

Rhode Island

# Department of Labor and Training



## 2009 Annual Report



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# Introduction



## A letter from the Director of the RI Department of Labor and Training

The need for the Department of Labor and Training's varied services was never more apparent than in 2009, when Rhode Island experienced double-digit employment for 10 out of 12 months. During this time period, the average weekly claim load for unemployment insurance grew to 35,000-40,000. Additionally, the number of unemployed Rhode Islanders grew from 54,000 in the beginning of the year to nearly 73,000 by year's end.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) played an important role in the department's operations in 2009. In February, Rhode Island launched the ARRA Federal Additional Compensation program, which provided \$25 additional dollars in every unemployment insurance claimant's weekly benefit payment. This, as well as ARRA-related extensions to the Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation program, not only helped individual claimants manage their finances during a difficult time, but provided economic stabilization by putting additional dollars in the hands of Rhode Island consumers.

In 2009, we increased our Unemployment Call Center staff by 51 in order to accommodate the growing demands of claimants who could

now collect for up to 99 weeks of unemployment insurance through regular, federal extended and state extended benefits programs.

ARRA funding also offered increased support to the Department's Workforce Development Division, growing the capacity for adult training in Workforce Investment Act programs. ARRA Workforce Investment Act funds also financed a summer youth employment program that subsidized nearly 2,000 Rhode Island youth aged 14 to 24 as they gained valuable work experience and life skills.

During an economic downturn, labor market information can gain importance, as states consider prioritizing their workforce development efforts. In Rhode Island, the Department of Labor and Training continues to rely on labor market information to focus its training efforts on the state's high-growth, high-wage industries, including the state's number one industry sector: Health Care & Social Services.

Our workforce development staff worked diligently to address the needs of job seekers connected to our netWORKri one-stop career center system. While the bricks-and-mortar presence of netWORKri remained the same in 2009, our online

presence grew significantly through our new virtual one-stop system, entitled EmployRI. Available at [www.employri.org](http://www.employri.org), this new case management and reporting Management Information System (MIS) makes job matching services available through any computer terminal with internet access, and has greatly improved our ability to help both our regular clientele at netWORKri offices and new customers at remote locations.

In 2009, the department not only rose to the income support and workforce development challenges presented by the current economy, but also continued to safeguard the state's workforce through its Workforce Regulation and Safety and Workers' Compensation Divisions. Our dedicated and talented staff plans to continue to provide critical workforce services throughout 2010.

Sincerely,

Sandra M. Powell  
Director  
RI Department of Labor and Training

# Strategic Planning



Strategic planning ensures the Department is best placed to maximize resources and utilize opportunities

The strategic plan for the RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT) has four main objectives.

Strengthen and improve income support programs so that:

- Rhode Island workers receive timely benefit payments during times of hardship, can access their benefits relatively easily with as little red tape as possible and receive a fair and competent hearing if benefits are denied.
- Rhode Island employers can be confident that the income support system is run effectively, does not put employers at a competitive disadvantage, does not discourage employee productivity and is not an unfair tax burden.

- The State of Rhode Island can benefit from maintaining a level of economic stability when workers and employers hit rough times.

Strengthen and improve Rhode Island's workforce development systems so that:

- Rhode Island workers can find job opportunities to match their skills and improve their standards of living.
- Employers have access to a well-trained, highly qualified workforce for a 21st-century economy.
- The state can make strategic, demand-driven investments in workforce development and leverage its funds with private sector investment.

Strengthen and improve the department's regulatory programs so that:

- Rhode Island workers can be confident that their rights are protected, that they are receiving a fair (legal) wage for their work and that they are working in safe and healthy workplaces.
- Rhode Island employers can be confident that laws are effectively and fairly enforced for all employers, that no single employer or group of employers has a competitive economic advantage and that bad employers are appropriately sanctioned and discouraged.
- The State of Rhode Island will be known as a place that protects its workers while supporting a level playing field for all employers.

## Legal Services

The Office of Legal Services within DLT represents the department in court proceedings and administrative hearings. It maintains a working relationship with the Department of Administration. It also counsels staff on state and federal laws as they influence DLT activities. This includes advising on legal matters; rendering written and oral legal opinions; appearing before various courts,

boards and commissions; attending board meetings in an advisory position; and serving as hearing officers. The Office of Legal Services also initiates civil prosecution on unemployment compensation fraud and benefit overpayments.

The Office of Legal Services represents the department in the following areas: motions to quash filed in all state courts when subpoenas for

confidential department records are served; objections to court-ordered counsel fees; hearings before the Board of Review; appeals to the District Court from the Board of Review; appeals under the Administrative Procedures Act; and all stages of labor relations/personnel cases (grievances, arbitrations, Personnel Appeal Board, Labor Relations Board and Human Rights Commission).



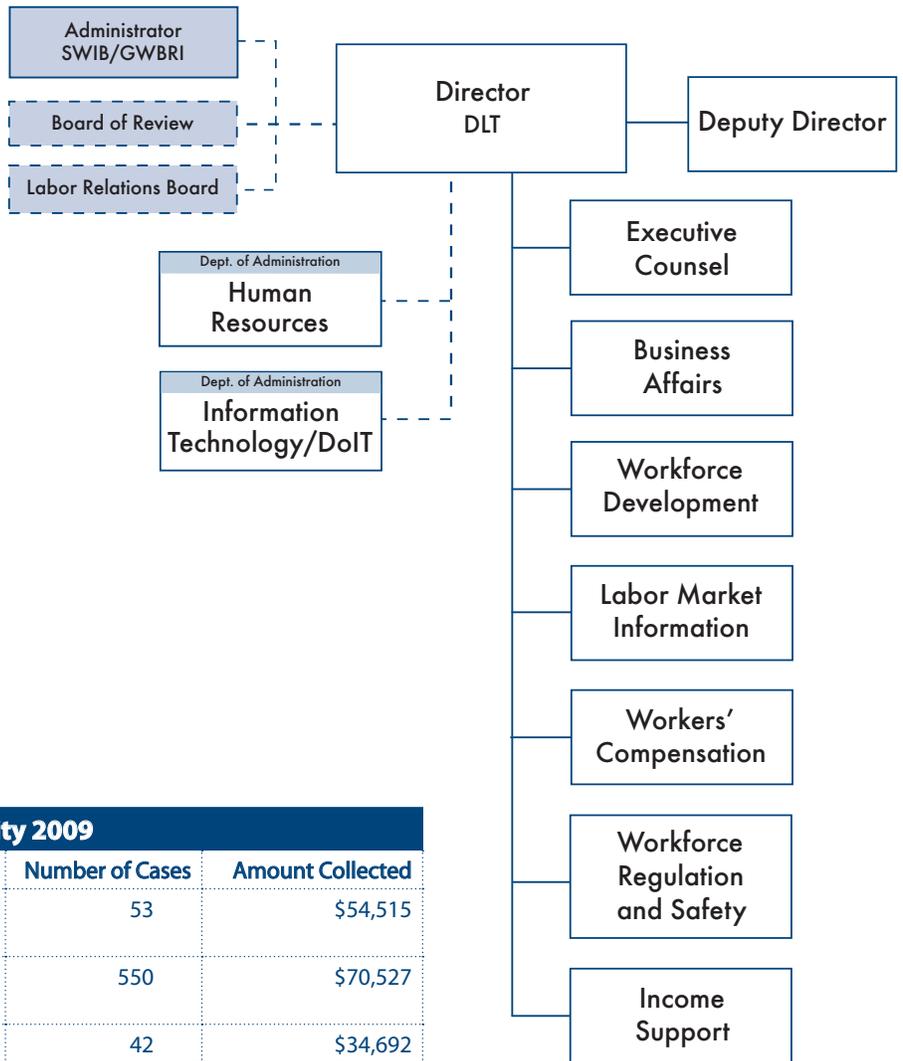
**Strategic Planning, continued**

Strengthen and improve administrative support functions so that:

