



Employment Labor Market Information Bulletin

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May 2000

The April Unemployment Rate Reached the Lowest Level Since 1989

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April dipped to 3.7 percent, its lowest level since June 1989. The unemployment rate continued to show improvement over the year, dropping 0.3 of a percentage point from the April 1999 figure of 4.0 percent. The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents fell by 1,000 over the year. The number of jobs in Rhode Island rose by 7,500, or 1.6 percent, between April 1999 and April 2000.

The Unemployment Rate

The April unemployment rate of 3.7 percent was down 0.1 of a percentage point from the revised March figure of 3.8 percent. The number of working Rhode Islanders increased by 8,800 over the month to 495, 200, the highest level since November 1989. Nationally, the unemployment rate for April fell to 3.9 percent, down 0.2 of a percentage point from March. The Rhode Island rate has been below the comparable national figure for eight months in a row. (Continued on Page 4)

Providence/Cranston Group Tells R.I. Companies "Let Us Show You The Money!"

The Providence/Cranston Workforce Development Board, in partnership with the Rhode Island Human Resource Investment Council, allocates statewide funds to provide *Project Upgrade* training opportunities to the employers of Rhode Island.

The intent of these funds is to upgrade skills of currently employed full-time workers who are being impacted by technological or organizational changes in the workplace. The bottom line is that effective training will produce higher skilled and more productive workers. The types of training include:

- ▶ Training for new or different machinery or equipment
- ▶ Training for new or different software applications and office technologies
- ▶ Statistical process control or other inventory control systems
- ▶ New production methods and product lines
- ▶ Staff who will be assuming new responsibilities for a wider scope of authority (Continued on Page 4)

Mass Filing Unemployment Insurance Claims

If you are an employer with a July vacation or inventory shutdown, the Department of Labor and Training (DLT) offers a method of mass filing your employees in advance. They can fill out their claim forms at work and automatically receive their waiting period and/or unemployment benefits without having to contact our Department. This enables you, the employer, to fill out the vacation pay request you would normally receive and return all of the forms in advance, so no further paperwork is necessary. After the shutdown, your employees will be given any benefits when due. **Call 243-9145 as soon as possible and the Department will send the form packets out to you at once.**

For anyone who does not mass file a claim through their employer, we now file all claims by phone through our Call Center. We no longer file claims in the local netWORKri offices. When an employee is laid off, or separated for any other reason, the first week they are unemployed they should call one of the following numbers:

Greater Providence Area	243-9100
Little Compton	635-4800
Middletown	683-1110
Narragansett	782-3700
Westerly	348-5800
Woonsocket	765-8100

The normal hours of operation are 8am-3pm Monday through Thursday and 9am-3pm Friday. During July, these phone lines will be available for extended hours as follows:

<u>Week ending 7/8/00:</u>	Wed., Thurs. 8am – 5:30pm & Sat. 8am – 11am
<u>Week ending 7/15/00:</u>	Mon., Tues., and Wed. 8am – 5:30pm

It's easy and quick, so please pass this information on to your employees.

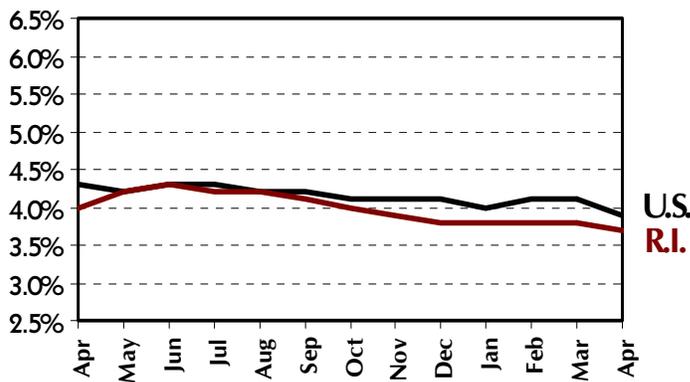
Rhode Island Labor Force Statistics* (in thousands)

	Unadjusted			Seasonally Adjusted		
	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99
Civilian Labor Force	505.2	500.6	494.4	514.2	505.4	503.2
Resident Employment	488.7	480.1	476.9	495.2	486.4	483.1
Unemployment	16.5	20.5	17.6	19.1	19.0	20.1
Unemployment Rate	3.3%	4.1%	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	4.0%

