

Rhode Island's Job Vacancy Report Summary



Spring 2008

Rhode Island Department
of Labor and Training

Labor Market Information Unit

The Department of Labor and Training's annual Job Vacancy Survey provides information on the quantity and characteristics of job vacancies available at the time of the survey. The 2008 survey results indicated that there were an estimated 8,912 job vacancies between May and June 2008. This translated to a job vacancy rate of 2.2 percent, or a little more than two job openings for every one hundred jobs filled. In comparison, there were 10,949 vacancies reported during the same survey period in 2006, reflecting a vacancy rate of 2.7 percent.

Even during less favorable economic conditions some businesses struggle to find qualified applicants to meet their needs.

During spring 2008, job vacancies were reported in all economic sectors and among all occupational groups. Economic sectors with the most openings included Health Care & Social Assistance (2,122), Accommodation & Food Services (1,809) and Retail Trade (1,770). However, each sector reported fewer vacancies this year than in spring 2006. Likewise, the three occupational groups with the most estimated vacancies—Food Preparation & Serving (1,803), Sales & Related (1,425) and Office & Administrative Support (1,032)—recorded more vacancies in 2006 than in 2008.

The majority (78.4%) of the 2008 vacancies were for permanent positions. The remaining vacancies (21.6%) were for seasonal or temporary positions concentrated among Food & Beverage Serving occupations to meet the summertime needs of Leisure & Hospitality businesses.

Over half (53.6%) of the job vacancies were for full-time positions (35 or more hours of work per week.) Part-time jobs accounted for the remaining vacancies (46.2%) in spring 2008, with many openings in the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and Accommodation & Food Services sectors

Job vacancies were noted for nearly 300 different occupations, with Registered Nurses, Retail Salespersons, Waiters & Waitresses, Nursing Aides, Food Preparation Workers and Cashiers topping the list.

Major Findings

Employers were seeking educated and experienced workers for the majority of their vacancies in spring 2008. One-third (33.3%) required a college degree (associate or higher) and nearly 38 percent required a high school diploma or GED. Nearly 60 percent of the job vacancies required experience in a related position and 20 percent required general work experience. Less than one-quarter of the job openings had no educational requirement, and just 21.5 percent were suitable for applicants with no previous work experience.

Less than 15 percent of the 2008 job vacancies required a license or certificate. In comparison, 25.8 percent of the 2006 vacancies required a license or certificate.

Less than half (45.1%) of the estimated vacancies had been open for less than 30 days and fewer than 10 percent had been open for 60 days or longer. Employers reported that they were constantly recruiting for more than 30 percent of their vacant positions. Vacancy duration changes between 2006 and 2008 showed a higher concentration of positions being listed as open less than 30 days in 2008.

The median wage reported for job vacancies in 2008 was between \$12.81 and \$14.67 per hour. In comparison, 2006 job vacancies paid a median wage between \$11.00 and \$12.00 per hour.

Many of the vacancies provided benefits such as health (62.0%), paid vacation (59.8%), retirement/pension plan (52.0%) and paid sick leave (51.9%). While there was little difference noted in the percentage of vacancies providing health or sick leave benefits, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of vacancies providing paid vacation, tuition reimbursement and retirement/pension plans in 2008 compared to 2006. Nearly one-third (32.6%) of the vacancies offered no benefits, up from 27.2 percent in 2006. The increase in vacancies offering no benefits is linked to the higher proportion of both part-time and seasonal positions reported during this survey cycle.

Private Sector Job Vacancy Data Summary Spring 2008

	2008	2006
Number of Job Vacancies	8,912	10,949
Job Vacancy Rate (vacancies per 100 filled jobs)	2.2%	2.7%
Full-Time Positions	53.8%	55.8%
Part-Time Positions	46.2%	44.2%
Vacancies Open < 30 Days	45.1%	35.8%
Vacancies Open Between 30-59 Days	15.1%	17.8%
Vacancies Open > 60 Days	8.8%	12.6%
Constantly Recruiting/Always Hiring	30.9%	33.7%
Permanent Positions	78.4%	87.0%
Temporary/Seasonal Positions	21.6%	13.0%
Vacancies Requiring a Diploma/GED	37.6%	41.0%
Vacancies Requiring Vocational Training	5.1%	8.3%
Vacancies Requiring an Associate Degree	8.5%	8.3%
Vacancies Requiring a Bachelor Degree	21.9%	16.1%
Vacancies Requiring an Advanced Degree	2.9%	3.7%
No Education Requirement	24.1%	22.3%
License or Certificate Required	14.7%	25.8%
General Work Experience Required	19.9%	20.2%
Experience Related to Position Required	58.6%	51.7%
No Experience Required	21.5%	28.1%
Median Hourly Wage Range	\$12.81 to \$14.67	\$11.00 to \$12.00
Vacancies with Health Insurance	62.0%	63.9%
Vacancies with Paid Sick Leave	51.9%	52.9%
Vacancies with Paid Vacation	59.8%	65.4%
Vacancies with Tuition Reimbursement	30.9%	40.2%
Vacancies with Retirement /Pension Plan	52.0%	60.9%
Vacancies with No Benefits Offered	32.6%	27.2%



Job Vacancy Data by Industry Sector

Once again, Health Care & Social Assistance reported the largest number of vacancies of all economic sectors with 2,122 openings, leading to a 2.8 percent vacancy rate. These postings represent nearly one-quarter (23.8%) of all vacancies in the state . The majority of Health Care & Social Assistance vacancies were full-time positions offering health insurance (72.1%), paid vacation (79.0%), retirement savings plans (73.8%) and/or paid sick leave (69.4%).