- DLT employees can better understand the work of the department, articulate how their own jobs fit into the larger picture, have the right tools and training to do their jobs and feel that DLT is a great place to work.
- DLT managers and senior staff can have legal, human resources, financial and administrative support to accomplish goals.
- The State of Rhode Island can have a model for administrative efficiency and cost effectiveness consistent with the Governor’s Fiscal Fitness goals.

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov](http://www.dlt.ri.gov) or by calling (401) 462-8000.

**Organizational Chart**



Legal Activity 2009		
Type of Case	Number of Cases	Amount Collected
Workers' Compensation (Lack of Insurance)	53	\$54,515
Unemployment Insurance Overpayments	550	\$70,527
Labor Standards	42	\$34,692

# Income Support



**Income Support includes Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance and Police and Firefighter Relief**

**T**he Division of Income Support insures Rhode Island workers against temporary loss of income due to unemployment or an inability to work due to a non-work related illness or injury. Income Support programs include Unemployment Insurance (UI), Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) and the Police

Officers' and the Firefighters' Relief Funds.

In 2009, the Unemployment Insurance Division continued to be impacted by an unprecedented demand for unemployment insurance services due to the economic downturn. Despite these challenging times, many Income Support project objec-

tives were accomplished—including the Clean Claims Project, Benefit Rights, IVR/IWR Hold File Waiting Periods and Supplemental Budget Requests—that resulted in improved efficiency and effectiveness.

## Technological Improvements

### Clean Claims Project

Months of collaboration with the Division of Information Technology came to fruition in 2009 as the Clean Claims project was implemented. The Clean Claims project allows approximately 20 percent of the Unemployment Insurance claims filed through the Internet to be processed more quickly, allowing interviewers more time to answer questions and handle the more difficult claims.

### Benefit Rights

By law, individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance benefit payments must receive a copy of their benefit rights. Currently, this form is mailed to the individuals as part of the initial claims mailing packet. In 2009, work continued on the UI Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system so the individuals collecting UI

benefit payments could listen to their benefit rights information in English, Spanish or Portuguese directly through the IVR. When completed, this innovation should increase efficiency while decreasing mailing costs.

### IVR/IWR Hold File

When completely implemented, this project will allow individuals to use the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and Interactive Web Response (IWR) systems to certify for their waiting period credit and weekly benefit payments while their claim is in a stopped payment status. Customer Service Representatives will be able to release the payments to the claimant once the stop payment issue has been resolved resulting in diminished manual payments. This will also eliminate the need to gen-

erate forms which the claimant is required to mail back, once again reducing postage costs which is an agency-wide priority. The most anticipated positive outcome of this project is the improvement of timely first payments. With the help of the Division of Information Technology, initial programming for this initiative was completed in 2009. The program is expected to become operational in 2010.

### Supplemental Budget Requests (SBR)

In 2009, Rhode Island submitted approximately 22 requests for SBR funding per specifications of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), 19 of which were approved. The total amount of USDOL funding for the requests is approximately \$2,305,164. Using USDOL funding will allow

**SBR, continued**

the Unemployment Insurance Division to implement projects that will upgrade and introduce new technology used to administer this federally

mandated program. While Rhode Island has until December 2011 to implement all the funded projects, by the close of 2009, it had begun work on workflow management SBR and

had already completed the online filing feature for the two extended benefits programs.

## Unemployment Insurance

**U**nemployment Insurance (UI) is a federal/state program financed through employer payroll taxes. The Unemployment Insurance program provides temporary income support to workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and have sufficient wages in their base period to meet the monetary requirements. In addition, individuals must be able and available for work and actively seeking work. UI claims are filed over the telephone through the Call Center or over the Internet.

Rhode Island's unemployment rate followed the national pattern and continued to increase during 2009. Rhode Island job seekers who had exhausted their regular UI benefits could, if eligible, collect additional benefits through the Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program. If they exhausted their EUC benefits and were still seeking work, they could collect from the State Extended Benefits program if they were eligible.

Although there was a slight reduction in regular claims activities during 2009, the EUC program continued to grow not only in volume but also in duration. Congress raised the number of weeks an individual can collect EUC by adding up to four tiers of benefits for states in high unemployment status, thus allowing more unemployed workers the opportunity to receive additional benefits.

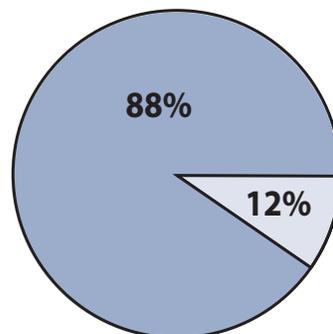
Due to unprecedented customer demand, the General Assembly passed

legislation in February 2009 to rehire retirees with expertise in unemployment insurance temporarily in order to reduce the claims backlog. The

### UI Claims Filed in 2009

	Total
Claims that generated payment of benefits	55,512
Claims that were issued a waiting period credit only	2,813
Claims that were denied due to monetary ineligibility	4,950

### UI Eligibility Determinations in 2009



- Claims that generated an unemployment insurance benefit payment (55,512)
- Claims that were denied or issued a waiting period credit only (7,763)

# Income Support

Income Support includes Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance and Police and Firefighter Relief

## Unemployment Insurance, continued

UI program was also given approval to hire 51 additional staff for the UI Call Center.

In 2009, the department continued to improve technology and sought to maintain adequate staffing patterns to meet the challenges of the escalating claims activity. With legislative approval, Income Support hired more staff to help reduce backlogs, phone queue wait times and to improve timely payments. In 2009, UI reinforced its long-term commitment to improving the efficiency of the program by researching new methods, updating existing methods and developing new ways to conduct the business of paying unemployment insurance benefits to UI claimants.

## Unemployment Insurance Activity 2009

	Total	Change from 2008
<b>Regular Benefits</b>		
Initial Claims (New and Additional)	116,118	+ 23%
First Payments	55,512	+ 19%
Number of Payments	1,109,239	+ 43%
Net Payments	\$411,267,553	+ 48%
Average Weekly Benefit	\$371	+ .03%
Average Duration (weeks)	16.6	+ .02%
<b>Trust Fund</b>		
Total Income	\$539,179,178	+ 109%
Total Disbursements	\$739,047,901	+ 113%
Year-End Fund Balance	-\$120,941,045	- 252%

## Unemployment Insurance and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

In February 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which provided several helpful programs for Rhode Island. These included:

- Changing the funding stream for the Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation program (see below) from the federal unemployment trust fund to the General Fund.

