

Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey 2005

*An Assessment of
Private Sector
Employment
Opportunities in the
Ocean State*

May - June 2005



A Publication of the:
Labor Market Information Unit
Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training
Adelita S. Orefice, Director

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Adelita S. Orefice, Director
Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

Robert J. Langlais, Assistant Director
Labor Market Information

1511 Pontiac Avenue
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920
(401) 462-8740

Visit us at: www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi

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Executive Summary

Rhode Island's private sector job market is driven by numerous, dynamic factors. As the forces of supply and demand change for products and services, so does the need for workers producing or providing them. Our distinct seasons also play a strong role in job creation and contraction - the warm summer months generate hundreds of opportunities for restaurant and recreational workers along the shore, while New England's cold winters limit the need for landscaping and construction laborers. Finally, the state's economy continues to undergo structural changes. Whereas production jobs once served as the bedrock of our labor market, manufacturing industries have given way to a more service-based economy, with new opportunities in healthcare, finance, retail trade, and food services.

What is the demand for workers in Rhode Island by industry? Which industries are reporting the most job vacancies? How long have these job openings been available and are they temporary or permanent positions? What are the educational and experience requirements for reported openings? Are they part-time or full-time positions and do they offer benefits, such as health insurance or tuition reimbursement? Which occupations yielded the most demand for qualified labor? The Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey provides insight into these and many other labor market questions, as shown by the following data highlights:

- ◆ **Statewide, there were an estimated 12,114 private sector job vacancies in Rhode Island.** This represents a job vacancy rate of 3.0 percent, or three job openings for every one hundred filled.
- ◆ **More than a quarter of all estimated vacancies were in the Healthcare & Social Assistance industry sector, which had a job vacancy rate of 4.7 percent.** Accommodation & Food Services, Administrative & Waste Services, Finance & Insurance, and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation also reported above-average job vacancy rates. Higher job vacancy rates indicate a greater demand for workers, perhaps due to increased business, high labor turnover, or an abundant level of part-time or per-diem work.
- ◆ **The occupations with the highest number of estimated job openings were Registered Nurses, Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants, Cashiers, Retail Salespersons, and Personal & Home Care Aides.**
- ◆ **More than 35 percent of reported job vacancies had been open for less than thirty days,** indicating that employers are not having a difficult time filling openings and that some jobs may have been open due to the improved weather. **On the other hand, just over one-third of estimated job openings were being constantly recruited for or were always open for hire.** These more persistent job openings suggest high labor turnover, an underskilled/underqualified workforce, and general workforce shortages.
- ◆ **A college education (associate, bachelor, or advanced degrees) was required for one-quarter of reported private sector vacancies in the Ocean State.** In contrast, forty percent required only a high school diploma/GED, while 28 percent of job openings had no educational requirement at all. Also, respondents noted that nearly a quarter of private sector job openings required certification or licensing.
- ◆ **Experience requirements for job openings varied.** Just over 45 percent of reported vacancies called for applicants to have previous work experience related to the job. However, the remaining job openings called for a near equal share of workers with general work experience or had no experience requirement at all.
- ◆ **Six out of every ten estimated job openings offered health insurance, while just over half of the state's vacancies provided access to a retirement savings/pension plan.**

Introduction to the RI Job Vacancy Survey

In an effort to provide insight into the dynamics of Rhode Island's labor markets and gain a more complete understanding of industry and occupational labor demand and job characteristics, the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's Labor Market Information unit conducted a Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) between May and June 2005. Approximately 2,000 private sector establishments were randomly selected to voluntarily participate in this survey. Respondents were asked to provide information on the number and types of job vacancies being actively recruited for at the time of survey completion. For each opening, employers had the option to provide more detailed information, including the length of each job opening, educational and experience requirements, benefits offered, and the starting pay rate.



The Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey provides a "snapshot" of private sector labor market demand, generating accurate, objective, and timely information on the quantity and quality of job openings through point-in-time measurements. It also allows for a thorough analysis of job vacancy characteristics, including wages and benefits offered, educational and experience requirements, and full- or part-time status. When combined with other labor market statistics, such as unemployment rates and occupational wage levels, job vacancy data can provide a good indicator of labor market tightness, labor force shortages, and the overall health of the labor market. These job vacancy statistics will prove beneficial to all of our labor market information customers, including:

◆ **Employers** – Human resource personnel and company management will find job vacancy data useful in determining hiring competition, wage levels, and in prioritizing human resource needs.

◆ **Jobseekers** – Job vacancy data provides Rhode Island's workforce with an additional source of information regarding job openings, occupational demand, potential benefits, and wage levels. It can also help jobseekers planning to change careers or entering the labor force for the first time by gauging the educational and experience requirements necessary for specific industries and occupations.

◆ **Workforce development community** – Training service providers, counselors, and educational planners can use job vacancy information to gain a better understanding of current labor market conditions and assist jobseekers and students in their career planning needs.

◆ **Policymakers** – Job vacancy surveys provide data on the quantity and quality of current job openings, while identifying labor market imbalances.



To meet the employment demands of Rhode Island's private sector, businesses must continue working with educational institutions and our state's training programs to develop the qualified, skilled professionals necessary for our evolving economy. The Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey will provide some guidance to the employers, jobseekers, policymakers, and workforce development personnel preparing for this endeavor.

Section I

Job Vacancy Characteristics throughout the Private Sector

An estimated 12,114 job vacancies existed throughout Rhode Island's private sector industries between May and June 2005. This translated into a job vacancy rate of 3.0 percent, or three job openings for every one hundred

jobs filled. Most vacancies were permanent positions (86%), with just 14 percent of estimated job openings listed as temporary or seasonal in nature. One-third of the temporary/seasonal vacancies measured were Food Preparation & Serving positions, reflecting the demand for summer help in the state's leisure and hospitality industries.

During the survey period, more than sixty percent of estimated vacancies were full-time jobs, defined as 35 or more hours of work per week. Part-time jobs accounted for the remaining 38.9 percent of vacancies. Notable concentrations of part-time vacancies varied across industries and occupations, ranging from low-skilled positions, such as Retail Salespersons and restaurant help, to high-demand and per-diem occupations, such as Registered and Licensed Practical Nurses and Personal & Home Care Aides.

Overall, 35.8 percent of estimated vacancies had been open for less than thirty days, partially due to an abundance of available, willing workers and/or because they were created due to seasonal demands (i.e. summer help). For example, nearly 40 percent of all temporary/seasonal job vacancies had been open for less than a month. Vacancy duration can serve as an indicator of workforce shortages due to an expanding economy, lack of willing applicants, or a thin pool of qualified candidates due to specialized education or training requirements.

In contrast, one-third of estimated openings were being constantly recruited for, while an additional 11.7 percent had been open for more than sixty days. Many industries struggle to find enough qualified applicants to meet the growing demand for their services, particularly in healthcare. For instance, 58 percent of estimated LPN openings and one-third of RN vacancies were being constantly recruited for.

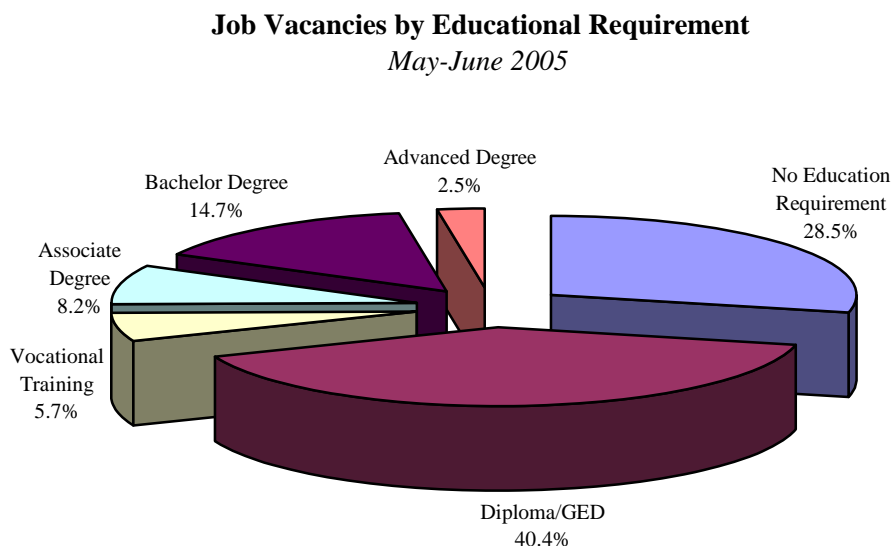
Lengthy vacancy durations may also suggest a high turnover rate, particularly in low-skilled, low-wage jobs where replacements can more easily be found, such as Security Guards, Fast-food Cooks, and Secretaries.

Private Sector Job Vacancy Data Summary

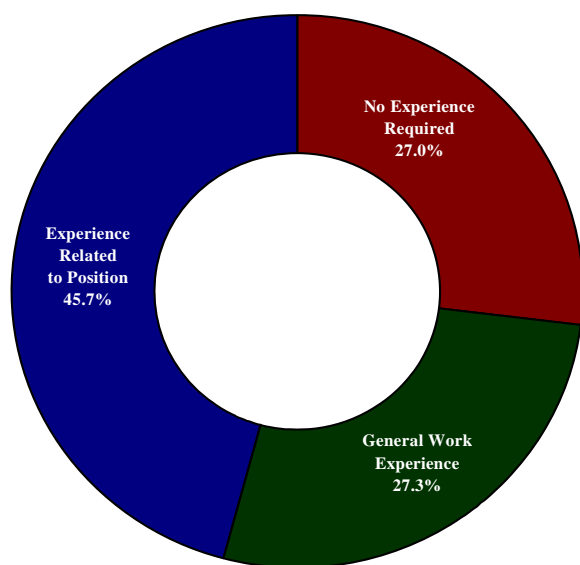
May - June 2005

Number of Job Vacancies	12,114
Job Vacancy Rate	3.0%
Full-Time Positions	61.1%
Part-Time Positions	38.9%
Vacancies Open < 30 Days	35.8%
Vacancies Open Between 30-59 Days	18.8%
Vacancies Open > 60 Days	11.7%
Constantly Recruiting/Always Hiring	33.7%
Permanent Positions	86.0%
Temporary/Seasonal Positions	14.0%
No Education Requirement	28.5%
Vacancies Requiring a Diploma/GED	40.4%
Vacancies Requiring Vocational Training	5.7%
Vacancies Requiring an Associate Degree	8.2%
Vacancies Requiring a Bachelor Degree	14.7%
Vacancies Requiring an Advanced Degree	2.5%
License or Certificate Required	24.7%
No Experience Required	27.0%
General Work Experience Required	27.3%
Experience Related to Position Required	45.7%
Median Minimum Hourly Wage Offered	\$10.20
Median Maximum Hourly Wage Offered	\$12.00
Vacancies with Health Insurance	61.0%
Vacancies with Paid Sick Leave	47.3%
Vacancies with Paid Vacation	63.3%
Vacancies with Tuition Reimbursement	30.5%
Vacancies with Retirement Svgs./Pension Plan	52.2%
Vacancies with No Benefits Offered	32.2%

Between May and June 2005, two out of every five estimated job vacancies required only a high school diploma or GED, while an additional 28.5 percent of openings had no educational requirement at all. These two characteristics were noted for more than 80 percent of all estimated part-time openings, compared to just 60 percent of full-time job vacancies. Most of the state's remaining job vacancies required a college education, comprising 25.4 percent of the total and divided among the associate (8.2%), bachelor (14.7%), and advanced (2.5%) levels.