United States Labor Force Statistics (in thousands)

	Unadjusted			Seasonally Adjusted		
	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99
Civilian Labor Force	140,403	140,501	138,240	141,230	140,867	139,086
Resident Employment	135,215	134,494	132,552	135,706	135,159	133,054
Unemployment	5,188	6,007	5,688	5,524	5,708	6,032
Unemployment Rate	3.7%	4.3%	4.1%	3.9%	4.1%	4.3%

Rhode Island & United States Unemployment Rates Seasonally Adjusted 1999-2000



City & Town Unadjusted Unemployment Rates

	Apr 00	Apr 99
Barrington	1.8	1.6
Bristol	2.6	2.8
Burrillville	3.2	4.1
Central Falls	4.5	5.6
Charlestown	3.9	4.2
Coventry	2.9	3.0
Cranston	3.3	3.5
Cumberland	2.7	3.5
East Greenwich	2.7	3.3
East Providence	4.0	3.5
Exeter	2.4	3.1
Foster	3.0	3.7
Glocester	2.8	2.7
Hopkinton	2.3	1.4
Jamestown	2.7	1.9
Johnston	3.8	4.5
Lincoln	3.0	3.4
Little Compton	2.2	2.5
Middletown	2.9	2.9
Narragansett	2.1	2.1
New Shoreham	12.7	10.2
Newport	3.5	3.9
North Kingstown	2.5	2.8
North Providence	3.2	3.3
North Smithfield	2.2	3.2
Pawtucket	4.0	4.3
Portsmouth	2.5	2.4
Providence	4.2	4.6
Richmond	1.2	1.6
Scituate	3.2	3.8
Smithfield	3.5	3.1
South Kingstown	2.5	2.9
Tiverton	3.1	3.4
Warren	3.5	3.0
Warwick	2.8	3.1
West Greenwich	2.4	2.7
West Warwick	3.4	4.0
Westerly	2.4	2.4
Woonsocket	3.4	4.5
State of R.I.	3.3	3.6

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	Apr.	Mar.	Apr.	% Change		Year to Date		
	2000	2000	1999	Mar 00	Apr 99	2000	1999	% Change
Initial Claims	7,201	5,690	7,507	26.6%	-4.1%	32,040	38,040	-15.8%
Number of Payments	44,033	55,611	48,259	-20.8%	-8.8%	227,209	249,770	-9.0%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$10.7	\$13.9	\$11.2	-22.9%	-4.0%	\$56.5	\$58.5	-3.5%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	1,167	1,144	1,350	2.0%	-13.6%	4,358	5,070	-14.0%
E.S. Fund Balance (millions)	\$235.8	\$237.7	\$203.1	-0.8%	16.1%			

*Current month figures are PRELIMINARY, prior month & year are REVISED. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Labor Force statistics are compiled by Labor Market Information, in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Labor.

For additional information, comments or suggestions, contact

Labor Market Information, Phone (401)222-3706, Fax: (401)222-2731, www.dlt.state.ri.us/lmi

Providence Place Mall

After nearly a decade of planning, the long awaited Providence Place Mall opened its doors in August 1999 with the promise of creating thousands of new jobs and generating millions of dollars in revenue for the state of Rhode Island. By the year's end, it had appeared that Providence Place Mall is fulfilling its promise.

As of December 1999, nearly two-thirds of the Mall's restaurants and stores, including two major anchors, had opened their doors, employing more than 3,000 workers and paying over \$9.3 million in wages. The Mall's ten largest tenants accounted for two-thirds of the Mall's employment.

Apparel and Accessory Stores represented the largest share of the Mall's employment (38.9%), followed by Restaurants (18.0%).

Once completed, the Providence Place Mall is expected to house 130 stores, restaurants, and theaters. By the end of 2000, total employment at Providence Place Mall is estimated to exceed 4,000.

