



Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Drops to 6.3 percent in March

- ◆ RI's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was 6.3 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the revised February rate of 6.4 percent.
- ◆ RI's March unemployment rate was down one and nine-tenths percentage points from last March's figure of 8.2 percent.
- ◆ The national rate was 5.5 percent, unchanged from February and down one and one-tenth percentage points from the previous year.
- ◆ In March 2015, Rhode Island (6.3%) had the tenth highest unemployment rate in the nation. Twelve states had unemployment rates of 6.3 or higher.
- ◆ The March 2015 unemployment rate decreased in twenty-three states, including Maine (-0.2), Massachusetts (-0.1), Vermont (-0.1) and Rhode Island (-0.1). Fifteen states' rates were unchanged, including Connecticut and New Hampshire, while twelve states' rates increased.
- ◆ Rates in other New England states for March 2015 – Connecticut 6.4 percent, Maine 4.8 percent, Massachusetts 4.8 percent, New Hampshire 3.9 percent and Vermont 3.8 percent.
- ◆ The number of employed RI residents totaled 517,100 in March 2015, up 2,400 from the previous month. Between March 2014 and March 2015, the number of employed RI residents was up 7,700.
- ◆ Over the month, the number of unemployed Rhode Island residents decreased by 300 to 34,600. From March 2014 to March 2015, the number of unemployed residents decreased by 11,200.

2014 City & Town Annual Average Unemployment Rates

Rhode Island's 2014 annual average unemployment rate was 7.7 percent, down one and six-tenths percentage points from the 2013 annual average unemployment rate of 9.3 percent. Of the state's 39 cities and towns, fourteen communities had an annual average unemployment rate at or above the state's 7.7 percent rate.

New Shoreham had the highest annual average unemployment rate in the state at 15.5 percent, due, in part, to the island's highly seasonal employment cycle. Woonsocket's annual average unemployment rate was 9.7 percent, followed by Central Falls (9.6%), Pawtucket (9.0%), Providence (9.0%) and Westerly (9.0%).

At the other end of the scale, Richmond (4.9%), Barrington (5.1%), Narragansett (5.2%), Jamestown (5.3%) and Glocester (5.8%) all had annual average unemployment rates below six percent.

All thirty-nine towns posted an over-the-year decrease in their unemployment rate. Woonsocket's unemployment rate decreased the most, dropping two and two-tenths percentage points, from 11.9 percent in 2013 to 9.7 percent in 2014. Central Falls and Foster each dropped by two percentage

points over the year. Thirty-three other towns' rates dropped by one percentage point or more. Only Richmond (-0.9), Barrington (-0.8) and Jamestown (-0.8) dropped by less than one percentage point.

2014 Annual Average Unemployment Rates

Rhode Island 7.7%

Highest

New Shoreham	15.5%
Woonsocket	9.7%
Central Falls	9.6%
Pawtucket	9.0%
Providence	9.0%
Westerly	9.0%

Lowest

Richmond	4.9%
Barrington	5.1%
Narragansett	5.2%
Jamestown	5.3%
Glocester	5.8%
North Kingstown	6.1%

Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics (in thousands)

	Rhode Island			United States		
	Mar 15	Feb 15	Mar 14	Mar 15	Feb 15	Mar 14
Civilian Labor Force	551.7	549.6	555.2	156,906	157,002	156,180
Resident Employment	517.1	514.7	509.4	148,331	148,297	145,796
Unemployment	34.6	34.9	45.8	8,575	8,705	10,384
Unemployment Rate	6.3%	6.4%	8.2%	5.5%	5.5%	6.6%

Rhode Island Jobs Increase by 1,600 in March

Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 480,000 in March, reflecting a gain of 1,600 jobs from the revised February estimate of 478,400. Thus far, the state's job count is up 700 through 2015, and up 4,900 from a year ago.

The Educational Services sector added 600 jobs in March, erasing the 500 job deficit reported in February. In addition, the Accommodation & Food Services sector erased their February loss of 400 jobs by adding 500 jobs to the March payroll.

Health Care & Social Assistance employment rose by 400 over the month, ending three consecutive months of job declines. Employment in the Other Services sector also grew by 400 from February, pushing their employment level above 24,000 for the first time ever.

A gain of 100 jobs each was reported in the Financial Activities, Information, Retail Trade, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and Government sectors.