Job Vacancies by Experience Requirement
May-June 2005



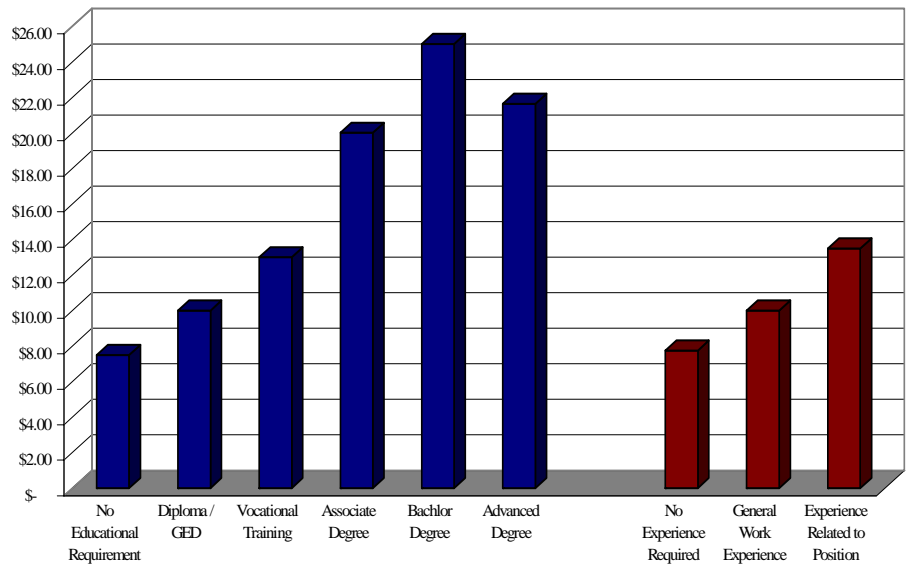
Along with their educational requirements, employers are also strongly seeking experienced workers. Based upon usable responses, 45.7 percent of all estimated vacancies asked prospective employees to have previous job-related experience. In comparison, 27.3 percent of measured openings during this period required just general work experience, while a similar share had no experience requirement at all. Further analysis of these job vacancy characteristics shows an expected correlation between education and experience. For instance, more than 55 percent of the job openings with no experience requirement also had no educational requirement - mostly low-skilled occupations such as Counter Attendants, Maids & Housekeepers, Cashiers, and general laborers. Moreover, whereas 10 percent of job openings without an experience requirement required a college degree, over 36 percent of estimated vacancies requiring previous job-related experience also called for some level of higher education.

The Job Vacancy Survey also asked employers to list the starting wage range for each job they were seeking to fill. Due to the range of job vacancies measured, combined with many other factors in determining compensation (i.e. part-time versus full-time status; temporary/seasonal versus permanent positions; experience requirements), pay and benefit levels varied widely between industries and occupations. Overall, the private job vacancies estimated during this survey period offered wages ranging from a median low of \$10.20 to a median high of \$12.00 per hour. As expected, part-time vacancies generally paid less than full-time openings. The former reported a median hourly wage ranging from a low of \$8.50 to a high of \$10.00, while job vacancies calling for 35 hours of work or more had a median pay range of \$12.02 to \$13.42 per hour.

Median wage levels for estimated vacancies rose with educational attainment. For example, the median low wage for openings without an educational requirement was \$7.50; with a diploma/GED \$10.00; with an associate degree \$20.00; and with an advanced degree \$21.63. For vacancies requiring a bachelor degree, the median low wage was \$25.00, partially due to the high concentration of well-paying RN jobs requiring four-years of higher education.

Similarly, as experience requirements increased, so too did the median wage range for estimated vacancies. Job openings requiring no experience offered a low median wage of \$7.75 and a high median wage of \$9.00. This range increased to \$10.00/\$11.00 for vacancies requiring general work experience and \$13.50/\$14.95 for openings that were to be filled by workers with previous job-related experience.

Median Low Wage for Job Vacancies by Education & Experience Requirements
 May-June 2005



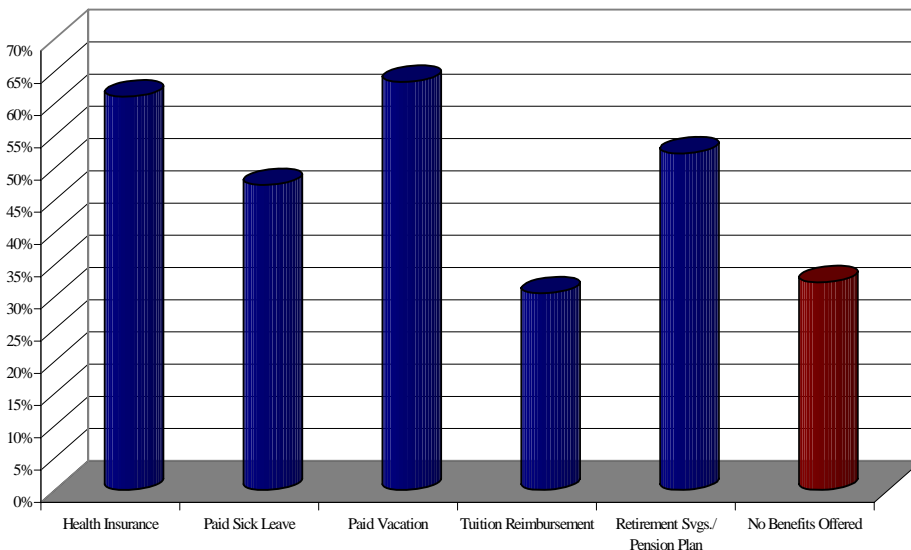
Along with starting wage rates, respondents provided information on the types of benefits offered with their job vacancies. Perhaps the most

important of the benefit types measured was health insurance - six of every ten estimated openings provided access to health insurance. The proportion of vacancies offering health insurance was significantly higher for full-time job openings (81.5%) than for part-time (28.6%) openings. Furthermore, the concentration of job vacancies offering health insurance generally rose as educational requirements increased. Approximately 36 percent of vacancies with no educational requirement had health insurance, compared to 64 percent of those requiring a diploma/GED and 83 percent of vacancies requiring a two-year degree or advanced degree.

Other types of benefits measured included paid vacation time and paid sick leave. Based on usable responses, 63 percent of vacancies offered paid vacation time, while less than half (47.3%) offered paid sick leave. Nearly all job openings that offered paid sick leave also offered paid vacation time, accounting for 46 percent of total estimated openings for which usable responses were received.

Three of every ten estimated vacancies gave prospective employees access to a tuition reimbursement program. With greater resources at their disposal, larger companies were much more likely to offer this benefit. For

Job Vacancies by Benefits Offered
 May-June 2005



instance, nearly three-quarters of job vacancies in companies with 250 or more employees offered some form of tuition reimbursement, compared to just 9 percent of vacancies in companies with less than 20 employees.

Nearly one-third of all job vacancies estimated between May and June 2005 offered no benefits at all. A very high proportion (62.8%) of part-time vacancies for which data was received offered prospective hires no benefits, compared to less than 13 percent of full-time openings.

Section II

Job Vacancy Data by Industry Sector

Nineteen distinct private industry sectors were measured by the 2005 Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey. The following pages provide job vacancy rates and characteristic comparisons among these economic sectors. While included in economy-wide totals, detailed job vacancy statistics for three industry sectors - Mining, Utilities, and Unclassified establishments - have not been released due to their limited sample size.

Job Vacancy Rate

Five industry sectors reported job vacancy rates above the private sector average of 3.0 percent. By far, the strongest demand for workers was measured in Health Care & Social Assistance - its 4.7 percent vacancy rate and 3,334 vacancies topped all industry sectors, accounting for 27.5 percent of all estimated job openings in Rhode Island's private sector. These totals are slightly higher than what was measured by our Spring 2004 job vacancy survey, which focused exclusively on Health Care & Social Assistance companies. At the time, we measured an industry sector job vacancy rate of 4.1 percent and 2,894 job openings. This continued trend indicates that healthcare-related establishments are having a difficult time meeting their workforce needs due to an increased demand for their services and an insufficient pool of qualified labor from which to draw prospective employees.

Both Accommodation & Food Services and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation reported above-average job vacancy rates as well, at 4.2 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively. These high rates can be partially attributed to seasonal factors, with the Ocean State's many hotels, restaurants, and recreational establishments increasing staff levels to meet summer demand. Combined, more than one-third of estimated vacancies in these two industry sectors were reported as temporary or seasonal in nature.

Job Vacancy Data by Private Industry Sector

<i>Industry Sector (sorted by job vacancy rate)</i>	<i>Estimated Number of Vacancies</i>	<i>Estimated Vacancy Rate</i>	<i>Average Employment (3Q 2004)</i>	<i>Percent of Total Est. Vacancies</i>
TOTAL	12,114	3.0%	407,501	100.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	3,334	4.7%	71,560	27.5%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,913	4.2%	45,772	15.8%
Administrative & Waste Services	609	3.7%	16,425	5.0%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	328	3.6%	9,031	2.7%
Finance & Insurance	901	3.5%	25,430	7.4%
Transportation & Warehousing	262	2.9%	9,041	2.2%
Retail Trade	1,480	2.8%	52,770	12.2%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	225	2.7%	8,433	1.9%
Construction	558	2.5%	22,432	4.6%
Information	261	2.4%	10,708	2.2%
Other Services	378	2.1%	17,951	3.1%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	144	2.1%	6,904	1.2%
Manufacturing	1,008	1.8%	56,391	8.3%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Serv.	336	1.7%	20,085	2.8%
Educational Services	259	1.6%	16,136	2.1%
Wholesale Trade	111	0.7%	16,396	0.9%

Administrative & Waste Services, an industry sector comprised of companies that provide routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations, had a job vacancy rate of 3.7 percent between May and June 2005. Many of these job openings were in low-skilled occupations, such as maids and housekeepers, security guards, and customer service representatives. In the Finance & Insurance industry sector, 901 job vacancies were estimated during the survey period, for a job vacancy rate of 3.5 percent. A notable share of these openings was for Tellers and Customer Service Representatives.

Several industry sectors reported job vacancy rates slightly below the private sector average, including Transportation & Warehousing (2.9%), Retail Trade (2.8%), Management of Companies & Enterprises (2.7%), Construction (2.5%), and Information (2.4%). Despite the below-average vacancy rate in Retail Trade, the industry sector still had an estimated 1,480 job vacancies - the third highest total behind Health Care & Social Assistance (3,334) and Accommodation & Food Services (1,913).

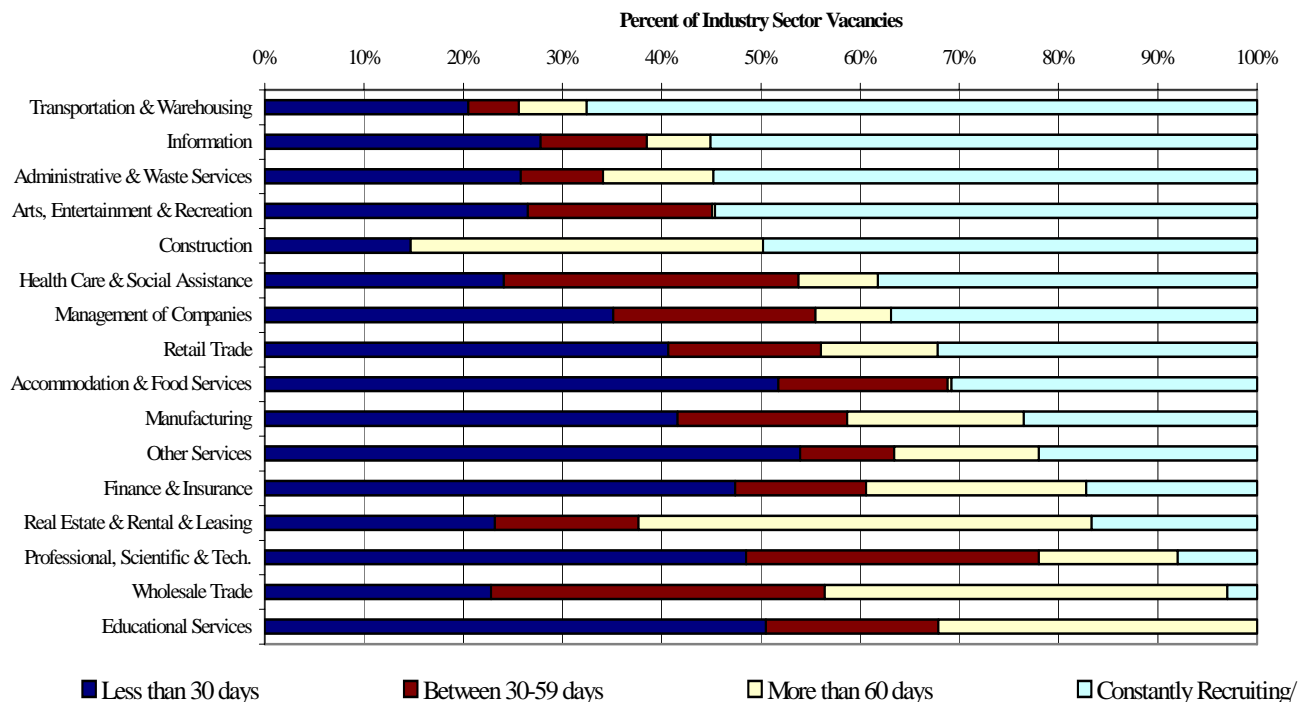
Labor demand was much weaker in the remaining six industry sectors. Other Services (including repair and maintenance businesses, personal services providers, and religious and social organizations) and Real Estate & Rental & Leasing both reported vacancy rates of 2.1 percent, or two open positions for every one hundred filled. In Manufacturing, an estimated 1,000 job openings were estimated to exist during the survey period. Yet, this translated into a job vacancy rate of just 1.8 percent. The Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (1.7%), Educational Services (1.6%), and Wholesale Trade (0.7%) industry sectors were estimated to have the lowest vacancy rates in the private sector.