- Paying \$25 additional dollars in every unemployment insurance weekly benefits payment, through Federal Additional Compensation (FAC) program.
- Allowing 100 percent (formerly 50 percent) federal unemployment trust fund reimbursement to the Rhode Island Employment Security Trust Fund under the State Extended Benefits program, as defined by federal law.

- Enlarging the eligibility pool for State Extended Benefits from a Benefit Year Ending (BYE) July 12, 2008 to May 5, 2007.
- Waiving interest on federal loans to the state trust fund through 2010.

In November, Congress passed two additional Tiers of EUC for states with continued high unemployment rates; this now entitled Rhode Island claimants up to 53 weeks of EUC benefits.

## Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund

In March 2009, Rhode Island became the 11<sup>th</sup> state to apply for a line of credit from the federal government to replenish its state unemployment insurance trust fund, administered by the RI Department of Labor and Training. The state was approved for a three-month, \$75 million line of credit from the federal unemployment insurance trust fund. In July and September, the state re-

quested and was approved for a \$40 million and a \$90 million line of credit, respectively. By year's end, Rhode Island had borrowed a total of \$122 million in federal funds.

Under the new federal stimulus program, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, (ARRA) the U.S. government allows state unemployment insurance programs to borrow interest-free from the federal

unemployment insurance trust fund through December 2010, allowing Rhode Island to borrow without incurring interest charges. Because the line of credit from the federal government is both guaranteed and immediate, unemployment insurance customers did not experience any delays in receiving their weekly payments.

## Emergency Unemployment Compensation

The Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program became effective July 6, 2008. In early 2009, the EUC program had two tiers of benefits: Tier I, which, due to Rhode Island's high unemployment rate, translates to up to 20 weeks of benefits; and Tier II, which provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits.

It is important to note that claimants can only collect benefits against one unemployment insurance program at a time, which means that claimants may apply for EUC only after they have exhausted all regular unemployment insurance benefits.

In July 2009, the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

enhanced the Internet claims-filing system to allow individuals to file online for the EUC program. Previously, only customers of regular

Rhode Island unemployment insurance benefits had the option to file online, because the original computer programming for regular claims-

### Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) Activity 2009

	Total	Change from 2008*
EUC '09 Initial Claims	44,096	+ 142%
EUC '09 First Payments		
First Payment - Tier I	26,512	+ 79%
First Payment - Tier II	22,703	N/A
First Payment - Tier III	6,325	N/A
First Payment - Tier IV	7	N/A
Number of Payments	654,645	+ 306%
Net Benefits	\$236,803,135	+ 321%
Average Weekly Payment	\$362	+ .002%

\* 2008 figures are calculated from the six months the federal program became effective on July 6, 2008.

# Income Support

Income Support includes Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance and Police and Firefighter Relief

## EUC, continued

filing was not compatible with the two extended benefits programs. However, with a \$140,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, the RI Department of Labor and Training, in collaboration with the Division of Information Technology, was able to create new programming that made online claims-filing possible for all available Rhode Island unemployment insurance programs.

In November 2009, the federal government extended the EUC program by adding up to an additional week of Tier II benefits, and adding two more tiers of benefits for states in high periods of unemployment. Tier III added up to 13 additional weeks and Tier IV up to six additional weeks of benefits. This brought the total number of weeks of potential eligibility for the EUC program to 53 weeks. Immediately, the

RI Department of Labor and Training sent letters and eligibility forms to approximately 4,000 UI claimants who had previously exhausted benefits, alerting them to their renewed eligibility.

While beneficial to Rhode Island job seekers, the latest changes to the EUC program were complex and time-intensive to implement, thereby significantly impacting staff workload and payment timeliness.

## Call Center Activity 2009

	Total	Change from 2008
Total Calls Received	3,157,066	+ 40%
TeleServe via Telephone	2,231,666	+ 43%
TeleServe via Internet*	8,617	N/A
Call Center	925,400	+ 42%
Payment History	45,101	+ 55%
Adjudication Status	29,960	+ 9%
Requests for 1099 Tax Forms	1,386	- 36%
General Information	55,414	+ 16%

\* The internet payment system was launched in December 9, 2009.

## State Extended Benefits/ High State Extended Benefits

Rhode Island triggered on its State Extended Benefits (EB) program in July 2008. Because the state unemployment rate's three-month moving average exceeded 8.0 percent for all

of 2009, claimants in the EB program became eligible for benefits for up to 20 weeks, the last seven of which are considered High State Extended Benefits (HEB). Because claimants

can only collect benefits against one unemployment insurance program at a time, claimants may apply for EB only after they have exhausted all regular and EUC benefits.



**State EB, continued**

Through ARRA, eligibility for EB became retroactive to a Benefit Year Ending (BYE) of May 5, 2007. Approximately 2,600 individuals who previously did not meet the program requirements became eligible for EB. Under ARRA, funding for the State Extended Benefits (EB) for payments issued from February 22, 2009 and for EB claims filed before February 27, 2010 came from the federal unemployment insurance trust fund.

In April 2009, there were also changes to the weekly certification procedures for individuals collecting State EB. State EB recipients must now certify on the TeleServe payment line that they have conducted the required work search and mail a record of their weekly work search activities to the department to verify

Extended Benefits Activity 2009		
	Total	Change from 2008*
EB Initial Claims	7,567	+ 119%
EB First Payments	6,600	+ 110%
Number of Payments	113,192	+ 555%
Net Payments	\$39,670,975	+ 547%
Average Weekly Benefit	\$350	- 0.01%
* 2008 figures are calculated from the six months the state program became effective on July 6, 2008.		

they are complying with program requirements. Recipients of unemployment insurance benefits have been and continue to be required to conduct and document at least three approved work search-related activities each week. The procedural change for the State EB program was based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor.

During the summer, the RI Department of Labor and Training col-

laborated with United Way 2-1-1, creating a flyer that listed available services for those job seekers who had exhausted their benefits. The flyer, which included information on the SNAP food program, health care, housing and heating assistance-was mailed to all claimants nearing benefit exhaustion; it continues to be mailed to every claimant when he or she progresses to the High Extended Benefits level.

**Central Adjudication**

The Central Adjudication Unit (CAU) is responsible for determining all disputed unemployment insurance claims by telephone. According to federal guidelines, CAU decisions are subject to quarterly external review for accuracy, timeliness and adherence to RI General Law. Rhode Island consistently exceeds federal standards for the quality of decisions.

CAU Activity 2009		
	Total	Change from 2008
Total Decisions	24,914	- 3.2%
Separation Issues*	14,551	- 12.2%
Non-Separation Issues**	10,363	+ 13.0%
* 49% of separation issues resulted in the denial of benefits. ** 78% of non-separation issues resulted in the denial of benefits.		

# Income Support



Income Support includes Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance and Police and Firefighter Relief

## WorkShare

The WorkShare program continues to be a viable layoff alternative for employers experiencing a temporary slowdown in business. WorkShare has continued to grow during the past year as the current global economic downturn continues to affect local businesses.