Total Establishment Employment in Rhode Island**

	Employment (in thousands)			Net Change From	
	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99	Mar 00	Apr 99
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	470.0	462.3	462.5	7700	7500
GOODS PRODUCING	92.0	90.4	92.4	1600	-400
Contract Construction	18.5	16.6	17.4	1900	1100
Manufacturing	73.5	73.8	75.0	-300	-1500
SERVICE PRODUCING	378.0	371.9	370.1	6100	7900
Trans. & Public Utilities	16.0	15.6	15.3	400	700
Trade (Wholesale & Retail)	104.9	102.3	101.0	2600	3900
Wholesale	20.1	20.2	19.7	-100	400
Durables=	12.4	12.5	12.3	-100	100
Nondurables=	7.7	7.7	7.4	-----	300
Retail	84.8	82.1	81.3	2700	3500
Building & Garden Supplies=	2.4	2.3	2.2	100	200
General Merchandise	7.1	6.8	6.6	300	500
Food Stores=	15.9	15.7	15.3	200	600
Automotive Dealers	7.6	7.5	7.2	100	400
Apparel & Accessory Stores	4.6	4.4	3.6	200	1000
Furn., Home Furn., & Equipt.=	2.4	2.4	2.3	-----	100
Eating and Drinking Places	30.2	28.4	29.7	1800	500
Miscellaneous Retail	14.7	14.6	14.5	100	200
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	29.7	29.6	29.5	100	200
Depository Institutions	8.7	8.6	8.6	100	100
Services	162.5	159.6	159.8	2900	2700
Hotels & Other Lodging=	4.2	3.8	3.6	400	600
Business Services	30.2	29.9	28.0	300	2200
Auto & Misc. Repair=	5.2	5.1	5.0	100	200
Amusement & Recreation	5.2	4.7	4.9	500	300
Health Services	50.9	51.0	51.9	-100	-1000
Educational Services	18.6	18.6	18.7	-----	-100
Social Services	15.4	15.5	15.3	-100	100
Government	64.9	64.8	64.5	100	400
Federal	10.8	10.7	10.7	100	100
State	18.3	18.5	18.4	-200	-100
Local	35.8	35.6	35.4	200	400
Education=	23.0	23.0	23.0	-----	-----
Non Education=	12.7	12.6	12.4	100	300

= Publication of these industries is not approved by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Establishment Employment, Hours and Earnings in Manufacturing Industries in Rhode Island

	EMPLOYMENT (in thousands)					PRODUCTION-WORKER AVERAGES					
				Net Change		Weekly Hours			Hourly Earnings		
	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99	Mar 00	Apr 99	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99
MANUFACTURING	73.5	73.8	75.0	-300	-1500	40.9	40.7	40.3	12.17	12.18	11.93
DURABLE MFG.	47.9	48.4	49.1	-500	-1200	40.6	40.4	40.1	12.00	11.98	11.71
Lumber/Furniture	2.8	2.9	2.9	-100	-100	42.1	42.7	40.4	12.10	12.11	12.04
Stone-Clay-Glass	1.0	1.0	1.0	-----	-----	42.9	40.1	47.0	13.89	13.89	13.99
Primary Metals	4.0	4.0	4.2	-----	-200	40.2	41.5	43.2	12.67	12.71	12.66
Fabricated Metals	8.2	8.2	8.3	-----	-100	38.1	37.6	36.9	11.28	11.26	10.82
Nonelectrical Mach.	5.2	5.2	4.8	-----	400	40.3	41.0	39.8	13.53	13.49	13.32
Electrical Mach.	5.3	5.3	5.4	-----	-100	43.9	41.5	42.7	11.50	11.41	11.28
Trans. Equipment	3.6	3.6	3.4	-----	200	42.2	41.7	43.5	14.32	14.29	14.24
Instruments	5.3	5.4	4.9	-100	400	42.0	42.3	41.1	12.72	12.74	12.57
Jewelry-Silverware	9.5	9.7	11.0	-200	-1500	39.9	39.8	38.4	10.45	10.46	10.05
Miscellaneous Mfg.	3.0	3.1	3.2	-100	-200	38.8	39.9	38.1	11.64	11.64	11.07
NONDURABLE MFG.	25.6	25.4	25.9	200	-300	41.5	41.2	40.5	12.50	12.55	12.35
Food Beverage	2.8	2.8	2.7	-----	100	41.3	38.1	43.2	11.49	11.48	11.29
Textiles	6.9	6.8	7.1	100	-200	41.3	41.8	41.4	10.73	10.76	10.75
Apparel	0.9	0.8	0.8	100	100	42.7	40.1	40.3	9.30	9.30	9.35
Paper Products	2.0	2.0	1.9	-----	100	40.4	38.9	37.4	12.04	12.04	11.84
Printing-Publishing	5.4	5.5	5.7	-100	-300	41.1	41.4	39.9	16.60	16.62	16.29
Chemical Products	2.1	2.0	2.0	100	100	41.7	42.0	43.9	13.74	13.77	13.69
Rubber Products	0.6	0.6	0.5	-----	100	41.5	44.5	42.0	12.98	13.03	12.86
Plastics Products	4.4	4.4	4.6	-----	-200	42.8	42.9	38.1	13.13	13.14	12.89
Leather Products	0.5	0.5	0.6	-----	-100	41.1	40.5	39.8	8.32	8.31	8.13

