



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 24, 2004

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Labor Market Information

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**Increase in Maximum Weekly Benefit Rates
for Unemployed Individuals Announced**

CRANSTON – New maximum weekly benefit rates of \$462 for Unemployment Insurance, and \$588 for Temporary Disability Insurance, will be in effect for claimants whose Benefit Years begin on or after July 1, 2004, announced Adelita S. Orefice, Director of the Department of Labor and Training.

These new rates reflect an increase of \$21 for Unemployment Insurance (UI) and \$27 for Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI). The previous maximum rates were \$441 for UI and \$561 for TDI. Individuals who established claims prior to July 1, 2004 will continue to be paid at their present rate for the duration of their Benefit Year. A Benefit Year is the 52-week period that begins once a new claim is filed.

The maximum rate for Unemployment Insurance benefits is set at 67 percent of the average weekly wage of workers covered by the Employment Security Act. The average weekly wage paid to workers covered by the Employment Security Act in calendar year 2003 was \$690.62. Sixty-seven percent of that average weekly wage is \$462.71. After rounding down to the next lower dollar amount, the new maximum for Unemployment Insurance will be \$462.

The maximum weekly benefit rate for Temporary Disability Insurance is set at 85 percent of the average weekly wage paid to workers covered by the Employment Security Act. Accordingly, the new maximum for Temporary Disability Insurance is \$588 (85 percent of \$690.62 rounded to the next highest dollar amount).

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The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training offers a wide array of employment and training services to both the general public and to individuals with unusual barriers to employment. DLT is ready to assist any job seeker, whether the goal is a first job, a better job, or a career change. Rhode Island's work force is protected through the enforcement of labor laws, prevailing wage rates, and work place health and safety standards. Temporary income support is available to unemployed, sick, or injured workers and a comprehensive rehabilitation program is available to those injured on the job.

DLT is dedicated to the growth and competitiveness of Rhode Island industry, administering a variety of training grants, tax credits, and apprenticeship programs to help employers. Economic indicators and labor market information are available for long-range planning. The Agency engages in active outreach, helping large and small employers retain their best workers or retrain their existing work force. At no cost to the employer, DLT will also screen job applicants, post job vacancies, and help businesses institute cost-sharing programs that can avert layoffs.

For more information on the innovative programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders at the Department of Labor and Training, please call (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.

*Equal Opportunity Employer
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TDD (401) 462-8006*

DLT-LMI-04-07