Vacancy Duration

Based upon available data, employers in Transportation & Warehousing, Information, Administrative & Waste Services, and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation had the greatest share of persistent, unfilled job openings. In each of these industry sectors, more than half of the estimated vacancies were constantly being recruited for or always open for hire. Furthermore, in Construction, 85 percent of estimated vacancies had been open for more

Job Vacancies by Industry Sector and Vacancy Duration

(sorted by % of vacancies constantly recruiting/always hiring)



than sixty days or were always open for hire. A large number of job openings left vacant for a long period of time can indicate workforce shortages due to specialized educational and training requirements, a lack of qualified, willing applicants, or high turnover.

Vacancy duration in Health Care & Social Assistance was similar to that measured one year earlier. Between May and June 2005, 38.2 percent of industry sector vacancies were constantly being recruited for, while an additional 8.0 percent of openings had been open for more than sixty days. In Spring 2004, these rates were 38.6 percent and 14.3 percent, respectively.

Other industry sectors seemingly had an easier time filling their workforce needs. More than half of the job vacancies estimated in Other Services, Educational Services, and Accommodation & Food Services had been open for less than thirty days. In the case of the latter, seasonal factors likely generated the short vacancy duration, as many hotels and restaurants were just beginning their summer hiring during the survey period.

Part-time/Full-time Status

The ratio of part-time to full-time job openings provides another measure of job quality. Generally speaking, full-time jobs provide increased work stability, higher wages and benefits levels, and greater access to long-term career opportunities. However, many employers find it financially prudent to hire several part-time workers to do the job of one full-time employee. Although this raises the actual number of job openings, it does not necessarily increase the number of quality jobs. Part-time workers often receive fewer benefits and less pay, saving the employer from providing increasingly cost-prohibitive health benefits or retirement packages.

There were few surprises in regards to the concentration of part-time to full-time job vacancies on the industry sector level. Economic sectors reliant upon low-skilled, low-wage labor, particularly those related to leisure activities, reported the highest concentrations of part-time vacancies. For instance, more than 95 percent of estimated vacancies in the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation industry sector were part-time jobs, in occupations such as Lifeguards, Bartenders, and food service workers - jobs in demand at beach clubs and golf courses throughout the state during the survey period. Retail Trade also posted a concentration of part-time vacancies greater than the private sector average, at 63 percent of total industry sector openings. Within that industry sector, 71 percent of all vacant Retail Salespersons jobs were part-time, offering fewer than 35 hours of work per week.

On the other hand, industry sectors that have traditionally relied upon “white collar” professionals, such as Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, Management of Companies & Enterprises, Educational Services, and Finance & Insurance, reported concentrations of full-time vacancies well-above the private sector average.

In Health Care & Social Assistance, 57 percent of estimated vacancies were for jobs requiring 35 hours of work or more. This was slightly higher than the 50 percent measured one year ago.

Job Vacancies by Industry Sector & Part-time/Full-time Status

<i>Industry Sector (sorted by part-time %)</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Full-time</i>
Private Sector Total	38.9%	61.1%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	95.7%	4.3%
Transportation & Warehousing	75.2%	24.8%
Retail Trade	63.0%	37.0%
Other Services	54.2%	45.8%
Accommodation & Food Services	45.7%	54.3%
Information	44.1%	55.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	42.9%	57.1%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	38.9%	61.1%
Administrative & Waste Services	28.4%	71.6%
Construction	24.0%	76.0%
Finance & Insurance	19.2%	80.8%
Educational Services	7.7%	92.3%
Manufacturing	7.5%	92.5%
Wholesale Trade	3.6%	96.4%
Management of Companies	3.6%	96.4%
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	1.5%	98.5%

The link between part-time/full-time status and benefits offered is evident in the chart to the left. For example, health insurance was offered with all full-time vacancies in the Information and Finance & Insurance industry sectors, but with just 15 percent and 18 percent of part-time vacancies, respectively. Similarly, nine out of every ten vacant Construction jobs offered the prospective hire access to healthcare, compared to just 42 percent of part-time openings. In the case of Management of Companies, Manufacturing, and Professional, Scientific & Waste Services, the high share of part-time vacancies with health benefits is the result of a limited number of overall part-time opportunities in those industry sectors.

Educational and Experience Requirements

Job vacancies in Accommodation & Food Services and Retail Trade had the lowest educational requirement levels in the private sector. More than 90 percent of estimated openings in these industry sectors required a high school diploma/GED or had no educational requirement at all, in occupations such as Housekeepers, Line Cooks, Waitstaff, Hotel Desk Clerks, Cashiers, and Retail Salespersons. Similarly, the educational requirements were low for vacancies in the Other Services industry sector, where many of the openings for Security Guards, Recreational Workers, and Teacher Assistants required a high school education or less.

A bachelor or advanced degree was required for more than half of the Educational Services and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services jobs vacant during the survey period. Just over 55 percent of estimated vacancies in these two industry sectors called for a four-year degree, with an additional 16 percent of Educational Services job openings requiring an advanced degree. The latter included several open positions for professors of various disciplines and post-secondary education administrators.

Percent of Part-time and Full-time Job Vacancies Offering Health Insurance by Selected Industry Sector
(sorted by percent of full-time vacancies offering health insurance)

Industry Sector	Part-time	Full-time
Information	14.9%	100.0%
Finance & Insurance	17.6%	100.0%
Management of Companies	100.0%	98.9%
Construction	41.8%	90.3%
Manufacturing	100.0%	89.6%
Educational Services	60.0%	84.7%
Health Care & Social Assistance	37.7%	82.6%
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	100.0%	82.4%
Transportation & Warehousing	44.7%	75.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	6.4%	58.1%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	19.4%	35.7%

Job Vacancies by Selected Industry Sector and Educational Requirements

(sorted by % of vacancies with no educational requirement)

Industry Sector	No Educational Requirement	High School/ Diploma/GED	Vocational Training	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree	Advanced Degree
Private Sector Total	28.5%	40.4%	5.7%	8.2%	14.7%	2.5%
Accommodation & Food Services	64.7%	33.1%	1.9%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Retail Trade	48.9%	41.4%	5.8%	2.2%	1.6%	0.1%
Other Services	38.9%	37.1%	0.9%	6.8%	13.9%	2.4%
Management of Companies	38.8%	7.8%	4.1%	7.8%	37.4%	4.1%
Information	33.9%	27.2%	3.1%	5.9%	21.3%	8.7%
Administrative & Waste Services	30.2%	58.2%	2.0%	2.0%	7.6%	0.0%
Manufacturing	29.4%	31.3%	7.3%	6.5%	23.4%	2.1%
Construction	16.2%	60.0%	22.5%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	12.9%	74.9%	0.0%	0.3%	11.5%	0.3%
Finance & Insurance	7.8%	64.5%	3.4%	4.9%	19.1%	0.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	4.9%	37.5%	7.6%	21.5%	22.9%	5.7%
Educational Services	4.2%	18.3%	4.2%	2.3%	55.4%	15.5%
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	3.1%	27.1%	2.3%	9.3%	55.4%	2.7%

More than two-fifths of estimated Health Care & Social Assistance vacancies required a two- or four-year degree. An associate degree was necessary for most Licensed Practical Nurses, Dental Hygienists, and Physical Therapist Assistants openings, while most Registered Nurses, Social Worker, and Physical Therapist vacancies called for a bachelor degree. Interestingly, the percentage of Health Care & Social Assistance vacancies requiring a bachelor degree jumped substantially from that measured one year ago. In 2004, a four-year degree was required for 10.7 percent of estimated vacancies in this industry sector; today, that percentage is nearly 23 percent. Finally, an additional 38 percent of healthcare-related job openings required just a high school education, in occupations such as Nursing Aides and Personal & Home Care Aides.

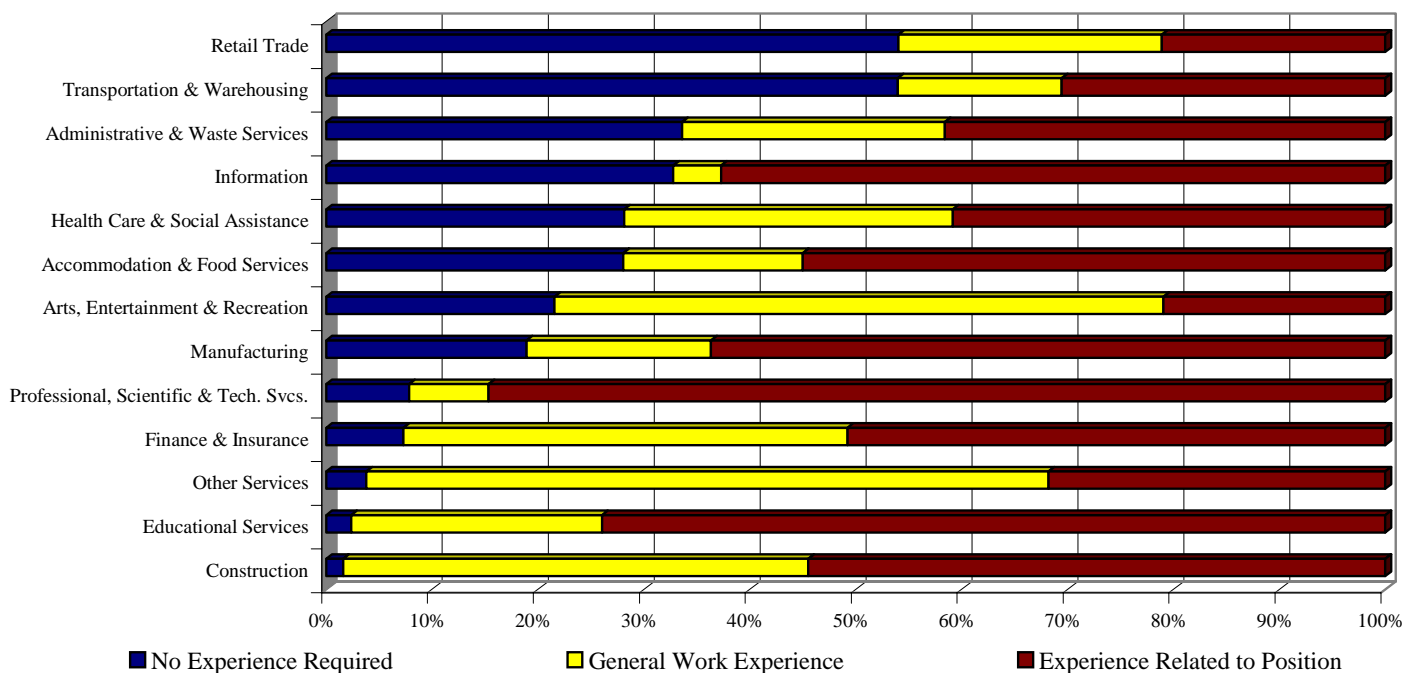
Vocational training was required for more than 22 percent of estimated Construction vacancies between May and June 2005. This rate was substantially higher than the private sector average of 5.7 percent, primarily due to the numerous carpenters and electricians being sought by Rhode Island businesses in this industry sector.

Survey participants were also asked to report on the experience requirements for each job vacancy they listed. More than 45 percent of all estimated vacancies in the private sector required experience related to the position, indicating that employers are seeking seasoned applicants who can fill their workforce needs immediately and efficiently, limiting the need for lengthy adjustment periods or on-the-job training. On an industry sector level, an estimated 85 percent of Professional, Scientific & Technical Services vacancies, along with nearly three-quarters of job openings in Educational Services, called for previous experience related to the position. These two industry sectors also had the highest educational requirements in private industry. Employers seeking to fill vacancies in occupations such as Education Administrators, Management Analysts, Computer Software Engineers, and Database Administrators clearly prefer well-educated, experienced applicants.

Not all industry sectors required experienced workers to fill their job vacancies. For example, Retail Trade and Transportation & Warehousing businesses were more than willing to hire people without any previous work experience, accounting for 54 percent of the estimated vacancies in those two industry groups. Many of these jobs, including Cashiers, Retail Salespersons, School Bus Drivers, and warehouse laborers, can be learned relatively quickly and require little in the way of specialized skill sets.