Since the inception of the program in October of 1991, WorkShare has allowed employers to retain their trained workforce while employees

WorkShare Activity 2009		
	Total	Change from 2008
Initial Claims	27,372	+ 159.5%
Payments	183,032	+ 227.4%
Layoffs Averted	6,618	+ 125.5%
RI Companies Served	612	+ 116.3%

work reduced hours. In 2009, the WorkShare program filed 27,372 initial claims and issued 183,032 pay-

ments. It is estimated that more than 6,600 layoffs were averted at more than 600 companies.

## Federal Claims

Federal law requires that states provide Unemployment Insurance (UI) coverage to Unemployed Civilian Federal Employees (UCFE) and former federal military personnel (UCX). These individuals must meet the same entitlement and eligibility provisions as individuals filing claims based on state-covered employment and wages.

In cooperation with the Fleet and Family Support Center of the Newport Naval Station, the department provided 137 individuals separating from the military with benefit information and one-on-one counseling during six Transition Assistance Management Program seminars.

Federal Claims Activity 2009		
	Total	Change from 2008
<b>Federal Employee UI Benefits (UCFE)</b>		
Initial Claims	216	+ 11.3%
Net Payments	\$1,027,531	+ 43.3%
<b>Federal Military Personnel UI Benefits (UCC)</b>		
Initial Claims	294	- 0.1%
Net Payments	\$2,802,843	+ 2.7%



## Benefit Accuracy Measurement

The Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM) Program is a diagnostic tool to audit the accuracy of Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims. In 2009, the department continued to cross match the UI benefits payments against the National Directory of New Hires database to improve accuracy and to stop any potential overpayments that may be paid in the future.

Benefit Accuracy Measurement Activity 2009		
	Total	Change from 2008
<b>Benefits Paid</b>	\$382,878,363	+ 14.1%
<b>Scientific Sample Size</b>	448	- 1.1%
Dollars Paid Properly	93.6%	+ 1.1%
Dollars Overpaid	6.4%	- 0.6%
Dollars Underpaid*	0.6%	- 0.4%
<b>Overpayment Causes</b>		
Work Search	0%	0%
Earnings	45.9%	- 4.8%
Separation Issues	15.7%	- 2.7%
Base Period Wages	1.6%	- 7.4%
Eligibility Issues	25.6%	- 4.2%
Other Causes	11.2%	+ 11.3%
<b>Responsibility for Overpayment</b>		
Claimant Only	72.9%	+ 8.2%
DLT Only	18.2%	- 4.3%
Employer Only	0.0%	0.0%
Claimant and Employer	5.0%	+ 5.0%
Claimant and DLT	3.2%	- 11.3%
Claimant, Employer and DLT	0.7%	- 0.2%

\*By Federal Department of Labor policy, underpayments are exclusive from dollars paid.

# Income Support

Income Support includes Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance and Police and Firefighter Relief

## Temporary Disability Insurance

The Rhode Island Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) program is funded exclusively by workers and protects workers against wage loss resulting from non-work-related illnesses or injuries. Only Hawaii, New York, New Jersey, California and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have a Temporary Disability Insurance program.

In 2009, approximately 421,000 Rhode Island eligible workers paid TDI taxes and were protected by this important insurance program.

In 2009, TDI implemented a new process to obtain medical documentation justifying any weeks provided by the Qualified Healthcare Provider (QHP) beyond the medical duration guidelines. This new process requires the QHP to justify the need for additional weeks via a “Chart Review” form that inquires about objective findings and/or complications.

Additionally, the appeals process was modified so that TDI could obtain additional information from the QHP prior to submitting the appeal

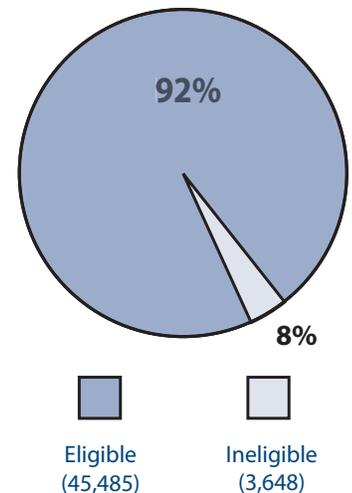
directly to the Board of Review. This new process has resulted in approximately 40 percent of claims reaching resolution without going to the Board of Review.

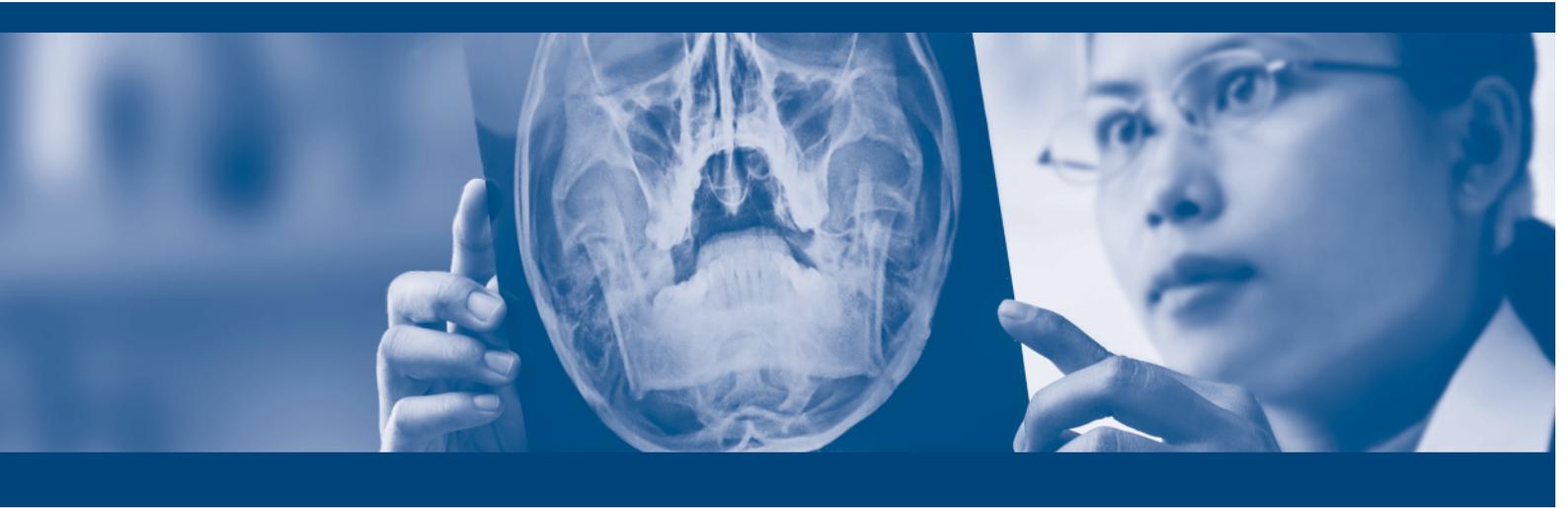
In 2009, legislative change eliminated the split waiting period. The waiting period now begins on a Sunday of the week in which the claimant grossed wages less than the claim’s benefit rate or a Sunday of the week where the claimant had zero earnings. All program changes and staff training were implemented successfully.