With 1,809 vacancies, Accommodation & Food Services employers ranked second in estimated job openings, accounting for 20.3 percent of all vacancies in our state. The 4.0 percent vacancy rate in this sector was the highest rate calculated for the 2008 survey. Openings in this sector were primarily part-time jobs (71.4%) with no prior work experience required. The high percentage of seasonal jobs (38.1%) contributed to this sector’s high vacancy rate. Nearly three-quarters of openings offered no benefits.

Nearly 20 percent (1,770) of the vacancies measured were in Retail Trade industries. The 2008 vacancy rate (3.5%) increased by nearly a full percentage point from the 2006 vacancy rate of 2.6 percent. Nearly 70 percent of the openings offered health care benefits and paid vacation, and nearly 60 percent offered paid sick leave.

There were 78 estimated job vacancies in the Construction sector in 2008, well below the 193 estimated openings reported in 2006. This year’s vacancy rate of 0.4 percent translated to just 4 openings per 1,000 Construction jobs filled.

Five industry sectors reported job vacancy rates above the private sector average of 2.2 percent: Accommodation & Food Services (4.0%); Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (3.6%); Retail Trade (3.5%); Health Care & Social Assistance (2.8%) and Management of Companies (2.7%).

Job Vacancy Data by Industry Sector

Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Vacancies	Job Vacancy Rate	Part-Time Vacancies	Percent of Total Vacancies
Health Care & Social Assistance	75,359	2,122	2.8%	47.5%	23.8%
Accommodation & Food Services	45,741	1,809	4.0%	71.4%	20.3%
Retail Trade	50,132	1,770	3.5%	55.1%	19.9%
Finance & Insurance	25,609	551	2.2%	5.4%	6.2%
Manufacturing	49,646	485	1.0%	10.9%	5.4%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	9,466	342	3.6%	98.2%	3.8%
Educational Services	17,578	320	1.8%	11.3%	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	15,480	298	1.9%	0.0%	3.3%
Management of Companies	9,390	256	2.7%	27.7%	2.9%
Information	10,145	221	2.2%	3.6%	2.5%
Administrative & Waste Services	24,825	172	0.7%	55.2%	1.9%
Professional & Technical Services	19,209	165	0.9%	9.1%	1.9%
Other Services	16,515	117	0.7%	64.1%	1.3%
Transportation & Warehousing	9,104	103	1.1%	53.4%	1.2%
Real Estate & Leasing	6,115	89	1.5%	16.9%	1.0%
Construction	21,226	78	0.4%	69.2%	0.9%

INFORMATION

NAME (FIRST)

ADDRESS

PERMANENT ADDRESS

ARE YOU 18 YEARS OR OLDER
 YES NO

Job Vacancy Data by Major Occupational Group

In spring 2008, nearly 60 percent of all estimated job vacancies were concentrated in just four major occupational groups: Food Preparation & Serving-Related (1,803), Sales & Related (1,425), Office & Administrative Support (1,032) and Healthcare Practitioner & Technical (965) occupations.

Due to seasonal hiring related to the summer tourism season in Rhode Island, 1,803 vacancies were reported for Food Preparation & Serving occupations. Vacancies for Waiters & Waitresses, Food Servers, Food Preparation Workers and Counter Attendants were prevalent for this group. This occupational group's 4.0 percent vacancy rate was the third highest in 2008.

An estimated 1,425 vacancies were reported for Sales & Related occupations, resulting in a 3.2 percent vacancy rate for the spring of 2008. This rate was consistent with the 2006 rate of 3.1 percent. Vacancies included Sales Clerks, Cashiers and Retail Sales Managers.

Office & Administrative Support vacancies (1,044) were dominated by Customer Service Representatives, General Office Clerks, Stock Clerks & Order Fillers and Teller positions. These four occupations represented 60 percent of all openings in this category. Nearly 90 percent were permanent positions.

At the detailed occupational level, Retail Salespersons (844); Registered Nurses (613); Waiters & Waitresses (523); Nursing Aides, Orderlies, & Attendants (401); Food Preparation Workers (302); Cashiers (296); Counter Attendants (285); Customer Service Representatives (232); Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners (190); and Social & Human Service Assistants (189) were in the most demand.

Job Vacancies by Major Occupational Group

	Estimated Vacancies	Vacancy Rate	Full-Time	Temporary/Seasonal
Private Sector Total	8,912	2.2%	53.8%	21.6%
Management Occupations	478	2.4%	83.5%	14.0%
Business & Financial Operations Occupations	322	1.8%	94.7%	10.2%
Computer & Mathematical Occupations	247	3.0%	98.0%	1.8%
Architecture & Engineering Occupations	99	1.9%	100.0%	0.0%
Life, Physical, & Social Science Occupations	72	3.1%	79.2%	22.2%
Community & Social Services Occupations	427	5.5%	64.4%	0.2%
Legal Occupations	50	1.9%	96.0%	0.0%
Education, Training, & Library Occupations	176	1.6%	93.2%	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment & Media Occupations	49	0.9%	57.1%	40.8%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations	965	3.5%	55.4%	5.2%
Healthcare Support Occupations	508	2.7%	39.2%	2.8%
Protective Service Occupations	93	2.6%	36.6%	40.9%
Food Preparation & Serving Occupations	1,803	4.0%	20.4%	47.1%
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	345	2.5%	55.4%	15.1%
Personal Care & Service Occupations	85	7.3%	29.4%	44.6%
Sales & Related Occupations	1,425	3.2%	47.2%	36.8%
Office & Administrative Support Occupations	1,032	1.3%	58.0%	11.3%
Construction & Extraction Occupations	76	0.4%	28.9%	71.1%
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair Occupations	108	0.7%	80.6%	16.7%
Production Occupations	281	0.8%	95.7%	1.4%
Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	271	1.1%	64.2%	5.7%