Job Vacancies by Selected Industry Sector and Experience Requirements

May - June 2005



Benefits

Private sector businesses reported a wide range of benefit levels for jobs vacant during the survey period. Of the types of benefits measured, the two most important are health insurance and access to a retirement savings plan or pension. The erosion of these benefits, due to rising healthcare costs, increasing employee contributions, pension scandals and unstable financial markets, along with a weakening social security system, have made them front-page news and a serious topic to consider around the dinner table. Projects such as the Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey allow us to further explore how businesses are adapting to these changing times and measure the prospects of workers seeking to improve their compensation packages or trying to gain access to benefits for the first time.

Job Vacancies by Industry Sector and Benefits Offered

<i>Industry Sector</i>	<i>Health Insurance</i>	<i>Paid Sick Leave</i>	<i>Paid Vacation</i>	<i>Tuition Reimburse.</i>	<i>Retirement Svgs. Plan/ Pension</i>	<i>No Benefits Offered</i>
Private Sector Total	61.0%	47.3%	63.3%	30.5%	52.2%	32.2%
Accommodation & Food Services	36.1%	17.5%	29.4%	9.2%	22.0%	61.6%
Administrative & Waste Services	62.7%	19.8%	86.6%	49.7%	57.3%	6.9%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	20.1%	1.2%	1.8%	0.6%	1.2%	79.6%
Construction	78.7%	46.4%	78.9%	3.2%	41.6%	17.6%
Educational Services	84.0%	84.0%	84.6%	72.6%	84.0%	15.4%
Finance & Insurance	81.9%	78.2%	78.9%	73.2%	80.9%	17.4%
Health Care & Social Assistance	63.3%	67.3%	74.7%	36.8%	60.0%	23.8%
Information	61.0%	59.0%	59.0%	28.1%	58.6%	36.9%
Management of Companies	98.9%	98.9%	98.9%	28.7%	77.3%	1.1%
Manufacturing	82.4%	40.6%	84.2%	42.0%	75.9%	15.7%
Other Services	29.1%	22.5%	27.0%	8.2%	19.8%	67.7%
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Svcs.	80.5%	80.5%	80.5%	60.0%	81.9%	18.1%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	54.7%	33.1%	47.5%	27.3%	32.4%	45.3%
Retail Trade	61.8%	42.2%	63.2%	25.2%	54.8%	34.8%
Transportation & Warehousing	52.3%	17.9%	27.1%	0.0%	30.9%	47.7%
Wholesale Trade	94.6%	94.6%	92.8%	40.5%	96.4%	1.8%

Not surprisingly, industry sectors primarily seeking full-time employees and white-collar professionals reported the highest concentrations of vacancies with health insurance and/or access to a pension plan. For example, in Management of Companies & Enterprises, 99 percent of estimated vacancies had healthcare and 77 percent had a retirement package. In Educational Services, both of these rates were 84 percent, while 82 percent and 81 percent of Finance & Insurance vacancies offered the same, respectively.

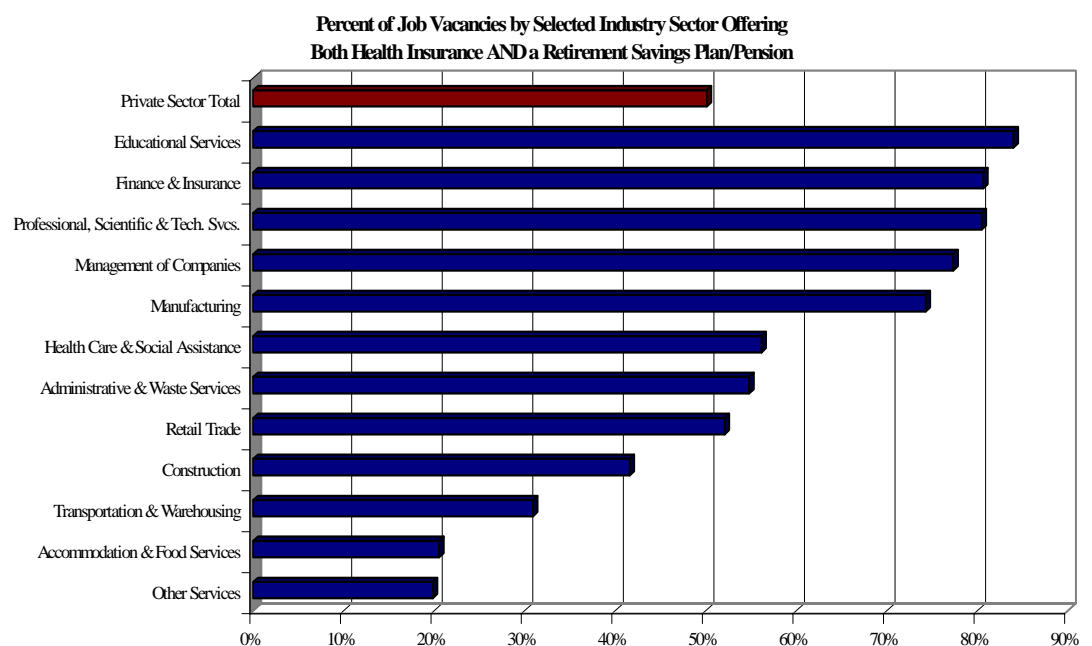
Interestingly, despite the difficulties faced by Rhode Island's Manufacturing sector and a steep overall decline in production-related employment, above-average shares of Manufacturing vacancies offered these primary benefits. An estimated 82 percent of Manufacturing vacancies had health insurance and more than three-quarters provided access to a retirement savings plan or pension. Moreover, 84 percent of industry sector openings had paid vacation time and 42 percent offered some form of tuition reimbursement. From these results, it would seem as though current employment opportunities in Manufacturing requiring a high school diploma or less, including Truck Drivers, Packaging & Filling Machine Operators, Machine Tool Setters, Fiberglass Laminators, and Electrical Equipment Assemblers, offer job seekers good access to benefits as well as decent pay.

The benefits offered with Health Care & Social Assistance vacancies have remained stable during the past year. Between May and June 2005, an estimated 63 percent of industry sector openings offered health insurance and 60 percent had access to a pension plan. However, nearly a quarter of Health Care & Social Assistance vacancies offered no benefits, primarily Registered Nurses and Personal & Home Care Aide jobs. In comparison, our 2004 Job Vacancy Survey of healthcare-related industries found that 67 percent of vacancies had health insurance and 61 percent had a retirement package, while 23 percent of estimated openings had no benefits at all.

Respondents also reported on the availability of tuition reimbursement programs. Tuition reimbursement is an intriguing benefit that can be mutually beneficial to employee and employer. It provides a personal and financial incentive for workers to further develop skill sets and pursue educational opportunities that might normally be out of reach due to rising tuition costs. This can lead to an increase in promotional opportunities or open the door to new occupations and career paths altogether. From an employer standpoint, tuition reimbursement should be seen as an investment in a better trained, more efficient workforce. The monetary costs incurred by providing this benefit can be partially offset by increased worker productivity and ingenuity, resulting in a better quality product or service for customers. While less than one-third of estimated private sector vacancies offered tuition reimbursement, several industry sectors did report above-average shares of job openings with this benefit. Slightly less than three-quarters of estimated vacancies in Finance & Insurance and Educational Services granted some form of tuition reimbursement. In Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, this share was 60 percent, while half of the Administrative & Waste Services vacancies estimated also had tuition reimbursement.

Three private industry sectors reported a significantly high concentration of vacancies without any benefits - Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (79.6%), Other Services (67.7%), and Accommodation & Food Services (61.6%). This is not surprising, as the vacancies in these industry groups are generally seasonal in nature and/or are low-skilled, part-time positions filled by students on break for the summer months and moonlighters trying to earn supplemental income. Occupational vacancies in these industry sectors, including Recreation Workers, Cooks, Waitstaff, and Security Guards, rarely offer health insurance or access to retirement plans. For instance, just one-fifth of Arts, Entertainment & Recreation vacancies had healthcare, while a similar share of job openings in Other Services offered some sort of retirement package.

Data collected by the Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey also allows for an examination of benefit combinations. For example, the chart at right provides the percent of industry sector vacancies offering prospective hires BOTH health insurance and access to a retirement plan. Across the private sector, job openings that offered the latter generally offered the former as well. Several industry sectors, including Educational Services (84.0%), Finance & Insurance (80.6%), and Manufacturing (74.3%), reported a much higher concentration of vacancies offering these two benefits than the private sector (50.1%) as a whole.



Wages

For each job vacancy reported, employers were asked to provide the expected hourly, monthly, or annual compensation rate. Many businesses provided a wage range from which they would be willing to pay a qualified applicant based upon work experience, skill sets, and educational levels. For this reason, the Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey provides both an estimated median low and median high hourly wage for each industry sector. Median values, or the wage at which half are below and half are above, are used to help limit the impact abnormal responses have on the final results.

Job vacancies in eight industry sectors offered a median low wage above the private sector average during the survey period. The highest hourly wage was reported in Wholesale Trade (\$15.87), around which many of the estimated wholesale buyers and sales representatives vacancies were clustered. Due to survey limitations, positions such as these may actually pay more than what the respondent listed once sales commissions and bonuses are added. However, this wage rate does provide a good estimation of starting base pay for vacancies in this industry sector.

Above-average wages were also offered for vacancies in the Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (\$15.00), Educational Services (\$14.66), Finance & Insurance (\$13.42), Construction (\$13.00), Manufacturing (\$12.01), and Information (\$11.00) industry sectors. In Finance & Insurance, many Customer Service Representative and Insurance Claims & Policy Processing Clerks vacancies offered median wages clustered around the industry sector median.

In Health Care & Social Assistance, the wages for job vacancies ranged from a median low of \$12.02 to a median high of \$14.00. This was somewhat higher than the \$11.00 estimated for all job openings reported during our 2004 survey of this industry sector. The diversity of occupations found within Rhode Island's healthcare industries created a wide spectrum of potential starting wages for jobseekers. For example, a few hundred estimated vacancies for which data was available paid \$8.00 or less per hour, including many Teacher Assistants, Personal & Home Care Aides, and Healthcare Support Workers (i.e. dietary aides) vacancies. Clustered around the industry sector's median low wage were openings for Bookkeepers, Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technologists, Mental Health Counselors, and Preschool Teachers. High-demand medical jobs and occupations requiring specialized education paid extremely well, including Psychologists, Dental Hygienists, LPN, and especially RN vacancies. Within the Health Care & Social Assistance industry sector, RN vacancies paid median hourly wages between \$29.10 (low) and \$30.00 (high), although actual reported pay rates ranged anywhere from \$19.23 to over \$45.00 per hour!

Not surprisingly, estimated vacancies in the state's seasonal industry sectors, as well as those reliant upon part-time, low-skilled workers, paid the lowest median wages. Job openings in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (\$7.00), Retail Trade (\$7.50), and Accommodation & Food Services (\$7.75) paid a low median hourly wage within one dollar of the state minimum (\$6.75). It is important to note that these median wages,