### Temporary Disability Insurance Activity 2009

	Total	Change from 2008
<b>Regular Benefits</b>		
Total Claims	42,519	- 6.9%
Number of Payments	367,133	- 16.5%
Net Payments	\$156,784,000	- 9.8%
Average Weekly Benefit	\$427.05	+ 8.0%
Average Duration (in weeks)	11.6	- 7.0%
<b>Trust Fund</b>		
Total Income	\$184,231,674	- 17.0%
Total Disbursements	\$163,567,292	- 5.0%
Year-End Fund Balance	\$110,599,545	+ 4.0%

### TDI Eligibility in 2009





## UI/TDI Fraud

To preserve the integrity of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) programs, the UI/TDI Fraud Unit investigates suspicious activity.

Through its efforts to further protect the Trust Fund, the Fraud Unit investigated 183 cases in 2009, resulting in \$318,723 of potential overpayments. Fourteen new cases were referred to the RI State Police for criminal prosecution.

### Fraud Unit Activity 2009

	Total	Change from 2008
Cases Investigated	183	- 43.5%
Overpayments Detected	\$318,723	- 54.4%
Cases Referred to State Police	14	- 68.8%

## Overpayment Recovery

The RI Department of Labor and Training recovers overpayments resulting from fraud by intercepting Rhode Island income tax refunds and lottery winnings. In 2009, the department recovered \$819,846.91 from state income tax for fraudulent unemployment insurance benefits, and another \$16,208.11 from lottery winnings to total \$836,055.02 in overpayments. In addition, Temporary Disability Insurance recovered \$53,335.17 in fraudulent benefits from state income tax.

### UI and TDI Overpayment Recovery 2009

	Total	Change from 2008
UI Recovery from Income Tax	\$819,847	+ 0.01%
UI Recovery from Lottery Winnings	\$16,208	+ 0.02%
TDI Recovery from Income Tax	\$53,335	+ 44.5%

# Income Support

Income Support includes Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance and Police and Firefighter Relief

## Police Officers' Relief Fund and Firefighters' Relief Fund

If an active or retired police or state police officer is killed or dies of a heart-related condition such as hypertension, the Police Officers' Relief Fund offers an annuity of \$3,600 per year to the surviving spouse for life or until remarriage. In addition, \$1,200 per year is provided for each dependent until the age of 18.

If a police officer, correctional officer or member of the state police is killed, dies from a heart condition or becomes totally and permanently disabled, the Police Officers' Relief Fund offers tuition payment for his or her dependents at any Rhode Island college or university for four consecutive years to earn a baccalaureate or lesser degree.

If a police officer becomes totally and permanently disabled, the Police Officers' Relief Fund provides that officer with tuition payments at any Rhode Island college or univer-

sity for four consecutive years. If the officer is killed in the line of duty, the surviving spouse is allowed four consecutive years of tuition payments. Students are required to submit an official transcript of grades and refund tuition for failed classes.

If an active, retired volunteer or auxiliary firefighter dies from a heart condition, hypertension, cancer, respiratory ailment, or if he or she is killed, the Firefighters' Relief Fund offers an annuity of \$3,600 per year to the surviving spouse for life or until remarriage and \$1,200 per year for each dependent until the age of 18.

If an active or retired firefighter, crash rescue person, or an auxiliary or volunteer firefighter is killed; dies from hypertension, heart condition, cancer or respiratory ailment; or becomes disabled, the Firefighters' Relief Fund offers tuition payments

to dependents or to the disabled firefighter for four consecutive years in order to earn a baccalaureate or lesser degree. Since 2005, students have been required to submit an official transcript of grades and to refund tuition for any failed classes.



**Police Officers' Relief Fund  
and Firefighters' Relief Fund Activity 2009**

	Total	Change from 2008
<b>Police Officers' Annuity Benefits</b>		
Recipients	250	+ 0.4%
Expenditures	\$918,654	+ 1.2%
Average per Person	\$3,675	+ 0.8%
<b>Police Officers' Tuition Benefits</b>		
Dependents	19	- 9.5%
Police Officers	1	0.0%
Expenditures	\$95,112	- 1.6%
<b>Firefighters' Annuity Benefits</b>		
Recipients	586	+ 3.4%
Expenditures*	\$2,396,092	+ 14.8%
Average per Person	\$3,895	+ 5.8%
<b>Firefighters' Tuition Benefits</b>		
Dependents	53	- 3.6%
Firefighters	1	- 66.7%
Expenditures	\$257,334	- 2.2%
*In 2009, the Firefighters' Annuity Fund had a One-Time Death Benefit of \$113,354 which is included in the total expenditures of \$2,396,092.		

# Workforce Development

Workforce Development builds the skills of RI workers and matches their strengths to the needs of employers

The Workforce Development Services Division dedicates itself to the advancement of all who comprise the workforce: those who perform the work and those who hire them. The division oversees activities that guide job seekers to suitable employment and introduce employers to qualified workers. These activities include:

- Employment Services, including State Workforce Investment activities
- Business Services
- Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Program
- netWORKri One-Stop Career Centers
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs
- Rapid Response Services for Dislocated Workers
- Veterans Service

- Foreign Labor Certification and Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers Program
- Youth Workforce Services
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- RI Works

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) has provided much needed additional funding for many of the programs and services utilized at the netWORKri One-Stop Career Centers, including but not limited to training/re-training opportunities.

In addition, a new web-based Virtual One-Stop (VOS) called EmployRI was implemented and is providing individuals, employers and Labor Market Information professionals with the tools they need to accomplish their goals.

## Labor Exchange Activity 2009

	Total
<b>Job Seekers</b>	
Customers Served	35,495
UI Eligible Claimants	14,305
Staff-Assisted Services	28,732
Job Search Activities	16,383
<b>Employers</b>	
Employers Served	3,096
Job Orders	1,762
Job Fairs and Recruitments	95
WOTC Certifications	1,300

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds) or by calling (401) 462-8800.

## Workforce Investment Act Services

The State Workforce Investment Office oversees Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services statewide and promotes the efficient delivery of services in netWORKri One-Stop Career Centers by coordinating with local workforce investment boards, administrators and staff. During 2009, the two local workforce investment boards – Workforce Solutions of Providence/

Cranston and the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island – provided WIA services to over 4,400 Rhode Islanders, an increase of 64 percent from the previous year.

The State Workforce Investment Office is responsible for evaluating the success of services provided to adults, dislocated workers and youth enrolled in WIA programs as well as offering guidance and technical

assistance to the local workforce investment boards. Under WIA, training can be accessed by eligible adults and older youth who are found to need training services in order to obtain employment. Those training programs approved by the local boards are included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which is maintained by the State Workforce Investment Office.



### WIA Services, continued

Specific accomplishments for the program year include:

- From July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 (the latest data available), Rhode Island exceeded or achieved all 17 federal WIA performance standards.
- Over 100 new programs were approved for inclusion on the ETPL, bringing the total to approximately 300. This affords greater training options to our customers.
- As part of its technical assistance, the State Workforce Investment

Office issued 30 Workforce Investment Notices (WINs) and conducted one Workforce Area meeting. The meeting was held to address issues impacting the various WIA programs.