Employment in the Construction sector continued to decline as 400 jobs were lost in March, matching the loss of 400 jobs from the previous month. Payrolls in the Professional & Business Services fell by 200 over the month, while falling by 100 in both the Wholesale Trade and Mining & Logging sectors.

Employment remained unchanged in the Manufacturing and Transportation & Utilities sectors.

Nationally, employment increased by 126,000 or 0.1 percent in March, while the New England region reported a gain of 21,900 (+0.3%) jobs. All six New England states added jobs over the month and all six states outpaced the nation in terms of job growth on a percentage basis.

Establishment Employment in Rhode Island					
Seasonally Adjusted					
	Net Change From				
	Mar-15	Feb-15	Mar-14	Feb-15	Mar-14
Total Nonfarm	480.0	478.4	475.1	1.6	4.9
Total Private	420.1	418.6	415.0	1.5	5.1
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.3	0.2	-0.1	0.0
Construction	16.1	16.5	16.3	-0.4	-0.2
Manufacturing	41.7	41.7	40.5	0.0	1.2
Wholesale Trade	16.7	16.8	16.8	-0.1	-0.1
Retail Trade	46.7	46.6	46.9	0.1	-0.2
Transportation & Utilities	11.4	11.4	11.0	0.0	0.4
Information	8.7	8.6	8.8	0.1	-0.1
Financial Activities	32.5	32.4	32.1	0.1	0.4
Professional & Business Services	59.9	60.1	59.9	-0.2	0.0
Educational Services	24.8	24.2	24.3	0.6	0.5
Health Care & Social Assistance	80.9	80.5	80.4	0.4	0.5
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	9.1	9.0	9.1	0.1	0.0
Accommodation & Food Services	47.3	46.8	45.9	0.5	1.4
Other Services	24.1	23.7	22.8	0.4	1.3
Government	59.9	59.8	60.1	0.1	-0.2

Manufacturing Employment in Rhode Island					
Not Seasonally Adjusted					
	Employment				
	(in thousands)			Net Change From:	
	Mar 15	Feb 15	Mar 14	Feb 15	Mar 14
Manufacturing	41.7	41.6	40.3	100	1,400
Durable Goods	27.1	27.1	25.7	0	1400
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	5.7	5.7	5.6	0	100
Computer & Electronic Product Mfg.	3.2	3.3	3.3	-100	-100
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	4.8	4.7	4.2	100	600
Miscellaneous DG Manufacturing	5.5	5.5	5.6	0	-100
Jewelry & Silverware	3.3	3.3	3.4	0	-100
Non-Durable Goods	14.6	14.5	14.6	100	0
Chemical Manufacturing	3.1	3.1	3.2	0	-100

In March 2015, nonfarm payroll employment decreased in 31 states, increased in 18 states and was unchanged in one state. The largest over-the-month percentage decline in employment occurred in Oklahoma (-0.8%), followed by Arkansas, North Dakota and West Virginia (-0.6% each). The largest over-the-month percentage increases in employment occurred in Delaware, Florida, Maine, New Hampshire and South Dakota (+0.4% each).

The employment figures in this section are derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state.

Not seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is available at: www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/ces.htm.

Current month's figures are preliminary and subject to change.



Alternate Measures of Labor Underutilization for Rhode Island

There are six alternative measures of labor underutilization available through the Current Population Survey (CPS) which provide narrower as well as broader definitions of labor underutilization. These alternative measures, which are referred to as U-1 through U-6, are available on a quarterly basis. While state unemployment averages derived solely from the CPS data are not strictly comparable to the official state average unemployment rates, these alternative measures can provide insight into the volume of states' discouraged populations and those working part-time for economic reasons.