Median Wages Offered for Job Vacancies by Selected Industry Sector

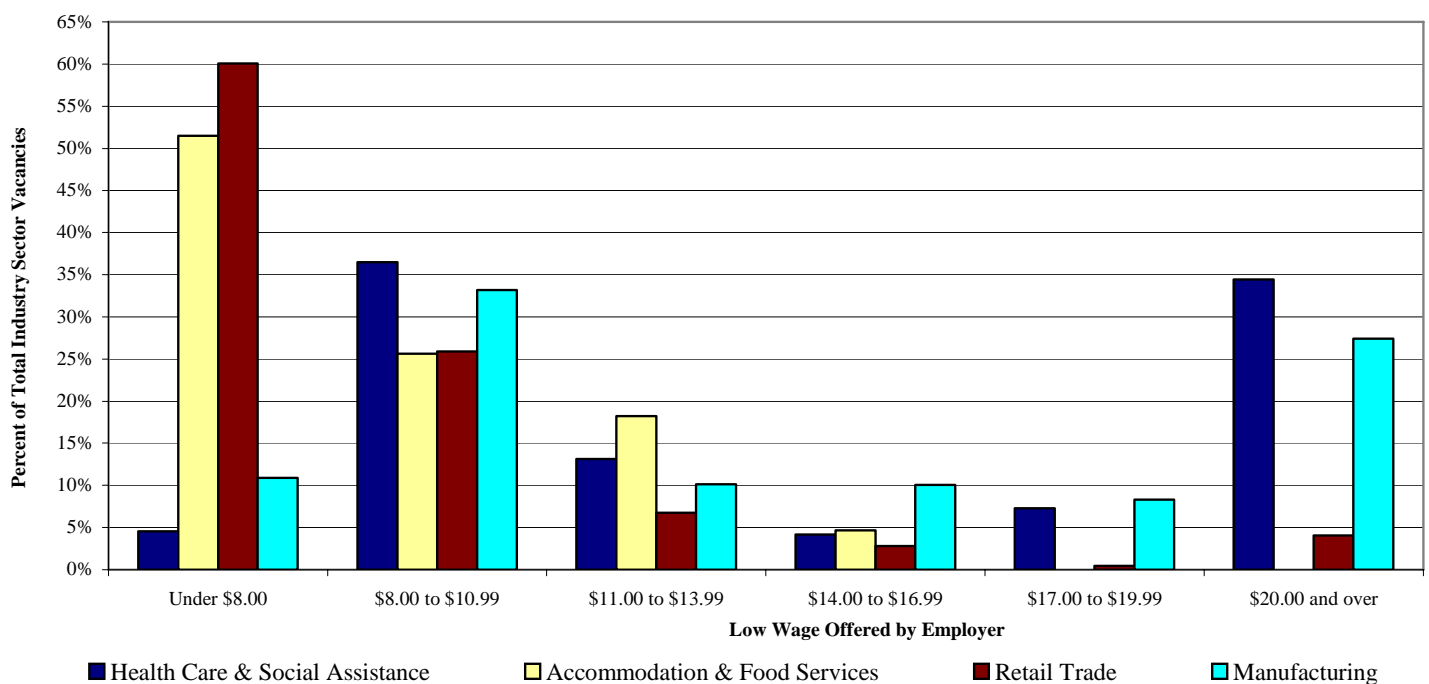
Industry Sector	Median	Median
	Low Wage	High Wage
Private Sector Total	\$ 10.20	\$ 12.00
Wholesale Trade	\$ 15.87	\$ 15.87
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Svcs.	\$ 15.00	\$ 16.83
Educational Services	\$ 14.66	\$ 16.66
Finance & Insurance	\$ 13.42	\$ 13.42
Construction	\$ 13.00	\$ 14.00
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$ 12.02	\$ 14.00
Manufacturing	\$ 12.01	\$ 13.46
Information	\$ 11.00	\$ 11.00
Administrative & Waste Services	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.50
Management of Companies	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Transportation & Warehousing	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	\$ 8.50	\$ 9.00
Other Services	\$ 8.00	\$ 9.00
Accommodation & Food Services	\$ 7.75	\$ 9.00
Retail Trade	\$ 7.50	\$ 8.00
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	\$ 7.00	\$ 8.00

particularly in Accommodation & Food Services, have been adjusted and do not account for earnings through gratuities. Many workers in these industries are often exempt from the \$6.75 state minimum because they receive tips to supplement their hourly pay. Since it is beyond the scope of this survey to measure these supplemental earnings, starting wage data provided by employers for these vacancies was removed prior to our calculations.

Below-average private sector median wages were also recorded for vacancies in Administrative & Waste Services (\$10.00), a result of a high concentration of low-skill, low-wage job openings in occupations such as Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners, Security Guards, and Customer Service Representatives. A low median wage of \$10.00 was also paid for vacancies in the Management of Companies (\$10.00) and Transportation & Warehousing (\$10.00) industry sectors. Estimated job vacancies in Other Services paid a low median wage of \$8.00 and a high of \$9.00 per hour, a range which included many of the estimated openings for Hairdressers and Fitness Trainers.

Data made available by this survey also allows for an examination of the *distribution* of vacancies by starting pay rates across industry sectors. The chart below provides a graphical interpretation of the percentage of job vacancies offering starting wages within specified ranges for Health Care & Social Assistance, Accommodation & Food Services, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing. Combined, these sectors accounted for nearly 64 percent of all estimated job openings during the survey period and are the four largest private industry sector employers in the Ocean State. Clearly, the Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services industry sectors had the highest concentration of low-wage vacancies, whereas Health Care & Social Assistance and Manufacturing businesses offered better-paying opportunities for job seekers. Slightly more than 60 percent of Retail Trade vacancies for which data was available, along with 52 percent of estimated job openings in Accommodation & Food Services, paid a low median wage of \$8.00 or less per hour. An additional 26 percent of estimated vacancies in these two industry sectors paid a base wage between \$8.00 and \$10.99. In contrast, 46 percent of vacancies in Health Care & Social Assistance and Manufacturing establishments offered a low median hourly wage of \$14.00 or greater.

Percent of Total Industry Sector Vacancies by Starting Hourly Pay Rate
May-June 2005



Section III

Summary of Job Vacancy Data by Major Occupational Group

The chart on the facing page summarizes job vacancy data by major occupational group. Above-average private sector vacancy rates were reported for eight of the twenty groups measured, led by Personal Care & Service (8.2%), Protective Service (6.1%), Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (6.0%), and Healthcare Support (5.0%) occupations. The lowest concentrations of job openings per existing employment were noted in the Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media (0.8%), Production (1.3%), and Installation, Maintenance & Repair (1.5%) occupational groups.

Food Preparation & Serving-Related led all occupational groups with 1,862 job openings, partially caused by seasonal hiring in the state's many restaurants. Office & Administrative Support (1,593), Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (1,514), and Sales & Related (1,459) followed Food Preparation & Serving-Related as the occupational groups with the most estimated vacancies between May and June 2005. The fewest job openings were noted in the Art, Design Entertainment, Sports & Media (45), Life, Physical & Social Science (132), and Architecture & Engineering (139) occupational groups.

An estimated six out of every ten vacancies in the Sales & Related (64%) and Personal Care & Service (61%) occupational groups were part-time positions, offering prospective employees less than 35 hours of work per week. Cashiers and Retail Salespersons vacancies in the former, and Personal & Home Care Aides in the latter occupational group, accounted for these high concentrations of part-time openings. More than half of the vacancies in the Protective Service (59%), Food Preparation & Serving-Related (53%), and Healthcare Support (50%) occupational groups were also part-time. It is also important to recognize those occupational groups with a significant number of temporary or seasonal vacancies. For example, while Food Preparation & Serving-Related led all occupational groups with more than 1,800 vacancies, nearly one-third of them were temporary or seasonal, likely to be contracted after the busy summer months. In contrast, just 6% of the nearly 1,600 Office & Administrative Support vacancies estimated were temporary positions. The status of job vacancies, whether they be temporary or permanent, can be an important indicator of job quality and security.

High percentages of vacancies in several occupational groups were being constantly recruited for or always open for hire, an indication of workforce shortages or high turnover. The latter likely impacted the Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance, Protective Service, and Transportation & Material Moving occupational groups, where more than half of all estimated vacancies were always open for hire. Many of the estimated openings in these groups are low-skill jobs in businesses which find it difficult to retain employees over time. Also, 53 percent of estimated Healthcare Support vacancies were constantly being recruited for, predominately openings for Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants. However, vacancies in other occupational groups had been open for a much shorter period of time, indicating seasonal hiring or an abundance of qualified applicants. For example, 55 percent of Office & Administrative Support and 52 percent of Management vacancies had been open for less than thirty days.

Data collected on education and experience requirements provided little surprise, as "white-collar," professional occupations required the highest levels of both, while low-skill, low-wage occupations generally required less than a college education and little previous work experience. For instance, all of the estimated Architecture & Engineering vacancies required a college degree (associate, bachelor, or advanced) and 97 percent asked applicants to have experience related to the position. Similarly, 85 percent of Management job openings called

Job Vacancy Characteristics by Selected Major Occupational Group

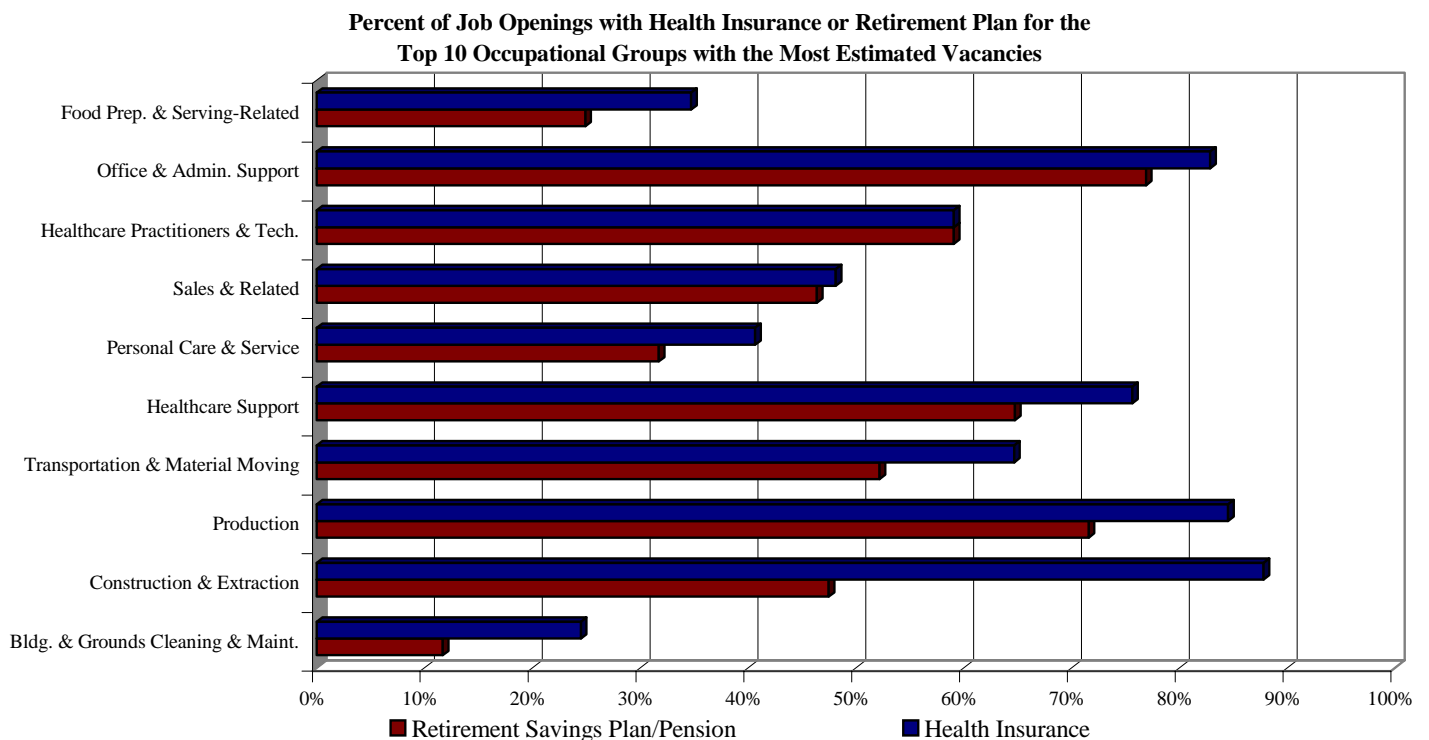
Major Occupational Group	Estimated Vacancies	Occupational Vacancy Rate	Part-time	Temporary/Seasonal	Open for less than 30 days	Constantly Recruiting/Always Hiring	Requiring a College Education	Experience Related to Position	Low Median Hourly Wage	Health Insurance	Retirement Svgs. Plan/Pension
Private Sector Total	12,114	3.0%	39%	14%	36%	34%	25%	46%	\$10.20	61%	52%
Architecture & Engineering	139	2.4%	1%	1%	46%	4%	100%	97%	\$28.85	99%	92%
Arts, Design, Entertain., Sports & Media	45	0.8%	18%	9%	56%	5%	83%	81%	\$16.87	75%	75%
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	423	3.3%	44%	16%	27%	56%	0%	30%	\$7.75	25%	12%
Business & Financial Operations	307	1.8%	3%	0%	38%	9%	76%	84%	\$15.87	98%	86%
Community & Social Services	201	2.5%	12%	2%	7%	11%	94%	69%	\$13.46	89%	79%
Computer & Mathematical	193	2.0%	2%	2%	53%	3%	87%	97%	\$21.63	96%	86%
Construction & Extraction	427	2.3%	21%	16%	14%	58%	1%	71%	\$14.00	88%	47%
Education, Training & Library	299	2.4%	20%	5%	75%	8%	45%	70%	\$8.75	54%	44%
Food Preparation & Serving-Related	1,862	4.3%	53%	32%	43%	39%	0%	47%	\$7.50	35%	25%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,514	6.0%	44%	16%	12%	38%	91%	43%	\$24.04	59%	59%
Healthcare Support	733	5.0%	50%	3%	23%	53%	4%	45%	\$10.00	76%	65%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	231	1.5%	5%	3%	51%	13%	3%	83%	\$12.50	91%	72%
Life, Physical & Social Science	132	4.9%	17%	17%	38%	17%	96%	77%	\$16.83	60%	58%
Management	346	1.9%	4%	1%	52%	2%	85%	92%	\$23.74	99%	83%
Office & Admin. Support	1,593	2.3%	22%	6%	55%	15%	15%	51%	\$11.30	83%	77%
Personal Care & Service	852	8.2%	61%	11%	24%	49%	5%	7%	\$9.00	41%	32%
Production	478	1.3%	10%	6%	42%	27%	4%	54%	\$9.80	85%	72%
Protective Service	238	6.1%	59%	21%	44%	53%	0%	27%	\$8.00	34%	26%
Sales & Related	1,459	3.2%	64%	13%	42%	29%	9%	25%	\$7.40	48%	46%
Transportation & Material Moving	638	2.6%	41%	29%	19%	61%	0%	19%	\$9.25	65%	52%

for a college education, with 92 percent seeking experienced workers. On the other hand, nearly all Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance, Food Preparation & Serving-Related, Transportation & Material Moving, and Protective Service occupational vacancies required a high school diploma or less. A large portion of these openings asked for general work experience or had no work experience requirement at all.

