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Employment Bulletin

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Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Drops to 12.3 percent in May

- ◆ RI's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for May was 12.3 percent, down two-tenths of a percentage point from April and the third consecutive over-the-month drop.
- ◆ RI's May unemployment rate is up 1.6 percentage points from last year's figure of 10.7 percent.
- ◆ The national rate was 9.7 percent, down two-tenths of a percentage point in May and up three-tenths of a percentage point from the previous year.
- ◆ In May 2010, Rhode Island had the 4th highest unemployment rate in the nation, trailing Nevada (14.0%), Michigan (13.6%) and California (12.4%).
- ◆ The May 2010 unemployment rate increased in six states. Thirty-seven states, including New Hampshire (-0.3), Vermont (-0.2), Rhode Island (-0.2), Connecticut (-0.1) and Maine (-0.1) saw their rates decrease. Massachusetts was unchanged. In all, sixteen states have unemployment rates in the double digits, with four states having a rate of 12.0 percent or higher.
- ◆ Rates in other New England States for May 2010—Massachusetts 9.2 percent, Connecticut 8.9 percent, Maine 8.0 percent, New Hampshire 6.4 percent, Vermont 6.2 percent.
- ◆ The number of employed RI residents totaled 507,700 in May 2010, reflecting an increase of 700 from the previous month. Between May 2009 and May 2010, the number of employed RI residents grew by 4,600.
- ◆ In May, the number of unemployed Rhode Island residents decreased by 1,100 to 71,200. From May 2009 to May 2010, the number of unemployed residents increased by 10,700.

New Maximum Weekly Benefit Rates for Unemployed Individuals

The RI Department of Labor and Training has announced new maximum weekly benefit rates of \$551 for Unemployment Insurance (UI) and \$700 for Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI). The new UI and TDI rates will be in effect for claimants whose benefit years begin on or after July 1, 2010.

These new rates reflect an increase of \$5 for UI and \$6 for TDI. The previous maximum rates were \$546 for UI and \$694 for TDI. Individuals who established claims prior to July 1, 2010 will continue to be paid at their present rate for the duration of their benefit year. A benefit year is the 52-week period that starts once a new claim is filed.

New Maximum Benefit Rates

UI - \$551
TDI - \$700

The maximum rate for UI benefits is set at 67 percent of the average weekly wage of workers covered by the Employment Security Act. The average weekly wage paid to workers covered by the Employment Security Act in calendar year 2009 was \$822.48. Sixty-seven percent of that average weekly wage is \$551.06. After rounding down to the next lower dollar amount, the new maximum for Unemployment Insurance will be \$551. The maximum weekly benefit rate for UI claimants with five or more dependents is \$688, an increase of \$6.

The maximum weekly benefit rate for TDI benefits is set at 85 percent of the average weekly wage paid to workers covered by the Employment Security Act. Accordingly, the new maximum for Temporary Disability Insurance is \$700 (85 percent of \$822.48 rounded to the next highest dollar amount). The maximum weekly benefit rate for TDI claimants with five or more dependents is \$945, an increase of \$9.

Weekly benefit rates for UI and TDI recipients are set at approximately 60 percent of their average weekly earnings (not

including dependents allowance or \$25 stimulus payment) up to the maximum benefit rates. In 2009, the average weekly UI payment was \$371. Approximately 27 percent of UI recipients were entitled to the 2009 maximum weekly benefit amount. The TDI average weekly payment was \$431 in 2009.

Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics

(in thousands)

	Rhode Island			United States		
	May 10	Apr 10	May 09	May 10	Apr 10	May 09
Civilian Labor Force	579.0	579.3	563.6	154,393	154,715	154,956
Resident Employment	507.7	507.0	503.1	139,420	139,455	140,438
Unemployment	71.2	72.3	60.5	14,973	15,260	14,518
Unemployment Rate	12.3%	12.5%	10.7%	9.7%	9.9%	9.4%

Rhode Island Jobs Increase by 3,200 in May

Rhode Island nonfarm payroll employment totaled 451,800 in May, a gain of 3,200 jobs from the revised April employment level of 448,600.

The boost to the local economy was fueled by the Government sector (+1,800) as Federal Government added nearly 1,600 temporary workers for the 2010 Census.

The private sector also contributed to the economic growth by adding 1,400 jobs between April and May. Employment in the Other Services sector increased by 700 as several civic and social youth organizations increased their payrolls in preparation for the end of the school year. Construction added 600 jobs in May, mainly due to reported job gains in the specialty trade contractors' field.