## Workforce Development and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

In late March 2009, the Department of Labor and Training, in conjunction with the RI Office of Economic Recovery and Reinvestment, announced the details of the nearly \$17.2 million in workforce training and employment grants funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

This workforce development stimulus package includes:

- \$7.9 million in Workforce Investment Act funds to help laid-off workers find appropriate employment or job training.
- \$5.6 million in Workforce Investment Act funds to help youth prepare for and connect to the workforce.
- \$2.1 million in Workforce Investment Act funds to help long-term unemployed Rhode Islanders re-enter the workforce.
- \$1.5 million in Wagner-Peyser funds to offer re-employment services and netWORKri one-stop career services for all Rhode Islanders.

The first ARRA workforce development initiative funded in Rhode

Island was the 2009 Summer Youth Employment Opportunities program. Through the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island and Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston, the program funded \$4 million in summer programs that provided subsidized work experience, work readiness and academic enrichment programming for approximately 2,000 additional youth aged 14 to 24.

## netWORKri One-Stop Career Centers

The RI Department of Labor and Training operates the One-Stop Career Center System for Rhode Island. This free public employment service includes:

- staff-assisted or self-directed employment searches.
- employment counseling and testing.
- access to information and referral to training programs funded

through federal workforce dollars including the Workforce Investment Act and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

**continued**

# Workforce Development



Workforce Development builds the skills of RI workers and matches their strengths to the needs of employers

## netWORKri, continued

- local and national job listings.
- a resource area, including library, telephones, copiers, fax machines and computer workstations.
- assistive technology for people with disabilities workshops, including résumé preparation, interviewing skills, job search techniques, computer basics, networking and online short-term course offerings. One-Stop Career Centers are located throughout the state.

In 2009, employment and training programs and services benefited approximately 38,000 customers through the netWORKri Career Centers. Customers include all types of job seekers, such as dislocated workers, seniors, people with disabilities, welfare recipients transitioning into work, students and out-of-school youth.

Partner agencies in the netWORKri System include:

- Department of Education
- Department of Human Services

- Department of Labor and Training
- Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island
- Office of Rehabilitation Services
- Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island
- Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston

Over 70 organizations, including community-based and rehabilitation programs, meet regularly at their local netWORKri Center, collectively forming the Employer Service Network, a group dedicated to local job development.

In 2009, the netWORKri One-Stop Career Center system upgraded technology to assess job seeker skills effectively and to make quality referrals to employment and training programs. New software included the following:

**Skills Tutor** – This computer-based remedial education and work readiness software enables customers to increase their level of educational and skill competency

in order to prepare for training or work.

**Prove It!** – This collection of internet-based occupational assessment tests allows netWORKri One-Stop Career Center staff to gauge a job seeker's proficiency in a particular subject matter, and offers employers a powerful screening and referral tool. Tests are available in multiple languages and can be accessed remotely through any computer that has Internet access.

**Metrix Learning** – Metrix Learning is an Internet-based online training system that offers netWORKri customers self-service learning in more than 5,000 computer, business-related, customer service, health and medical courses, and is particularly helpful to job seekers needing only short-term courses to increase their employability skills.

More information may be found by visiting [www.netWORKri.org](http://www.netWORKri.org) or by calling 1-888-616-JOBS.

## EmployRI

In May 2009, the One-Stop Career Center System implemented a new case management and reporting Management Information System (MIS) known as EmployRI.

EmployRI is an Internet-based system that contains information about job seekers, employers, job orders and training providers. This system has greatly improved netWORKri's

### EmployRI Activity 2009

	Total
Job Seekers Registered	24,940
Employers Registered	2,135



**EmployRI, continued**

ability to assist with job matching for self-service job seekers and employers, and is also a helpful tool for staff-assisted matching. EmployRI spiders multiple online job boards to create a virtual one-stop job search resource. It allows job seekers to

target their search by preferred employer, location, source, date and/or required skills, and offers additional features such as automated résumé and cover letter writing. EmployRI is also an important labor market information tool and replaces the department’s previous database, RI Red. In

2009, EmployRI assisted 24,940 job seekers in their search for work and registered 2,135 employers.

Visitors may access the services through the EmployRI web site at [www.employri.org](http://www.employri.org).

**Business Service Unit**

Representatives from the Business Service Unit are the department’s liaisons to the business community and simplify the process of doing business in Rhode Island. These representatives are active participants in area Chambers of Commerce and use networking sessions and direct employer contact to keep employers abreast of departmental and other services and programs.

Services in 2009 included:

- developing job orders.
- coordinating recruitments/job fairs.
- pre-screening applicants.
- facilitating contacts that help employers become or stay competitive (tax credits, on-the-job training and incumbent worker grants, WorkShare).

Because the Business Service Unit often serves as the primary employer

**Business Service Unit Activity 2009**

	Total
Employers Served	3,096
Job Orders	1,762
Job Fairs and Recruitments	95

outreach for the department, it also oversees such employer-centered initiatives as Rapid Response and tax credit programs.

**Rapid Response**

The Rapid Response Program, administered by the Business Service Unit, proactively responds to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. The Rapid Response Unit works with employers and employee representa-

tives to maximize public and private resources quickly and to minimize disruptions associated with job loss. Rapid Response staff members conduct on-site services to disseminate information on accessing unemployment insurance benefits, One-Stop Career Center re-employment services and training opportunities.

Other on-site services include job fairs and customized re-employment workshops, such as résumé development and interviewing strategies.

During 2009, Rapid Response conducted orientations for 2,587 workers from 49 Rhode Island companies. For those companies affected

**continued**

# Workforce Development



Workforce Development builds the skills of RI workers and matches their strengths to the needs of employers

## Rapid Response, continued

by increased imports or shifts in production out of the United States, Rapid Response staff members provide information about the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) and Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) programs.

This federally-funded program provides outstanding benefits and

Rapid Response Activity 2009	
RI Companies	49
Impacted Workers	2,587
Trade Certified Companies	15

long-term training opportunities for certified worker groups.

In 2009, Rapid Response assisted four area companies in their application for Trade Certification

through the U.S. Department of Labor.

More information is available at [www.dlt.ri.gov/ui/rapidresponse.htm](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui/rapidresponse.htm) or by calling (401) 462-8724.

## Federal Tax Credits

Federal tax credits are designed to engage the private sector, complement welfare reform efforts and encourage hiring from disad-

vantaged and unemployed groups. The federal tax credit program was funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and has been under the direc-

tion and oversight of the Business Service Unit (formerly the Employer Service Unit) since 2005.

## Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Employers who hire individuals that are members of a designated target group may be eligible to receive a tax credit up to \$2,400 per individual. All new employees must work a minimum of 400 hours before an employer is eligible to claim this full tax credit. For employees working at least 120 hours but less than 400 hours, the credit allows a maximum tax credit amount of \$1,500.

In addition, employers may qualify for a tax credit up to \$4,800 for each

new disabled veteran hire and up to \$9,000 for each new long-term family assistance recipient who remains employed with the company for a minimum of two years.

In general, the target groups include qualified Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients, some veterans, vocational rehabilitation service recipients, food stamp recipients, qualified ex-felons and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients.

Qualifying employers must file IRS form 8850 and ETA form 9061 or 9062 with the Department of Labor and Training within 28 days of the employee's start date. The department must certify that there is documented evidence verifying that the individual qualifies in one of the targeted groups for employment categories.