The highest paying vacancies (low median hourly wage) were measured in the Architecture & Engineering (\$28.85), Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (\$24.04), Management (\$23.74), and Computer & Mathematical (\$21.63) occupational groups, all well-above the private sector average of \$10.20 per hour. The high hourly wage in Healthcare was driven by openings for Registered Nurses, an occupation whose vacancies paid a low median hourly wage of \$28.00. Job openings in four occupational groups offered median wages of \$8.00 or less - Protective Service (\$8.00), Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance (\$7.75), Food Preparation & Serving-Related (\$7.50), and Sales & Related (\$7.40). Many of the vacancies in these categories were part-time or temporary/seasonal positions, requiring a high school diploma or less, and little in the way of previous work experience.

Most of the vacancies in professional occupations offering high wages also tended to have health insurance and a retirement plan. More than nine out of ten Architecture & Engineering vacancies had one or both of these benefits. Similarly, nearly all of the Management job openings estimated during the survey period offered health insurance, with 83 percent providing access to a pension plan. These two benefits were less frequently offered for low-skill, low-wage vacancies in industries reliant upon part-time workers. Approximately one-third of Protective Service vacancies offered prospective hires health insurance and just 26 percent had a retirement plan. Similar ratios were noted for vacancies in the Food Preparation & Serving-Related occupational group.

The following pages break down this data for individual selected occupations, particularly those which had a high number of overall estimated vacancies and those which reported above-average vacancy rates.



Section IV

Job Vacancy Data by Occupation

Job vacancies in over 300 occupations were reported throughout the Ocean State between May and June 2005. This section will focus on occupations for which a significant number of job openings was estimated and whose job vacancy rates or characteristics were of interest. However, it should be noted that job openings were reported in a wide variety of fields, ranging from high-demand occupations such as registered nurses and restaurant cooks, to others which might not be as obvious, yet still play a vital role in our economy, including broadcast news analysts, foreign language teachers, statisticians, employment & recruitment specialists, concierges, hazardous materials removal workers, meeting & convention planners, motorcycle mechanics, and sewing machine operators.

Of the occupations with the most estimated vacancies during the survey period, several were primarily concentrated in Health Care & Social Assistance industries. This list included three of the top five occupations - Registered Nurses (962), Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants (630), and Personal & Home Care Aides (539) -

Top 35 Occupations with the Most Estimated Vacancies

May - June 2005

<i>Occupational Title</i>	<i>Estimated Vacancies</i>
Registered Nurses	962
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	630
Cashiers	592
Retail Salespersons	561
Personal & Home Care Aides	539
Waiters & Waitresses	374
Customer Service Representatives	340
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	339
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers, Hand	307
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Concession, & Coffee Shop	290
Restaurant Cooks	275
Food Preparation Workers	245
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	223
Carpenters	214
Security Guards	180
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	140
Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers	129
Tellers	127
Insurance Claims & Policy Processing Clerks	126
First-Line Supv./Mgrs. of Food Prep. & Serving Workers	123
Teacher Assistants	119
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	119
Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	113
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	101
Executive Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	100
Mental Health Counselors	89
Telemarketers	89
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	89
Data Entry Keyers	89
First-Line Supv./Mgrs. of Office & Admin. Support Workers	88
School Bus Drivers	88
Bartenders	84
Dishwashers	82
Accountants & Auditors	78
Recreation Workers	75

as well as Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses (223), Teacher Assistants (119), Preschool Teachers (101), and Mental Health Counselors (89). Due to the increasing demand for healthcare services throughout Rhode Island, job vacancies for numerous related occupations were reported, such as EMT & Paramedics (66), Dental Hygienists (47), Physical Therapist Assistants (15), Respiratory Therapists (14), Cardiovascular Technologists & Technicians (11) and Physician Assistants (11).

Other occupations with a significant number of vacancies were tied to the seasonal demands of the state's many restaurants, hotels, and recreational facilities. While large numbers of job openings for Waiters & Waitresses (374), Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners (339), Counter Attendants (290), Restaurant Cooks (275), Food Preparation Workers (245), Bartenders (84), Dishwashers (82), and Recreation Workers (75) were reported, many of these vacancies were part-time and/or temporary positions offering low-wages and few benefits.

Beyond the top 35 list to the left were numerous other occupations with a notable number of estimated vacancies, many of which required a college education and offered good wages and benefits. These included Financial Managers (70), Industrial Engineers (38), Computer Systems Software Engineers (38), Database Administrators (33), Insurance Underwriters (25), Biochemists (22), Financial Analysts (21), Education Administrators (20), and Market Research Analysts (20). Each of these occupations reported a job vacancy rate above 3.0 percent during the survey period.

Job Vacancy Rate

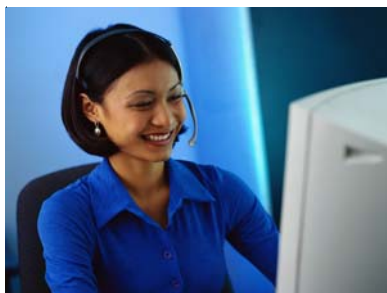
While the list of occupations with the most estimated vacancies is heavy with low-skill, low-wage positions, an occupational analysis by job vacancy rates provides a different perspective on the state of Rhode Island's job market. It includes an interesting combination of low-skill and high-skill jobs requiring a varying degree of educational attainment levels. Recognition of this occupational mix is important for policymakers and workforce development personnel seeking to maximize economic opportunities and realize the full potential of the Ocean State's human capital.

Occupational Vacancy Rates and Characteristics for Selected Occupations in the Private Sector

(sorted by occupational vacancy rate)

<i>Occupational Title</i>	<i>Estimated Occupational Vacancies</i>	<i>Occupational Vacancy Rate</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Temporary or Seasonal</i>	<i>Requiring a College Degree</i>	<i>Low Median Hourly Wage</i>
Personal & Home Care Aides	539	33.7%	58%	0%	0%	\$ 9.50
Biochemists & Biophysicists	22	22.0%	0%	0%	100%	N/A
Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics	66	17.8%	17%	0%	0%	\$ 11.00
Mental Health Counselors	89	17.8%	0%	0%	100%	\$ 14.71
Amusement & Recreation Attendants	46	14.4%	59%	100%	0%	N/A
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	339	13.6%	48%	16%	0%	\$ 7.75
Recreational Protective Service Workers (Lifeguards, etc.)	44	12.9%	100%	30%	0%	\$ 7.19
Database Administrators	33	12.2%	0%	3%	100%	\$ 16.66
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	223	12.2%	56%	1%	77%	\$ 17.06
Restaurant Cooks	275	10.3%	3%	14%	0%	\$ 12.00
Registered Nurses	962	10.1%	42%	22%	98%	\$ 28.00
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	630	9.6%	47%	1%	0%	\$ 10.00
Food Preparation Workers	245	9.5%	54%	53%	0%	\$ 8.00
Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers	129	9.3%	67%	20%	0%	\$ 6.75
Clinical, Counseling & School Psychologists	37	9.3%	54%	0%	100%	\$ 30.00
Recreation Workers	75	8.9%	49%	49%	7%	\$ 7.25
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators (Metal/Plastic)	29	8.8%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 19.23
Insurance Claims & Policy Processing Clerks	126	8.6%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 12.02
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Concession, & Coffee Shop	290	8.5%	69%	18%	0%	\$ 7.00
Compensation, Benefits & Job Analysis Specialists	23	7.9%	0%	0%	55%	\$ 14.42
Dental Hygienists	47	7.7%	100%	N/A	100%	\$ 25.00
Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technologists	43	7.7%	74%	0%	50%	\$ 12.00
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	101	7.3%	12%	12%	38%	\$ 8.75
Chemists	25	6.9%	0%	N/A	100%	N/A
Social & Community Service Managers	34	6.9%	0%	0%	92%	\$ 26.44
Tellers	127	6.6%	28%	0%	0%	\$ 10.00
Telemarketers	89	6.6%	78%	4%	0%	\$ 10.00
Industrial Engineers	38	6.1%	0%	0%	100%	\$ 28.85
Multi. Machine Tool Setters, Operat. & Tenders (Metal/Plastic)	36	5.9%	6%	0%	0%	\$ 9.80
Security Guards	180	5.8%	53%	21%	0%	\$ 8.00
Customer Service Representatives	340	5.0%	16%	1%	14%	\$ 13.00
Cashiers	592	5.0%	69%	17%	0%	\$ 7.00
Carpenters	214	4.8%	26%	23%	0%	\$ 14.00
Physical Therapists	36	4.4%	19%	0%	100%	\$ 23.00
Financial Managers	70	4.3%	0%	0%	100%	\$ 21.63
Teacher Assistants	119	4.2%	36%	0%	25%	\$ 7.00
Insurance Underwriters	25	4.1%	0%	0%	88%	\$ 16.83
Electricians	63	3.9%	0%	0%	2%	\$ 20.00
Retail Salespersons	561	3.8%	70%	16%	0%	\$ 7.00
Computer Systems Software Engineers	38	3.6%	8%	0%	100%	\$ 28.85
Waiters & Waitresses	374	3.3%	67%	50%	0%	\$ 6.87
Financial Analysts	21	3.2%	0%	0%	100%	\$ 21.75

At 33.7 percent, Personal & Home Care Aides had the highest occupational vacancy rate during the survey period. Although 539 vacancies were estimated for this occupation, nearly 60 percent of these job openings were part-time and offered a low median hourly wage of just \$9.50. Despite these statistics, it is an in-demand occupation suited for low-skilled workers - all of the Personal & Home Care Aides vacancies for which data was available required a high school diploma/GED or less, and 95 percent of these vacancies did not require previous experience related to the position.



Other occupations spanning a variety of industries also present opportunities for low-skilled workers and prospective multiple jobholders, including Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners (13.6%), Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants (9.6%), Food Preparation Workers (9.5%), Recreation Workers (8.9%), Telemarketers (6.6%), and Security Guards (5.8%). Nearly all of the vacancies measured in these occupations required a high school diploma/GED or less and a high percentage required general work experience or had no experience requirement altogether. Moreover, both full- and part-time job openings were available in these occupations.