Large employment gains were also reported in the Educational Services (+500) and Accommodation & Food Services (+400) sectors. Health Care & Social Assistance employment was up 400 due to gains in ambulatory health care services. Smaller, but positive gains were noted in Transportation & Utilities (+200) and Natural Resources & Mining (+100), while the Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Financial Activities and Information sectors remained unchanged.

Professional & Business Services employment declined by 1,200 in May, due mainly to losses in temporary help and business support services. Wholesale Trade (-200), and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-100) were the remaining two sectors to report job losses.

May 2010 employment was down 8,800 (-1.9%) from May 2009, with job declines reported in several economic sectors, including Retail Trade (-3,100), Accommodation & Food Services (-2,000), Manufacturing (-1,700), Professional & Business Services (-1,400) and Construction (-1,000). Smaller over-the-year losses were noted in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-800), Information (-600), Wholesale Trade (-600) and Financial Activities (-400).

Establishment Employment in Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted

	Net Change From				
	May-10	Apr-10	May-09	Apr-10	May-09
Total Nonfarm	451.8	448.6	460.6	3.2	-8.8
Natural Resources & Mining	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
Construction	16.4	15.8	17.4	0.6	-1.0
Manufacturing	39.9	39.9	41.6	0.0	-1.7
Wholesale Trade	15.5	15.7	16.1	-0.2	-0.6
Retail Trade	44.3	44.3	47.4	0.0	-3.1
Transportation & Utilities	10.1	9.9	10.1	0.2	0.0
Information	9.8	9.8	10.4	0.0	-0.6
Financial Activities	30.8	30.8	31.2	0.0	-0.4
Professional & Business Services	50.9	52.1	52.3	-1.2	-1.4
Educational Services	23.8	23.3	23.8	0.5	0.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	78.0	77.6	76.5	0.4	1.5
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	6.8	6.9	7.6	-0.1	-0.8
Accommodation & Food Services	39.9	39.5	41.9	0.4	-2.0
Other Services	22.1	21.4	22.1	0.7	0.0
Government	63.2	61.4	62.0	1.8	1.2

Information sectors remained unchanged.

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Manufacturing Employment in Rhode Island Not Seasonally Adjusted

	Employment				
	(in thousands)			Net Change From:	
	May 10	Apr 10	May 09	Apr 10	May 09
Manufacturing	39.6	39.7	41.7	-100	-2,100
Durable Goods	25.0	25.1	26.8	-100	-1,800
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	5.3	5.3	5.8	0	-500
Computer & Electronic Product Mfg.	3.8	3.8	3.9	0	-100
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	6.4	6.4	6.9	0	-500
Jewelry & Silverware	4.1	4.1	4.5	0	-400
Non-Durable Goods	14.6	14.6	14.9	0	-300
Chemical Manufacturing	3.0	3.0	3.1	0	-100

Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,500), Government (+1,200) and Natural Resources & Mining (+100) added jobs over the year. Employment in Transportation & Utilities, Educational Services, and Other Services remained even.

MANUFACTURING: In May 2010, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$14.76 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up 7 cents from April 2010 and up 79 cents from May 2009. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.8 hours per week in May, up seven-tenths of an hour over the month, and up 1.7 hours over the year.

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.



Newest Occupational Employment and Wages Released

Rhode Island workers earned a median hourly wage of \$16.80 in May 2009, according to the latest Occupational Employment Statistics survey. This median hourly wage was the third highest in New England, and nearly a dollar higher than the national median of \$15.95 per hour. In New England, Massachusetts led the states with the highest median hourly wage of \$19.64, followed closely by Connecticut at \$19.29 per hour. New Hampshire followed in fourth place with median hourly earnings of \$16.36. Vermont and Maine had the lowest median hourly wages in the region at \$15.73 and \$15.01 per hour respectively and were the only two New England states to have average hourly wages lower than the national median.

Best Paying Occupational Groups

Management occupations reported the highest paying occupations in the Rhode Island workforce with a median hourly rate of \$46.59. This group employed 4.4 percent of the workforce. Legal occupations had the second highest paying occupations with a median hourly rate of \$36.34. This group employed 0.7 percent of Rhode Island workers. Architecture and Engineering occupations ranked third in highest wages with a median hourly rate of \$35.78. This group employed 1.7 percent of Rhode Island workers.

