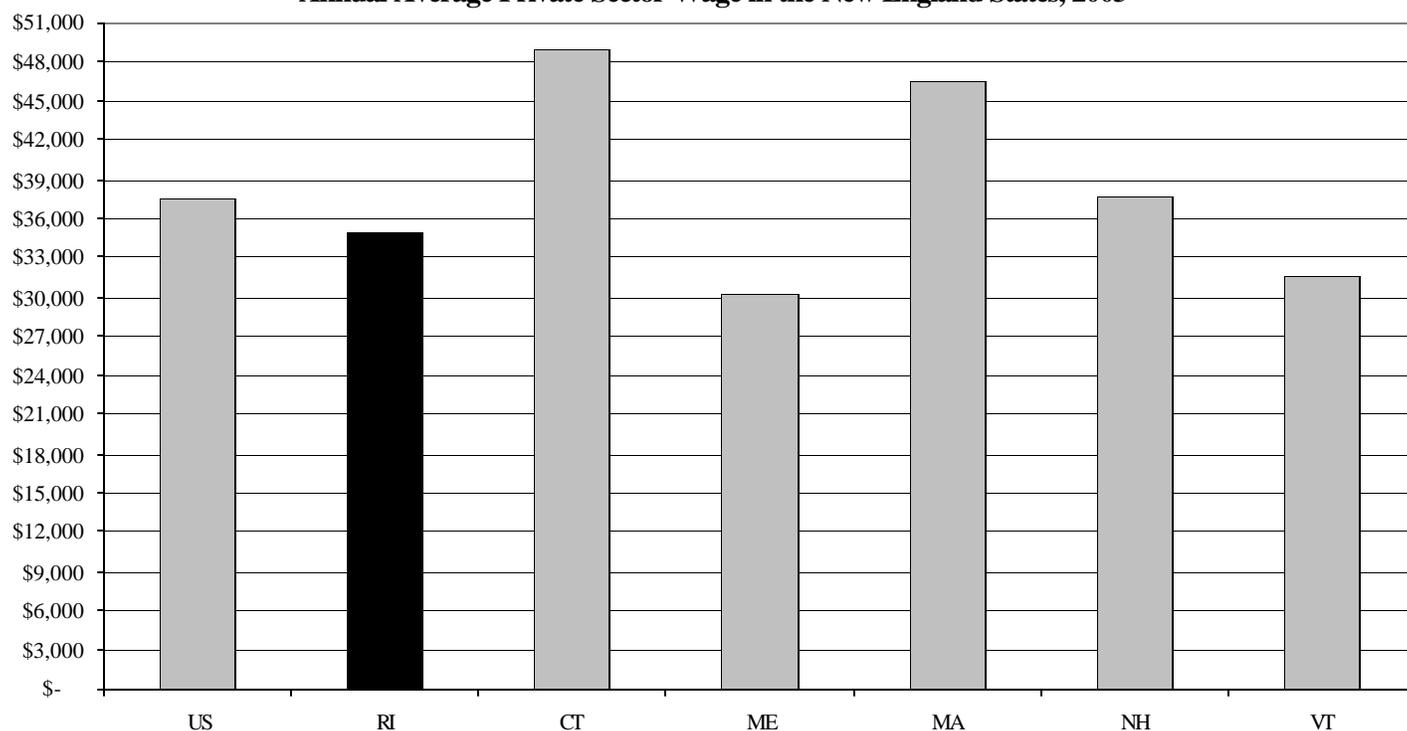
Rhode Islanders in several industry sectors earned annual average wages above the national average. For example, the state's Construction workers were paid \$43,480 on average in 2003, compared to the U.S. average of \$39,509. Similarly, Educational Services employees earned an average of \$34,418 nationwide, but \$37,097 here in the Ocean State. For more detailed information on annual average wages paid throughout the region in 2003, please see the accompanying label page, or visit www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/publications/annwage.htm.