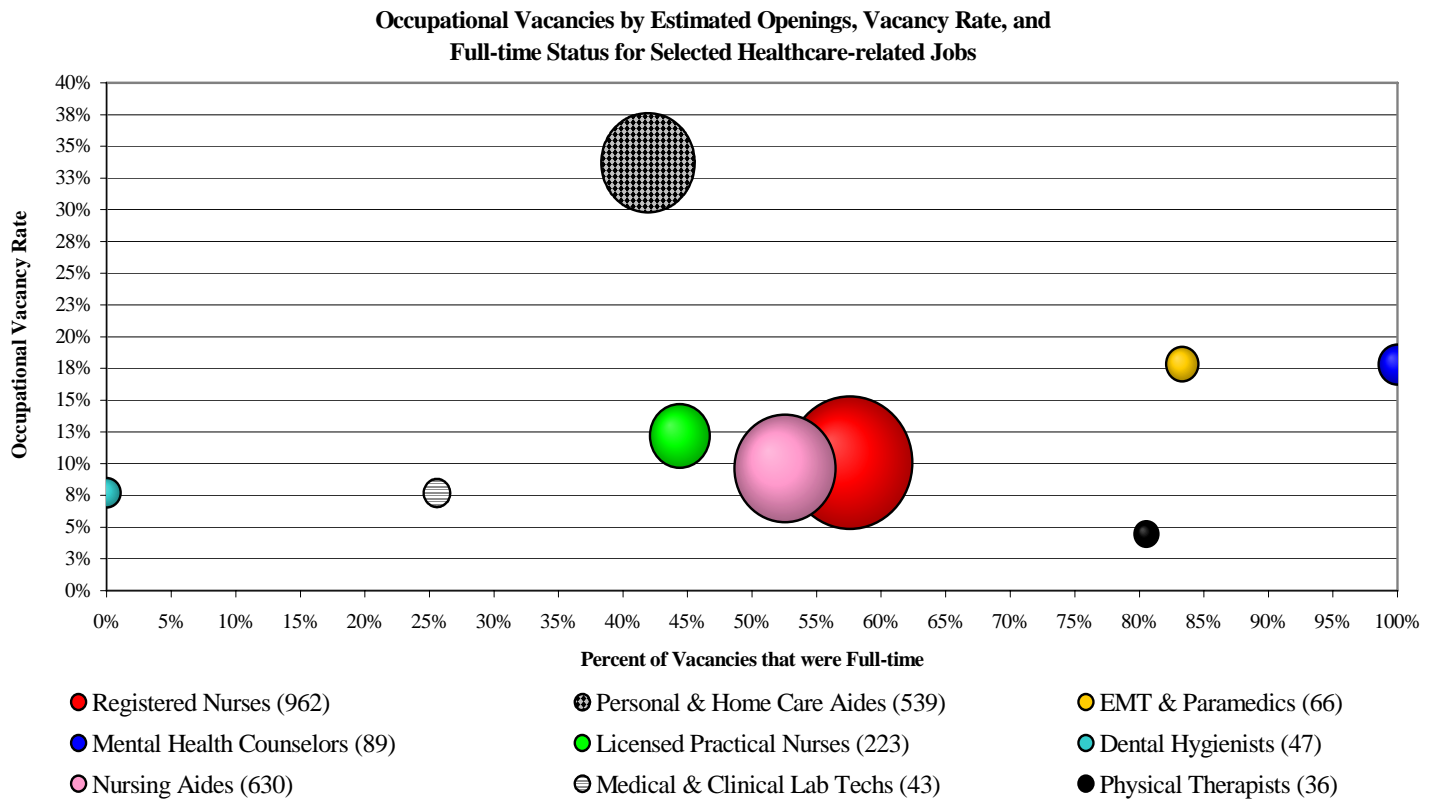
Vacancies were also reported in occupations requiring slightly more education than the aforementioned. EMT & Paramedics were in high demand during the survey period, with a vacancy rate of 17.8 percent. Four out of five EMT openings offered 35 or more hours per week to prospective hires, with a low median wage of \$11.00 per hour. Employers also noted that these occupational vacancies required some vocational training, yet no previous work experience was required for 70 percent of estimated EMT openings. Similarly, vocational training was required for most of the Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operator (8.8%) vacancies estimated between May and June 2005, all of which were full-time jobs. These occupational openings offered a low median hourly wage of \$19.23. Nearly two dozen openings for Biochemists were also estimated, an occupation which posted a notable 22 percent vacancy rate. Although median wages were not available from survey data, the Labor Market Information unit's Occupational Employment Statistics program estimates an entry level wage of \$24.08 for this occupation.

Well-paying occupations requiring college educations reported significant vacancy rates as well, including Clinical, Counseling & School Psychologists (9.3%), Dental Hygienists (7.7%), Social & Community Service Managers (6.9%), Industrial Engineers (6.1%), Physical Therapists (4.4%), and Financial Managers (4.3%). Private sector businesses reporting vacancies in these occupations offered a low median hourly wage of \$20.00 or more and generally provided access to an array of benefits, particularly health insurance and retirement plans.

At a low median hourly wage of \$28.00, Registered Nurses was one of the highest paying occupations for which vacancies were measured. Ten out of every 100 filled RN positions were estimated as being vacant, totalling 962 job openings - the highest occupational total estimated in the private sector. This high level of occupational demand in Rhode Island is consistent with regional and national trends. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook maintains that "more new jobs are expected be created for RNs than for any other occupation," a result of a rapidly aging population and "technological advances in patient care, which permit a greater number of medical problems to be treated, and an increasing emphasis on preventive care." These trends have long-term implications not only for nurses, but also for many other occupations providing healthcare-related services to our population.



This presents a unique challenge to local industry employers, educators, and workforce development personnel, as the demand for many healthcare-related occupations in Rhode Island is already above the private sector average. The chart below presents a three-dimensional snapshot of current occupational demand for nine healthcare-related occupations in the Ocean State. Each bubble represents a unique occupation, as described in the chart legend. Graphed on the vertical axis is the occupation’s vacancy rate; on the horizontal axis, the percent of estimated vacancies that were full-time (35+ hours per week) jobs; finally, the size of the bubble represents the total number of estimated vacancies - the larger the bubble, the more vacancies were estimated for that occupation. When combined with our survey’s data on vacancy duration, a severe gap seems to exist between labor supply and industry demand for many of these occupations, several of which had hundreds of estimated job openings each. Even where educational and skill requirements are low, the sheer number of vacancies will make it difficult to meet employer demand in the short-term. This problem is magnified for more skilled occupations requiring specialized education and/or professional licencing (i.e. RNs, LPNs), stretching resources and testing the capacity at our state’s colleges and universities to produce a qualified pool of labor.

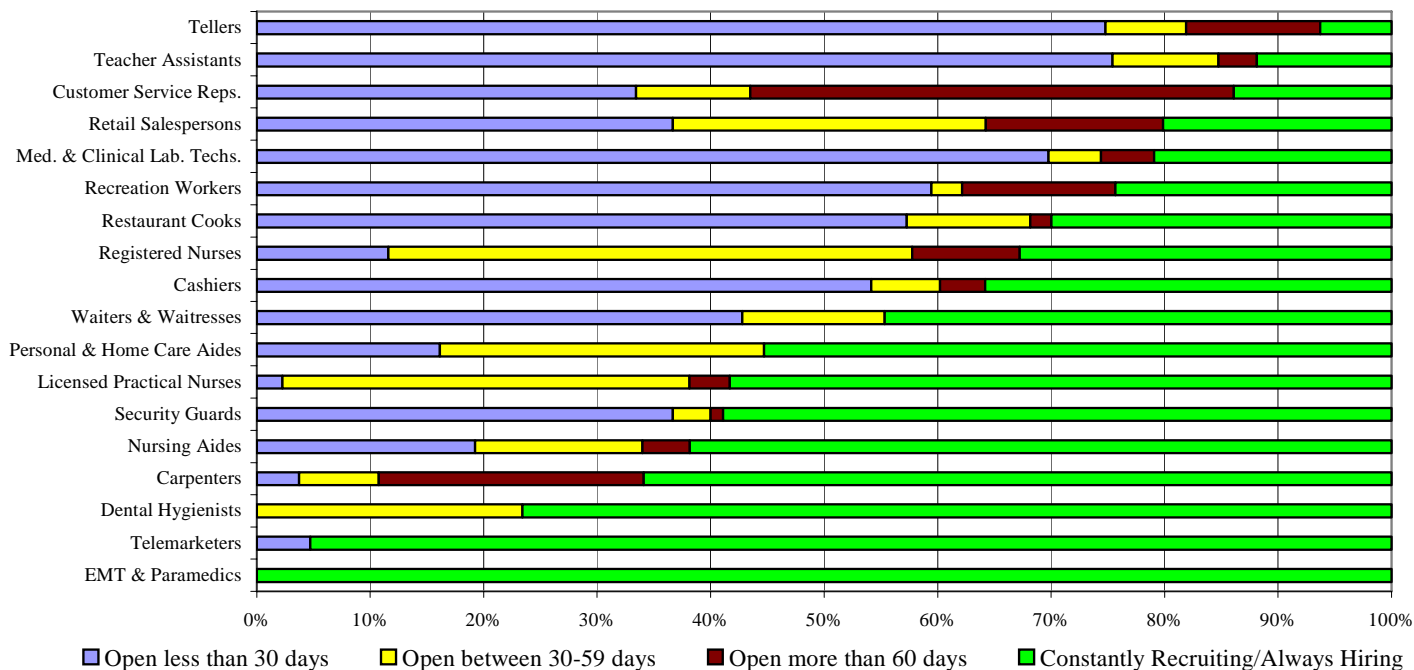


Vacancy Duration

Numerous occupations reported a high concentration of long-term vacancies, perhaps indicating skill shortages in the labor force and/or a persistent gap between industry demand and the supply of willing, qualified applicants in the area. This is particularly true for healthcare-related occupations. For instance, all of the estimated openings for EMTs were being constantly recruited for, as were 77 percent of Dental Hygienists, 62 percent of Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants, and 58 percent of LPN vacancies. Similarly, one-third of estimated RN openings were continuously open, on par with the private sector average. Lengthy vacancy durations may also indicate high-turnover, particularly in low-skilled, low-wage occupations such as Telemarketers, Security Guards, and Waiters & Waitresses.

Vacancy Duration for Selected Occupations

May - June 2005



In contrast, a high concentration of short duration vacancies may indicate that job openings are being filled quickly, perhaps due to an abundant supply of qualified applicants or seasonal factors. The latter certainly attributed to the fact that all of the Amusement & Recreation Attendants vacancies for which usable data was available had been open for less than 30 days, as were more than half of the Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers, Recreational Protective Services Workers, Recreation Workers, and Restaurant Cooks vacancies.

Part-time/Full-time Status

As expected, most of the occupations reporting high concentrations of part-time vacancies were low wage jobs requiring a minimal amount of education and experience, including Bartenders (90% part-time), Fast Food Cooks (89%), Telemarketers (78%), Retail Salespersons (70%), Counter & Coffee Shop Attendants (69%), Cashiers (69%), Waiters & Waitresses (67%), and Security Guards (53%). Many of these job openings were in establishments preparing for increased summer businesses. It is likely that a fair share of these vacancies will be filled by students on summer break and moonlighters seeking supplemental income. A majority of Personal & Home Care Aides (58%) and Licensed Practical Nurses (56%) vacancies also offered less than 35 hours of work per week. Combined, these two occupations accounted for 6.3 percent of all estimated private sector vacancies during the survey period.

Full-time work was available in numerous occupations, particularly “white-collar” professional occupations requiring a college education. High concentrations of vacancies offering 35 or more hours of work per week included Mental Health Counselors (100% full-time), Chemists (100%), Insurance Underwriters (100%), Social & Community Service Managers (100%), Financial Analysts (100%), Accountants & Auditors (97%), Child, Family & School Social Workers (94%), and Physical Therapists (81%).

Educational & Experience Requirements

Occupational vacancies with a wide range of educational requirements were measured throughout the economy between May and June 2005. Although the survey measured vacancies in six educational categories, we can divide nearly all vacancies into two summary categories: those requiring a high school diploma or less and those which required a college education, whether it be on the associate, bachelor, or advanced levels. The former

group included vacancies for Construction Laborers, Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners, Cashiers, Food Preparation Workers, Stock Clerks & Order Fillers, Telemarketers, and Security Guards - occupations that require little previous experience and are learned quickly by new hires. However, these positions often pay low wages, offer few benefits, and have limited career advancement opportunities.