- ◆ The U-3 rate is the rate closest to the standard definition of unemployment - individuals in the labor force without a job who are available for and actively seeking work. Rhode Island's average unemployment rate for the four quarters ending March 2015 obtained directly from the CPS survey was 7.1 percent, tied for the third highest rate among all states. The national U-3 rate was 5.9 percent.
- ◆ Expanding this definition to include "discouraged workers" (U-4), individuals who want a job, but have given up looking for work because they believe no work available for them, yields an unemployment rate of 7.4 percent, tied for the sixth highest rate among all states. The national U-4 rate was 6.3 percent. Including discouraged workers adds three-tenths of a percentage point to Rhode Island's standard definition of unemployment while adding four-tenths of a percentage point to the United State's standard definition. Among the 50 states, 30 states had a greater percentage of discouraged workers than Rhode Island, while nine had a lower percentage.
- ◆ The inclusion of discouraged workers and those that are "marginally attached" (U-5), individuals who want a job, are currently available for work, but have not looked in the past twelve months for a variety of reasons other than discouragement, yields an unemployment rate of 8.4 percent, tied for the sixth highest rate among all states. The national U-5 was 7.2 percent.
- ◆ The broadest measure of unemployment (U-6) includes discouraged workers, marginally attached workers and those working part-time for economic reasons yields an unemployment rate of 12.9 percent for Rhode Island, the eighth highest rate among all states. Nationally, the U-6 rate was 11.6 percent.

For more information, visit www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/laus/altlaus.htm.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed

A total of 14,543 individuals were eligible to collect Unemployment Insurance benefits in March 2015, down 2,012 (-12.2%) from the 16,555 collecting these benefits in March 2014. In all, 38.4 percent of Rhode Island's unemployed workers were eligible to collect unemployment benefits in March.

Of the 14,543 individuals collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits, 22.4 percent faced long-term unemployment (defined as collecting unemployment insurance for fifteen weeks or more), down from 24.4 percent in March 2014.

On an industry basis, 22.8 percent (3,322) of the State's insured unemployed workers came from the Construction sector. There were also 2,524 individuals with an attachment to the Administrative & Waste Services sector, accounting for 17.4 percent of all insured unemployed workers. An additional 9.8 percent (1,418) of those collecting UI benefits in March had worked in the Accommodation & Food Services sector. Large numbers of insured unemployed were also reported in Manufacturing (1,096), Retail Trade (1,066) and Health Care & Social Assistance (1,062).

For more information, go to www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/uiadmin/characteristics.htm.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed, March 2015			
	Total	Long-Term	Percent Long-Term
Total	14,543	3,252	22.4%
Male	9,819	1,884	19.2%
Female	4,724	1,368	29.0%
Selected Industries	14,543	3,252	22.4%
Construction	3,322	328	9.9%
Manufacturing	1,096	313	28.6%
Wholesale Trade	456	123	27.0%
Retail Trade	1,066	278	26.1%
Transportation & Warehousing	319	77	24.1%
Information	168	71	42.3%
Finance & Insurance	369	125	33.9%
Real Estate	247	81	32.8%
Professional & Tech. Services	474	125	26.4%
Administrative & Waste Services	2,524	370	14.7%
Educational Services	168	57	33.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,062	391	36.8%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	635	177	27.9%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,418	400	28.2%
Other Services	428	141	32.9%
Public Administration	96	23	24.0%

**Consumer Price Index for
All Urban Consumers**

				% Change
	Mar. 15	Feb. 15	Mar. 14	Prev. Year
All Items	236.1	234.7	236.3	-0.1%

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

**Employer Demand for Workers
in Rhode Island**

The *Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine* (HWOL) data series reported that there were 22,900 advertisements for Rhode Island based jobs this month, an increase of 200 (+0.9%) from the February 2015 postings, and up 2,800 (+13.9%) from the advertised vacancies posted online in March 2014. There were an estimated 4.16 advertised vacancies for every 100 persons in Rhode Island's labor force.

**Help Wanted OnLine
Advertised Job Vacancies**

	Mar 15	Feb 15	Mar 14
RI Vacancies	22,900	22,700	20,100
Labor Demand Rate *			
Rhode Island	4.16	4.12	3.62
US	3.48	3.47	3.14
Connecticut	4.01	3.95	3.58
Massachusetts	4.78	4.55	4.19
Maine	4.28	4.19	3.32
New Hampshire	3.61	3.51	3.78
Vermont	4.19	4.11	3.41
Supply/Demand Rate **			
Rhode Island	1.51	1.54	2.28
US	1.57	1.60	2.12

* Number of advertised vacancies per 100 persons in labor force
** Number of unemployed persons in state per advertised vacancy