Most Frequently Employed Occupational Groups

Office and Administrative Support occupations employed the largest number of workers in Rhode Island. This group employed 17.9 percent of the workforce at a median hourly rate of \$15.73. Employees working in Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations were the second largest occupational group in the Rhode Island workforce. This group employed 10.0 percent of Rhode Island workers at a median hourly rate of \$9.20. Sales and Related occupations were the third most frequently employed occupations in the Rhode Island workforce. This group employed 9.6 percent of the workforce at a median hourly rate of \$11.48.

Note: The median is the middle value of the wage distribution. If 101 wage values are reported for an occupation and are listed in ascending order, the median wage would be the 51st value on the list. There are 50 values below it and 50 values above it.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed

A total of 17,754 individuals were eligible to collect “regular” Unemployment Insurance benefits in May 2010, down 5,394 (-23.3%) from the 23,148 collecting these benefits in May 2009. In addition, 17,138 individuals collected Emergency Unemployment Compensation and 1,322 collected Extended Benefits. In all, 53.6 percent of Rhode Island’s unemployed workers were eligible to collect unemployment benefits in May.

Of the 17,754 individuals collecting “regular” Unemployment Insurance benefits, 36.6 percent faced long-term unemployment (defined as collecting unemployment insurance for fifteen weeks or more), down from 41.6 percent in May 2009.

On an industry basis, 15.6 percent (2,761) of the State’s insured unemployed workers came from the Manufacturing sector. There were also 2,754 individuals with an attachment to the Construction sector, accounting for 15.5 percent of all insured unemployed workers. An additional 13.9 percent (2,472) of those collecting UI benefits in May had worked in the Retail Trade sector. Large numbers of insured unemployed were also reported in Health Care & Social Assistance (1,624), Administrative & Waste Services (1,431) and Accommodation & Food Services (1,343). For more information, go to www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/uiadmin/characteristics.htm.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed, May 2010

	Total	Long-Term	Percent Long-Term
Total	17,754	6,490	36.6%
Male	9,789	3,710	37.9%
Female	7,965	2,780	34.9%
Selected Industries	17,754	6,490	36.6%
Construction	2,754	1,039	37.7%
Manufacturing	2,761	1,038	37.6%
Wholesale Trade	785	274	34.9%
Retail Trade	2,472	690	27.9%
Transportation & Warehousing	386	128	33.2%
Information	253	96	37.9%
Finance & Insurance	792	356	44.9%
Real Estate	411	155	37.7%
Professional & Tech. Services	907	347	38.3%
Administrative & Waste Services	1,431	510	35.6%
Educational Services	262	101	38.5%
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,624	612	37.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	285	131	46.0%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,343	491	36.6%
Other Services	671	271	40.4%
Public Administration	128	51	39.8%

**Consumer Price Index for
All Urban Consumers** % Change

	May 10	Apr 10	May 09	Prev. Year
All Items	218.2	218.0	213.9	1.9%

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 18,300 advertisements for Rhode Island based jobs this month, a decrease of 2,100 (-10.3%) from the April 2010 postings, and an increase of 3,100 (+20.4%) from the 15,200 advertised vacancies posted online in May 2009. There were an estimated 3.17 advertised vacancies for every 100 persons in Rhode Island's labor force.

**Help Wanted OnLine
Advertised Job Vacancies**

	May 10	Apr 10	May 09
RI Vacancies	18,300	20,400	15,200
Labor Demand Rate *			
Rhode Island	3.17	3.53	2.70
US	2.68	2.68	2.17
Connecticut	3.64	3.60	2.70
Massachusetts	4.03	3.88	2.95
Maine	2.91	3.09	2.42
New Hampshire	2.86	3.38	2.51
Vermont	3.01	3.55	2.77
Supply/Demand Rate **			
Rhode Island	3.89	3.54	3.98
US	3.61	3.68	4.32