In 2009, 1,300 new employees were certified for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.



## Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance

The Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance program has the main functions of providing monetary benefits and educational/training assistance to workers who lose their jobs, or whose hours of work and wages have been reduced due to increased foreign imports. These services provide the opportunity to obtain necessary educational and occupational skills needed to become more competitive and marketable.

In 2009, the former Trade Adjustment Assistance Act was expanded under the the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act, creating coverage to more workers and firms, and improving workers' opportunities for training, cash benefits, health insurance coverage and reemployment.

The Health Coverage Tax Credit program allows individuals who qualify for the program the potential reimbursement of a portion of

their monthly health care premiums. Prior to the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009, the rate of potential reimbursement was 65 percent of the monthly premium. As a result of the Act, the rate of potential reimbursement is now 80 percent of the monthly premium. According to the latest data received, 3,213 Rhode Islanders have qualified for Health Coverage Tax Credit program since its inception in August 2003.

The Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) helps Trade-eligible claimants over 50 years of age seeking alternatives to standard training programs to receive a wage subsidy when they return to work. Trade-eligible claimants who return to work may qualify for 50 percent of the difference between new employment wages and previous wages. Modified under the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assis-

### Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Activity 2009

Program Participants	1,067
Participants Trained	638
Training Allocation	\$4,127,145

tance Act of 2009, the new RTAA has eliminated a 26 week deadline period to secure employment from the last day of work. The maximum benefit that a worker may receive throughout the course of their eligibility for RTAA has increased from \$10,000 to \$12,000. There has also been an increase in the limit of wages in eligible reemployment from \$50,000 to \$55,000. During 2009, 13 individuals participated in the program.

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.us/ui.trade.htm](http://www.dlt.ri.us/ui.trade.htm) or by calling (401) 462-8795.

# Workforce Development

Workforce Development builds the skills of RI workers and matches their strengths to the needs of employers

## National Emergency Grants

**N**ational Emergency Grants are discretionary grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor in response to significant dislocation events which create a sudden need for assistance that cannot reasonably be accommodated with state formula funding.

Impacted workers are eligible to receive re-employment services including job development, career counseling and assessment, access to re-employment workshops and training opportunities for those experiencing barriers to re-employment.

The last NEG grant received was for the Brooks Eckerd drugstore chain in 2007. The total number of individuals served was 76. These workers had access to all services noted above. The grant ended June of 2009, with 52 individuals having secured employment.

## Veterans Service Unit

**T**he Veterans Service program consists of local veterans service representatives and a disabled veterans outreach program specialist who are prepared to assist veterans and eligible spouses in finding new careers and resources. The representatives and specialist are located at the Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket and West Warwick netWORKri Centers.

The primary duty of the local veterans service representatives is to conduct outreach to employers to assist employment-seeking veterans in obtaining employment.

Responsibilities include:

- Conducting outreach to employers in assisting veterans in obtaining employment.
- Providing seminars for employers and create employment search groups for employment seeking veterans.
- Providing and facilitating employment and training.

The primary duty of the disabled veterans outreach program specialist is to provide intensive services to veterans. The specialist is skilled at quickly identifying veterans' barriers to employment, thereby ensuring

that intensive services are provided in obtaining and retaining suitable employment.

Responsibilities include:

- Providing intensive services to meet the employment needs of disabled and other eligible veterans.
- Providing a full range of employment services to veterans with an emphasis on assisting veterans with economic and educational disadvantages.

In 2009, Veterans Service staff participated in the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Rhode Island Operation Stand Down,



**Veterans, continued**

outreach event for homeless veterans. Honoring with the mission to eliminate homelessness among the nation’s veterans, the staff diligently provided services to over 260 veterans, an increase of nearly 30 percent over the previous year.

In a separate Veterans’ Day initiative, the Veterans Service Unit partnered with over 25 employers and supporting agencies for the annual job fair. This job fair provided an opportunity for staff to bridge the gap between employers and veterans who were seeking

employment and other resources or social services.

More information may be found by visiting <http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds/vetserv.htm>.

**Foreign Labor Certification and Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers**

The foreign labor certification process allows employers to bring foreign workers, who are temporarily authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, to live and work in the United States on a temporary basis. However, before hiring a foreign worker, a business must demonstrate its inability to fill the position with a qualified citizen at prevailing wages.

The Department of Labor and Training provides guidance to the employer in complying with U.S. Department of Labor regulations and requirements; provides training on how to

use the EmployRI Internet system to place a job order in connection with a future application for H-2B workers; reviews the job order for compliance with content requirements; and monitors the referral of U.S. workers.

Employers must obtain a prevailing wage determination from the department prior to filing an application for temporary employment certification. The wage offer must be at least the prevailing wage for the occupation. Careful monitoring of prevailing wages discourages unfair labor practices and assures the stability of the economy.

**Foreign Labor Certification and Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Activity 2009**

H-2A Cases	5
H-2B Cases	23
Requests for Prevailing Wages	180

In 2009, DLT received and processed five H-2A (Agricultural) cases, 23 H-2B (Non-Agricultural) cases and 180 Requests for Prevailing Wages.

# Workforce Development



Workforce Development builds the skills of RI workers and matches their strengths to the needs of employers

## Youth Initiatives

The Workforce Development Services Division, in partnership with the state and local workforce investment boards, oversees a state-wide, unified youth workforce development system for youth aged 14-24 entitled YouthWORKS411.

The division's focus is to increase the skill sets of the emerging workforce, build the capacity and skill sets of youth service providers, engage business in supporting youth employment and improve access for

all youth in need of workforce development services.

In 2009, YouthWORKS411 provided services to over 10,000 youth through 13 youth centers and 89 youth service providers. Of those served, 49 percent were considered at-risk clients, as they included youth who have disabilities, are pregnant or parenting, are involved with the juvenile justice system, are in or aging out of foster care and/or are homeless or runaway youth.

Over 16,000 service units were provided in the following areas:

- Job Coaching
- Academics
- Work Experience
- Leadership Development
- Adult Mentoring
- Job Development
- Work Preparation
- Follow-Up Services

## Senior Community Service Employment Program

In July 2008, the RI Department of Labor and Training became the managing agency for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), a service- and work-based program for low-income persons aged 55 and older. Previously, the RI Department of Elderly Affairs had served as the managing agency for this program, and as such, was a formal partner of the netWORKri One-Stop Career Center system.

The department, through a Request for Proposals, chose SER Jobs for

Progress to administer the SCSEP program on a day-to-day basis, including recruitment and outreach, eligibility screening, enrollment assessment, Individual Employment Plans, follow-up, work site placement, monitoring and enrollee recertification.

Enrollees are placed at sites for up to 30 hours per week and are paid minimum wage. Work sites, which include senior centers, faith-based organizations, community action programs and community-based

organizations, prepare participants for unsubsidized unemployment.

Eligible applicants to the Senior Community Service Employment Program must reside in Rhode Island, be unemployed at the time of application and be a member of a family with an income not more than 125 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Priority is given to applicants over the age of 60, veterans and spouses of veterans. Preference is given to limited English-speaking, minority applicants.