Source: The Conference Board

**City & Town
Unadjusted Unemployment Rates for March**

	2015	2014		2015	2014
Barrington	4.7	5.7	Newport	6.4	8.0
Bristol	6.5	8.0	North Kingstown	5.5	7.2
Burrillville	7.2	9.0	North Providence	6.7	8.7
Central Falls	8.5	11.0	North Smithfield	5.7	7.4
Charlestown	8.5	10.8	Pawtucket	7.7	10.1
Coventry	6.6	8.5	Portsmouth	6.7	8.3
Cranston	6.6	8.7	Providence	7.9	10.2
Cumberland	5.7	7.3	Richmond	4.3	6.1
East Greenwich	5.9	7.9	Scituate	6.7	8.2
East Providence	7.4	9.6	Smithfield	6.3	8.1
Exeter	6.5	8.2	South Kingstown	6.4	8.3
Foster	7.1	8.7	Tiverton	6.6	8.8
Glocester	5.7	6.9	Warren	7.2	9.3
Hopkinton	7.0	8.7	Warwick	5.9	7.8
Jamestown	4.8	6.4	West Greenwich	6.4	8.5
Johnston	7.2	9.5	West Warwick	7.6	9.7
Lincoln	5.8	7.4	Westerly	8.6	10.3
Little Compton	6.1	7.1	Woonsocket	8.8	11.0
Middletown	6.2	8.0			
Narragansett	4.9	6.2	State of R.I.	6.9	8.9
New Shoreham	25.5	30.4	United States	5.6	6.8

Nationally, there were an estimated 3.48 advertised vacancies for every 100 persons in labor force. Among the New England states, Massachusetts (4.78), Maine (4.28) and Vermont (4.19) had higher vacancy rates than Rhode Island.

There were an estimated 1.51 unemployed Rhode Island residents for every advertised job in March, down from 1.54 unemployed residents estimated per February advertisements. Nationally, there were 1.57 unemployed persons for every job opening advertised in March, down from 1.60 in February.

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	Mar.	Feb.	Mar.	% Change		Year to Date		
	2015	2015	2014	Feb. 15	Mar. 14	2015	2014	% Change
Regular Claims								
Initial Claims	4,524	8,081	5,517	-44.0%	-18.0%	21,583	25,054	-13.9%
Number of Payments	65,347	56,287	73,507	16.1%	-11.1%	173,277	201,188	-13.9%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$22.0	\$18.7	\$24.8	17.6%	-11.3%	\$57.3	\$67.7	-15.4%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	1,108	815	1,657	36.0%	-33.1%	2,817	4,008	-29.7%

**Rhode Island City & Town
Labor Force Statistics
2014 Annual Average**

	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Rhode Island	553,332	510,902	42,430	7.7
Barrington	8,370	7,943	427	5.1
Bristol	12,117	11,298	819	6.8
Burrillville	8,860	8,180	680	7.7
Central Falls	8,659	7,832	827	9.6
Charlestown	4,142	3,780	362	8.7
Coventry	18,764	17,391	1,373	7.3
Cranston	41,218	38,056	3,162	7.7
Cumberland	19,137	17,942	1,195	6.2
East Greenwich	6,858	6,391	467	6.8
East Providence	24,266	22,256	2,010	8.3
Exeter	3,889	3,626	263	6.8
Foster	2,866	2,659	207	7.2
Glocester	5,869	5,528	341	5.8
Hopkinton	4,800	4,437	363	7.6
Jamestown	3,212	3,042	170	5.3
Johnston	15,619	14,358	1,261	8.1
Lincoln	12,095	11,306	789	6.5
Little Compton	1,896	1,778	118	6.2
Middletown	7,996	7,461	535	6.7
Narragansett	9,103	8,629	474	5.2
New Shoreham	817	690	127	15.5
Newport	13,375	12,485	890	6.7
North Kingstown	14,587	13,697	890	6.1
North Providence	17,912	16,526	1,386	7.7
North Smithfield	6,723	6,303	420	6.2
Pawtucket	36,398	33,127	3,271	9.0
Portsmouth	8,842	8,237	605	6.8
Providence	86,333	78,565	7,768	9.0
Richmond	4,246	4,040	206	4.9
Scituate	6,076	5,652	424	7.0
Smithfield	11,203	10,428	775	6.9
South Kingstown	16,458	15,315	1,143	6.9
Tiverton	8,784	8,153	631	7.2
Warren	5,769	5,324	445	7.7
Warwick	46,138	42,990	3,148	6.8
West Greenwich	3,191	2,961	230	7.2
West Warwick	16,242	14,901	1,341	8.3
Westerly	11,498	10,462	1,036	9.0
Woonsocket	19,005	17,154	1,851	9.7