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

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

	2010	2009		2010	2009
Barrington	9.0	8.2	Newport	10.5	9.4
Bristol	10.2	10.3	North Kingstown	9.8	8.7
Burrillville	11.6	10.8	North Providence	11.6	10.5
Central Falls	15.0	14.8	North Smithfield	10.7	9.6
Charlestown	11.0	10.0	Pawtucket	13.4	13.6
Coventry	11.4	10.4	Portsmouth	9.5	8.3
Cranston	12.6	11.1	Providence	14.1	13.2
Cumberland	10.8	9.9	Richmond	9.3	7.2
East Greenwich	10.9	9.5	Scituate	11.3	10.6
East Providence	12.4	11.6	Smithfield	10.8	9.7
Exeter	10.6	8.1	South Kingstown	9.8	8.7
Foster	13.0	10.5	Tiverton	10.8	10.6
Glocester	9.9	8.8	Warren	10.5	10.8
Hopkinton	11.9	9.8	Warwick	11.9	10.1
Jamestown	9.2	6.3	West Greenwich	10.2	8.8
Johnston	12.3	11.3	West Warwick	13.6	11.1
Lincoln	10.8	10.2	Westerly	8.5	8.6
Little Compton	10.5	9.0	Woonsocket	13.3	12.9
Middletown	9.2	8.3			
Narragansett	8.2	6.7	State of R.I.	11.8	10.8
New Shoreham	12.0	9.4	United States	9.3	9.1

Nationally, there were an estimated 2.68 advertised vacancies for every 100 persons in labor force. Among the New England states, Massachusetts (4.03) and Connecticut (3.64) had higher vacancy rates than Rhode Island.

There were an estimated 3.89 unemployed Rhode Island residents for every advertised job in May, up from 3.54 unemployed residents estimated per April advertisements. Nationally, there were 3.61 unemployed persons for every job opening advertised in May, down from 3.68 in April.

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	May	Apr.	May	% Change		Year-to-Date		
	2010	2010	2009	Apr 10	May 09	2010	2009	% Change
Regular Claims								
Initial Claims	7,160	9,488	6,927	-24.5%	3.4%	45,574	57,088	-20.2%
Number of Payments	66,943	76,218	91,613	-12.2%	-26.9%	418,290	538,437	-22.3%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$24.3	\$28.2	\$34.3	-13.8%	-29.2%	\$156.0	\$200.1	-22.0%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	2,457	2,748	3,215	-10.6%	-23.6%	12,762	13,765	-7.3%
Emergency Unemployment Compensation						2010	Since Program Began	
Initial Claims	3,778	2,813	3,088	34.3%	22.3%	17,835	80,083	
Number of Payments	71,646	75,133	41,086	-4.6%	74.4%	411,172	1,226,709	
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$26.7	\$27.9	\$14.6	-4.3%	82.9%	\$151.7	\$444.8	
Extended Benefits						2010	Since Program Began	
Initial Claims	1,047	1,256	1,068	-16.6%	-2.0%	2,940	13,950	
Number of Payments	5,259	3,558	10,147	47.8%	-48.2%	21,320	151,776	
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$1.9	\$1.2	\$3.6	58.3%	-47.2%	\$7.4	\$53.2	
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	98	97	247	1.0%	-60.3%	1,880	7,372	

Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

“The Great Flood”

**Three Months Later
Nearly 1,700 Workers Still Affected by March Floods**

Department of Labor and Training (DLT) records indicate that 85 of the 240 businesses temporarily closed due to the March 2010 floods will still be closed on July 1. More than three-quarters of the businesses and nearly 85 percent of the jobs still affected are located in the city of Warwick, the majority at the Warwick Mall.

The Department’s most current data shows that eleven of these businesses with 254 workers plan to reopen in July and fifty-two businesses with 789 affected workers are likely to reopen in August. Four businesses with 486 affected workers plan to reopen by January of next year, with three reopening in the fall.

Four businesses employing a total of 82 workers are not planning to reopen. The status for fourteen businesses with a total of 78 workers is unknown.

The majority of businesses and jobs still affected by the March flood are in the Retail Trade (42/1,150) sector of the economy, followed by Accommodations & Food Services (16/325) and Other Services (7/38).

Rhode Island's "Great Flood"				
March 2010				
	Companies		Workers Affected	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Companies Closed*	240	100%	4,854	100%
<u>Re-Opening Dates</u>				
Within Three Days Flood (April 4th)	26	10.8%	26	0.5%
Within Ten Days Flood (April 10th)	72	30.0%	1,613	33.2%
Within One Month of Flood	119	49.6%	2,482	51.1%
By end of May	143	59.6%	2,797	57.6%
By end of June	155	64.6%	3,155	65.0%
By end of July	166	69.2%	3,409	70.2%
By end of August	218	90.8%	4,198	86.5%
By end January 2011	222	92.5%	4,684	96.5%
Not Planning to Reopen	4	1.7%	78	1.6%
Reopening Status Unknown	14	5.8%	92	1.9%

* Based on Unemployment Insurance Records

Prepared by: Labor Market Information
Source: Unemployment Insurance Administrative Records
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages