



FOR RELEASE
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Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Edges Up in June
The Number of Jobs Increases Marginally

Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training Director Adelita S. Orefice announced today that Rhode Island's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for June was 5.8 percent. The June unemployment rate is up 0.2 of a percentage point from May. The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents climbed by 1,300 in June to an estimated 33,200. A year ago, the unemployment rate was 5.4 percent and the jobless level stood at 31,100. Nationally, the unemployment rate for June held steady at 5.6 percent.

	<u>Jun. 04</u>	<u>May 04</u>	<u>Jun. 03</u>
Rhode Island	5.8%	5.6%	5.4%*
United States	5.6%	5.6%	6.3%
* Revised			

The national rate has been at 5.6 percent in all but one month this year. Rhode Island's unemployment rate surpassed the national average for the second time in three months.

"The trend in the unemployment rate over the past several months indicates that Rhode Island has yet to feel the effects of improvement at the national level," said Director Orefice. "While we are encouraged that payroll employment moved in the right direction for the second straight month, the uptick in the unemployment rate and the addition of just 600 jobs in June reflect the continued slow pace of labor market activity."

Rhode Island Job Highlights

The Rhode Island job count increased in June, the second consecutive month of growth following two successive months of reduced employment. Businesses in the state reported an increase of 600 jobs, bringing the June job count to 488,100 (seasonally adjusted). Over-the-month employment gains were reflected in Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+500); Professional & Business Services (+300); Government (+300); and Manufacturing (+100). The only segments to report employment declines were Leisure & Hospitality (-400) and Construction (-100). Since January 2004, jobs are up 900 mainly due to increased employment in Trade, Transportation & Utilities.

The more detailed unadjusted estimates increased by 1,300 (0.3%) over the month. The June job count stood at 493,000 (unadjusted), the highest June job count on record. The largest employment gain occurred in Accommodation & Food Services (+1,900). Construction (+800); Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+800); Professional & Business Services (+700); Retail Trade (+600) and Health Care & Social Assistance (+500) reported notable monthly gains as well. Significant losses were reported in Educational Services (-3,700) and Government (-900).

The over-the-month increases in Accommodation & Food Services; Construction; Arts, Entertainment & Recreation; and Professional & Business Services were seasonal increases, reflecting the improved weather conditions. Manufacturing gains were due to increased employment by Non-Durable Goods employers. Decreased employment in Educational Services, as well as Government, is reflective of the end of the school year for both private and public education.

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Over the year, employment was up 3,100 (+0.6%) from the 489,900 jobs (revised) reported in June 2003. The largest over-the-year gains were noted in Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,700); Construction (+1,400); and Accommodation & Food Services (+1,400). The largest private employment losses occurred in Information (-500); Professional & Business Services (-500); Manufacturing (-400); Wholesale Trade (-400); Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-300); and Financial Activities (-300). Government employment decreased by 400 over the year, as job gains on the Local level (+300) were overshadowed by losses in the Federal (-300) and State (-400) segments.

Hours and Earnings

The \$13.05 average hourly wage earned by the Manufacturing sector's production workers in June 2004 is down one cent from last month and represents a yearly gain of nineteen cents per hour. In June 2004, Manufacturing employees worked an average of 39.5 hours per week, an increase of 0.4 of an hour over the month and unchanged over the year.

***Note:** The unemployment figures are based largely on a survey of households in Rhode Island and measure the unemployment status of people who live in the state.*

The employment figures in the "Rhode Island Job Highlights" section are derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state.

**Rhode Island Labor Market Information is available on our web site at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi
The July labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, August 20, 2004.**

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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/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

TDD (401) 462-8006

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