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	Mar	Feb	Mar	% Change		Year to Date		
	2005	2005	2004	Feb 05	Mar 04	2005	2004	% Change
Initial Claims	5,543	7,634	5,983	-27.4%	-7.4%	22,967	24,342	-5.6%
Number of Payments	67,517	66,697	77,903	1.2%	-13.3%	205,005	213,835	-4.1%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$22.7	\$22.3	\$25.0	1.8%	-9.2%	\$68.3	\$67.6	1.0%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	1,417	1,166	1,902	21.5%	-25.5%	4,098	4,644	-11.8%

Private Sector Wages for New England - 2003

Annual Average Private Sector Wage in the New England States, 2003



Annual Average Private Sector Wages by Industry Sector, 2003

	<u>US</u>	<u>RI</u>	<u>CT</u>	<u>ME</u>	<u>MA</u>	<u>NH</u>	<u>VT</u>
Total Private	\$ 37,508	\$ 34,865	\$ 48,935	\$ 30,229	\$ 46,569	\$ 37,685	\$ 31,572
Natural Resources & Mining	\$ 33,729	\$ 28,706	\$ 28,326	\$ 25,581	\$ 37,973	\$ 28,169	\$ 26,841
Construction	\$ 39,509	\$ 43,480	\$ 48,046	\$ 33,594	\$ 51,501	\$ 42,061	\$ 33,416
Manufacturing	\$ 45,916	\$ 39,152	\$ 58,051	\$ 40,237	\$ 58,363	\$ 48,237	\$ 44,256
Wholesale Trade	\$ 50,835	\$ 49,711	\$ 66,464	\$ 42,612	\$ 64,353	\$ 60,426	\$ 44,233
Retail Trade	\$ 23,804	\$ 23,845	\$ 27,873	\$ 21,343	\$ 26,086	\$ 25,053	\$ 22,395
Transportation & Warehousing	\$ 37,436	\$ 30,815	\$ 36,906	\$ 30,451	\$ 36,250	\$ 31,243	\$ 31,639
Utilities	\$ 68,651	\$ 70,206	\$ 80,052	\$ 53,927	\$ 81,540	\$ 68,926	\$ 68,664
Information	\$ 58,002	\$ 52,781	\$ 57,480	\$ 38,408	\$ 68,222	\$ 56,188	\$ 37,230
Finance & Insurance	\$ 64,956	\$ 53,872	\$ 104,235	\$ 45,438	\$ 87,960	\$ 60,463	\$ 49,853
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	\$ 35,054	\$ 33,275	\$ 42,956	\$ 26,973	\$ 44,808	\$ 36,518	\$ 27,530
Professional & Technical Services	\$ 59,877	\$ 52,718	\$ 70,820	\$ 43,019	\$ 74,863	\$ 57,697	\$ 47,283
Mgmt. of Companies & Enterprises	\$ 72,270	\$ 83,882	\$ 105,496	\$ 52,413	\$ 67,844	\$ 71,839	\$ 59,466
Administrative & Waste Services	\$ 26,056	\$ 23,041	\$ 30,201	\$ 23,613	\$ 31,678	\$ 29,468	\$ 23,608
Educational Services	\$ 34,418	\$ 37,097	\$ 43,772	\$ 31,230	\$ 44,607	\$ 36,189	\$ 31,056
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$ 35,167	\$ 33,878	\$ 38,981	\$ 31,270	\$ 39,690	\$ 36,288	\$ 30,314
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	\$ 27,016	\$ 20,563	\$ 23,583	\$ 16,866	\$ 28,973	\$ 17,211	\$ 16,449
Accommodation & Food Services	\$ 14,228	\$ 14,108	\$ 16,031	\$ 13,123	\$ 16,688	\$ 14,754	\$ 15,062
Other Services	\$ 24,348	\$ 22,749	\$ 26,811	\$ 21,857	\$ 25,385	\$ 26,555	\$ 23,680