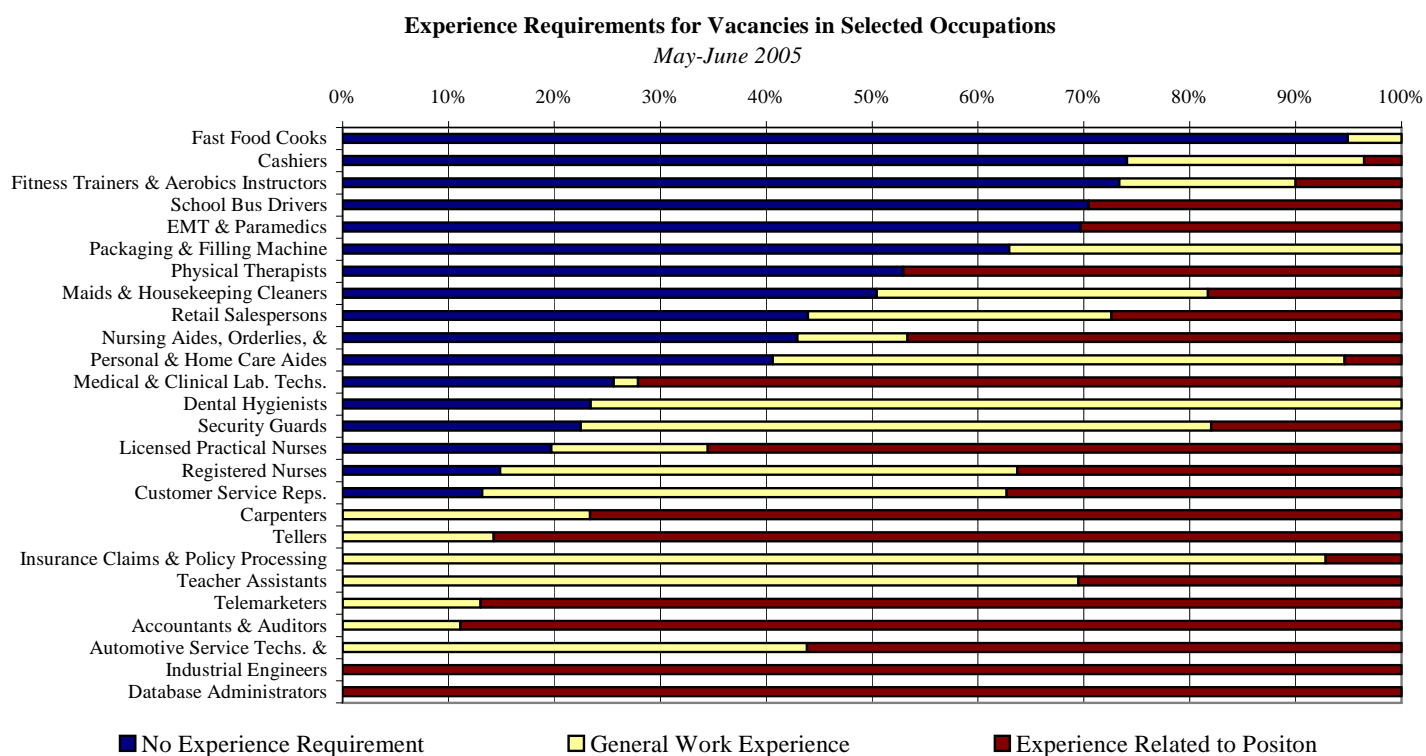
Vocational training was required for a significant number of Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics, EMT & Paramedics, Electricians, and Carpenters vacancies. Employers also required vocational training for Cardiovascular Technologists & Technicians, Executive Secretaries & Administrative Assistants, Sheet Metal Workers, Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, and Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators openings.

A college education was required for all Computer Software Applications Engineers, Database Administrators, Industrial Engineers, Financial Managers, Mental Health Counselors, Physical Therapists, Physical Therapist Assistants, Occupational Therapists, Elementary School Teachers, Chemists, and Biochemists vacancies for which data was available.

Educational Requirements for Vacancies in Selected Occupations

(sorted by concentration of vacancies with no educational requirement)

<i>Occupational Title</i>	<i>No Educational Requirement</i>	<i>High School Diploma/ GED</i>	<i>Vocational Training</i>	<i>Associate Degree</i>	<i>Bachelor Degree</i>	<i>Advanced Degree</i>
Private Sector Total	29%	40%	6%	8%	15%	3%
Construction Laborers	97%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Fiberglass Laminators & Fabricators	75%	12%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Cashiers	73%	27%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Food Preparation Workers	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Restaurant Cooks	66%	21%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Waiters & Waitresses	61%	36%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	60%	35%	0%	0%	6%	0%
School Bus Drivers	45%	55%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Telemarketers	45%	55%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Retail Salespersons	43%	49%	9%	0%	0%	0%
Security Guards	38%	62%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Automotive Service Techs. & Mechanics	24%	8%	68%	0%	0%	0%
Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors	13%	22%	0%	0%	64%	0%
Personal & Home Care Aides	11%	89%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Customer Service Representatives	5%	81%	0%	12%	2%	0%
Carpenters	5%	53%	42%	0%	0%	0%
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, & Attendants	4%	69%	27%	0%	0%	0%
Registered Nurses	0%	0%	2%	40%	57%	1%
Teacher Assistants	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Mental Health Counselors	0%	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
Accountants & Auditors	0%	18%	0%	8%	74%	0%
Financial Managers	0%	0%	0%	0%	94%	6%
EMT & Paramedics	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Electricians	0%	37%	62%	2%	0%	0%
Medical & Clinical Lab. Techs.	0%	30%	20%	10%	40%	0%
Industrial Engineers	0%	0%	0%	3%	82%	16%
Social & Community Service Managers	0%	8%	0%	4%	88%	0%
Database Administrators	0%	0%	0%	6%	94%	0%
CPU Software Applications Engineers	0%	0%	0%	0%	79%	21%
Insurance Underwriters	0%	12%	0%	40%	48%	0%



In regards to experience requirements, a high-proportion of vacancies for most low-skill occupations did not require the applicant to have previous work experience. This includes Cooks, Dining Room and Counter Attendants, Cashiers, Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners, Retail Salespersons, Ushers & Lobby Attendants, and Stock Clerks & Order Fillers.

Interestingly, 70 percent of estimated EMT & Paramedic vacancies also had no experience requirement. One year ago, our survey of the healthcare sector determined that all of the estimated EMT & Paramedic vacancies for which data was available required experience related to the position. With lower experience requirements, combined with the fact that this occupation had a high vacancy rate (17.8%) and lengthy vacancy duration (100% constantly recruiting), current survey data indicates that employers are having a very difficult time finding experienced, qualified workers for these healthcare-related job openings. It may be that businesses have found it so difficult to hire for their EMT & Paramedic vacancies, that they have been forced to loosen their applicant requirements during the past year.

Vacancies in many professional, “white collar” occupations, particularly those requiring a college degree, asked for prospective hires to have experience related to the open position. This included all Database Administrators and Industrial Engineers vacancies for which data was available, as well as a high concentration of openings for Accountants & Auditors, Financial Managers, Education Administrators, Social & Community Service Managers, Management Analysts, Computer Software Engineers, Mental Health Counselors, and Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technicians.

Benefits

Low-skill and predominately part-time occupations generally reported the highest concentrations of vacancies without any benefits, including Waiters & Waitresses, Recreation Workers, Food Preparation Workers, Dishwashers, Cashiers, Telemarketers, Shipping & Receiving Clerks, and Retail Salespersons. More than three-quarters of estimated Dental Hygienist vacancies also offered no benefits. Interestingly, employers reported that 44 percent of RN job openings offered none of the benefits listed, significantly higher than the 11 percent of similar vacancies reported in last year’s survey of healthcare industries.

Most vacancies in “white-collar” occupations offered a wide range of benefits. All of Financial Managers, Database Administrators, Insurance Underwriters, and Medical Assistants openings measured had health insurance, paid sick and vacation time, tuition reimbursement, and access to a retirement plan. Also, all of the Electricians, Financial Analysts, Industrial Engineers, Physical Therapists, and Social & Community Service Managers vacancies for which data was available offered both health insurance and a retirement plan.

Just over three-quarters of Nursing Aides vacancies offered health insurance, while 63 percent offered a retirement plan or pension. In contrast, just 40 percent of Personal & Home Care Aides job openings had healthcare and 47 percent offered a retirement plan or pension.

Job Vacancies by Selected Occupation and Benefits Offered

<i>Occupational Title</i>	<i>Health Insurance</i>	<i>Paid Sick Leave</i>	<i>Paid Vacation</i>	<i>Tuition Reimburse.</i>	<i>Retirement Plan/Pension</i>	<i>No Benefits Offered</i>
Private Sector Total	61%	47%	63%	30%	52%	32%
Accountants & Auditors	93%	93%	93%	87%	89%	0%
Automotive Service Techs. & Mechanics	100%	91%	100%	19%	100%	0%
Cashiers	38%	28%	42%	15%	43%	57%
Child, Family & School Social Workers	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%	6%
Computer Systems Software Engineers	87%	87%	87%	13%	100%	0%
Construction Laborers	57%	16%	57%	3%	16%	43%
Customer Service Reps.	98%	66%	98%	79%	87%	1%
Database Administrators	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Dental Hygienists	0%	0%	23%	0%	23%	77%
Dishwashers	39%	34%	39%	24%	34%	61%
Electricians	100%	51%	100%	21%	100%	0%
EMT & Paramedics	88%	36%	88%	5%	88%	12%
Executive Secretaries & Admin. Assts.	96%	95%	97%	56%	85%	3%
Fast Food Cooks	68%	0%	5%	0%	5%	32%
Financial Analysts	100%	100%	100%	93%	100%	0%
Financial Managers	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Food Preparation Workers	27%	20%	5%	4%	22%	73%
Industrial Engineers	100%	66%	100%	82%	100%	0%
Insurance Underwriters	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Janitors & Cleaners	70%	74%	87%	39%	78%	13%
Licensed Practical Nurses	54%	84%	84%	12%	60%	12%
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	9%	4%	61%	4%	5%	35%
Medical & Clinical Lab. Techs.	95%	83%	95%	39%	95%	5%
Medical Assistants	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Mental Health Counselors	100%	100%	100%	90%	78%	0%
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	76%	71%	81%	32%	63%	13%
Personal & Home Care Aides	40%	62%	72%	23%	47%	27%
Physical Therapists	100%	86%	100%	78%	100%	0%
Preschool Teachers, Ex. Spec. Ed.	26%	88%	88%	0%	26%	12%
Receptionists & Information Clerks	57%	25%	54%	50%	57%	43%
Recreation Workers	20%	20%	20%	4%	4%	80%
Registered Nurses	54%	51%	56%	42%	52%	44%
Restaurant Cooks	44%	25%	44%	21%	29%	48%
Retail Salespersons	48%	33%	49%	24%	38%	50%
Security Guards	38%	6%	37%	4%	27%	44%
Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks	45%	36%	45%	2%	44%	55%
Social & Community Service Managers	100%	100%	100%	9%	100%	0%
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	65%	51%	65%	35%	65%	35%
Teacher Assistants	64%	64%	64%	20%	42%	36%
Telemarketers	45%	45%	45%	27%	45%	55%
Tellers	76%	76%	81%	76%	76%	19%
Waiters & Waitresses	17%	1%	16%	1%	9%	81%

Survey Methodology

The Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey produces point-in-time estimates: employers were asked to provide information on current job vacancies at the time of survey completion, including job titles, number of job vacancies, educational and experience requirements, wages and benefits, and the length of time vacancies had been open. It is important to note that this survey provides *estimates* for the demand of workers during the survey period - exact counts of all job vacancies in the labor market cannot be known with certainty. Job vacancy statistics should be used in conjunction with other labor market information to gain a more complete understanding of the state's labor force conditions.

The information in this report was derived from a survey of non-farm, private-sector establishments throughout the Ocean State, excluding temporary help services and private households. Sample units were randomly selected from the state's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (ES-202) database and stratified by three-digit industry and size class. Survey responses were collected for approximately seven-weeks during May and June 2005. Each sample unit was mailed a letter explaining the purpose of the job vacancy survey, a brief survey form, and a postage-paid envelope for its return. Respondents could also report their results using fax, phone, or e-mail.

Overall, usable survey data was collected from 58 percent of the sample. To account for non-respondents, sample units were re-weighted by strata. Data on job vacancy characteristics (i.e. duration, benefits, etc.) are based upon usable responses and do not account for item non-response. To calculate median wages, several assumptions had to be made. First, wage data for vacancies paying less than the state minimum wage were removed from calculations. Second, annualized and monthly salaries were converted to hourly wages, assuming 2,080 hours of work over one year. Finally, earnings from tips or commissions are not accounted for in this survey.



Occupational vacancy rates are based upon total estimated employment figures provided by LMI's Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program. For more information on OES statistics, please visit:

www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/oes.htm.

Data included within this report is subject to revision and may not be additive due to rounding and excluded data. Some detailed industry and occupational data has been withheld due to disclosure standards. No company-specific information collected during this survey has or will be released to the public. For more information on the Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey, including a list of Frequently Asked Questions, please visit our website at:

www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/jvs.htm.

Acknowledgments

The Labor Market Information unit would like to thank all of the Rhode Island employers who assisted us by completing their 2005 Job Vacancy Survey.

This project would not have been possible without their cooperation.



For more Rhode Island Labor Market Information...



At LMI, our mission is to conduct economic research and analysis that promotes a better understanding of the Rhode Island economy. We are dedicated to ensuring the highest degree of accuracy and integrity in our labor market information. The information we provide assists jobseekers, business owners, policy makers, planners, researchers and the general public in making informed economic decisions. Our data, including a variety of publications, are available on-line at: www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi.

If you have any questions or would like further information regarding Rhode Island's labor market conditions, please contact us at (401) 462-8740. We look forward to hearing from you!

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September 2005