**Current month figures are PRELIMINARY, prior month & year are REVISED. Totals may not add due to rounding. Farmers, Self-employed, Domestic & Armed Services personnel are excluded from Establishment Employment figures.

The April Unemployment Rate Reached the Lowest Level Since 1989

(Continued from Page 1)

"The April labor force figures clearly indicate that the Rhode Island economy remains strong", said DLT Director Dr. Lee H. Arnold. "More Rhode Islanders are employed than at any other time since 1989, our unemployment rate is the lowest in eleven years, and employment opportunities are increasing as the number of jobs continues to grow."

The Number of Jobs in Rhode Island (Over the Year)

Since April 1999, the number of jobs in Rhode Island increased by 7,500 or 1.6 percent. This increase reflected growth in every major industry, except manufacturing. Trade posted the largest gain (+3,900), with all component industries adding jobs. Services, bolstered by hiring in business services, expanded by 2,700 jobs over the year. Contract construction payrolls were up by 1,100 jobs, due mostly to hiring in special trade construction. Transportation/public utilities recorded an increase of 700 jobs, resulting from gains in transportation. Employment in government rose by 400, mostly due to increases in the local government segment. Finance/insurance/real estate expanded by 200 jobs over the year. Manufacturing posted a net drop of 1,500 jobs, with the largest reduction in jewelry-silverware.

Investing in the growth and development of your business requires an investment in your employees. *Project Upgrade* provides your company with the opportunity to increase the overall productivity of your employees through upgrade training. Our Business Development Specialist will meet with you to discuss the program and assist you in developing a training outline that will meet your specific needs.

Don't delay....call today and say "Show Me the Money".

**Providence/Cranston
Workforce Development Board
(401) 861-0800**

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers

	Apr 00	Mar 00	Apr 99	% Change Prev. Year
All Items	171.2	171.1	166.2	3.0%

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

Rhode Island Job Highlights (Over the Month)

The number of jobs in Rhode Island rose by 7,700 from March to April, mostly the result of seasonal employment gains in services, trade, and contract construction.

Services – Employment in services rose by 2,900 in April to 162,500. As anticipated, seasonal hiring occurred in landscaping services, amusement/recreation, and hotels/lodging. Business services and automobile repair added 300 and 100 jobs, respectively.

Trade – Trade recorded a net gain of 2,600 jobs in April. Hiring was particularly heavy in restaurants with the addition of 1,800 workers. Smaller increases were posted in general merchandise stores, food stores, apparel and accessory stores, garden and building supply stores, auto dealerships, and miscellaneous retail stores.

Contract Construction – Contract construction employment picked up seasonally in April, due mostly to the hiring of special trade contractors. The increase of 1,900 workers is normal for the March-April period as the warmer weather allows for more outdoor-related construction activity.

Government – Employment in government increased by 100 over the month. An increase of 200 jobs in the local government sector was offset by a loss of 200 in state government. The federal government increased by 100 workers due to the ongoing 2000 Census.

Manufacturing – Manufacturing firms in Rhode Island reported a reduction of 300 workers. A loss of 200 jobs in jewelry-silverware, together with losses of 100 each in lumber/furniture, instruments, printing/publishing, and miscellaneous manufacturing, were partially offset by gains off 100 each in textiles, apparel, and chemical products.