## RI Works

**R**I Works is a partnership between the RI Department of Labor and Training and the RI Department of Human Services to provide intensive employment services to beneficiaries who receive cash assistance under the Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) program.

RI Works was signed into law and became effective October 2008. This new legislation replaced the Family Independence Program (FIP). The goal of RI Works is to make job searches the first and primary activity for those receiving cash assis-

RI Works Activity 2009	
Total Referred (by Dept. of Human Services)	6,572
Total Enrolled in Program	2,488
Total Participated in Program*	1,987
Average Participants who Entered Employment**	37.5%
Average Hourly Wage	\$9.50
* Participants who engaged in at least five of twenty program days.	
** Average tabulated from first quarter rate of 38.90% and second quarter rate of 36.05%. Third and fourth quarter data not available at time of publication.	

tance. Those receiving cash benefits as well as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries and non-custodial parents

must participate in approved job search activities to continue receiving such benefits.

# Labor Market Information



Labor Market Information collects and analyzes data critical to the Rhode Island economy

The Labor Market Information (LMI) Unit is responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating a wide variety of information on the condition of the Rhode Island economy. The unit's goal is to make the latest available information universally accessible to job seekers, employers, planners, policy makers, economists, government officials and other customers. LMI operates a number of programs in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Employment and Training Administration. These programs include:

- **Current Employment Statistics:** A monthly survey which queries more than 1,500 Rhode Island businesses regarding workforce size, wages paid and hours worked.
- **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages:** This collaboration with the Bureau of Labor Statistics mines quarterly tax data for employment and wage data by industry, business location and business size.
- **Local Area Unemployment Statistics:** This monthly program provides labor force, resident employment and unemployment estimates and unemployment rates for the state and sub-state areas, based on the Current Population Survey of Households.

- **Occupational Employment Statistics:** This program provides industrial staffing patterns, occupational employment estimates and occupational wage rates, based on an annual survey of 2,000 employers.
- **Mass Layoff Statistics:** This statistical program uses Unemployment Insurance data to identify, describe and track the effects of major job cutbacks on both a statewide and national level.
- **Industry and Occupational Projections:** Using a model that combines past trends with other forecasting data, these biennial projections provide a 10-year window into Rhode Island's economic future.

The Labor Market Information Unit conducted three additional employer surveys in 2009. The annual Job Vacancy Survey provided point-in-time estimates for labor demand occurring during the spring survey period. Separately, the unit partnered with the RI Department of Education and the Center for Primary Care and Prevention at Brown University to collect information on the state's Community Health Worker workforce, making Rhode Island one of the first states in the nation to ascertain the size of their Community Health Worker workforce, and the first to predict the demand for such

## LMI Publications

- Community Health Workers in Rhode Island
- Rhode Island Employment & Wage Analysis
- Rhode Island Employment & Wage Analysis by County
- Rhode Island Job Vacancy Survey
- Rhode Island Occupational Wage Report
- Rhode Island Employment Trends & Workforce Issues
- Rhode Island Statistical & Fiscal Digest
- Multiple Jobholders in the Ocean State
- Union Membership in Rhode Island
- Women's Earnings in the Ocean State
- Women in Rhode Island's Economy
- State of the State: Profiles of Rhode Island Cities and Towns



workers now and in the future. Lastly, on behalf of the Governor’s Steering Committee on Corrections Reform and Prisoner Reentry, the LMI unit also spearheaded a Prisoner Reentry Study to evaluate Rhode Island employers’ attitudes toward hiring formerly incarcerated individuals.

In 2009, the LMI Unit received a \$114,000 grant as part of the Northeast Research Consortium’s “Green Economy” research project. LMI’s focus will be “Defining Green,” “Real Time Demand Analysis” and “Enhancements to and Use of Traditional LMI.” The grant runs through June 30, 2011.

The Labor Market Information unit provides a monthly Employer Bulletin newsletter in both print and electronic form to approximately 1,100 stakeholders and releases an electronic data update, entitled LMI Stat-Track, to a list-serve of 1,200 customers. LMI provides industry and occupational information as well as an employer database for Employ-RI, the department’s new interactive web site and virtual one-stop, to assist job seekers of all ages evaluate job openings, conduct employment searches and plan careers.

In addition to these communications vehicles, in 2009, LMI staff provided overviews of current economic trends as well as training sessions for students, employment and

Quick Facts on the Rhode Island Economy		
	2008	2009
Total Labor Force	569,600	567,100
Number of Workers	526,100	503,400
Average Number of Unemployed	43,500	63,700
Average Unemployment Rate	7.6%	11.2%
Number of Jobs in RI Businesses	481,700	459,000

education counselors and business associations in the proper use of labor market information.

**Unemployment Rate Calculations**

Each month, Census Bureau workers interview persons in approximately 65,000 sampled households (1,300 located in Rhode Island) to obtain information on the labor force activities of all individuals living in the household. The interviewees answer a series of questions which result in the classification of each household member (16 or older) as being employed, unemployed or not in the labor force. While the national unemployment rate is derived directly from data collected through this survey known as Current Population Survey (CPS), sample sizes in each state are too small to provide reliable monthly estimates for the states directly. Therefore, all states including Rhode Island calculate their unemployment rates using statistical models developed by the U.S. Bureau of

Labor Statistics. The models, which are based on historical trends, incorporate the number of jobs at businesses and current unemployment insurance claims data to refine the individual state estimates provided by the CPS survey.

**Job Count Estimates**

Approximately 1,500 RI employers, selected through a probability sample, are surveyed each month to determine the number of workers on their payrolls for the pay period including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. The weighted employer responses are incorporated into statistical models developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. These models generate employment estimates for the state’s major industries each month. Each year, the monthly job estimates are revised by benchmarking them to the employment data reported by all employers on their quarterly payroll reports.

# Workers' Compensation



Workers' Compensation makes certain that businesses insure their employees against work-related injury or illness

**W**orkers' Compensation insurance is a no-fault system which mandates that all RI employers with one or more employees maintain insurance coverage for the protection of their employees in the event of an earnings loss and/or medical expenses due to a work-related injury or illness. This insurance may be purchased through any licensed insurance agent, broker or insurance company offering Workers' Compensation insurance. A self-insurance program is also offered through the RI Department of Labor and Training for larger companies who meet established criteria.

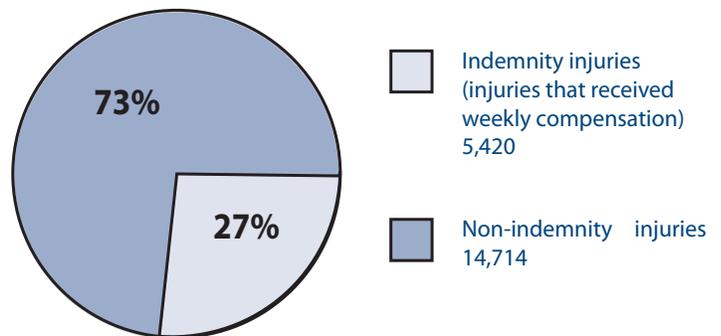
The Workers' Compensation Division monitors procedures and payments made by insurance carriers, provides rehabilitative services to injured workers and responds to compliance and fraud issues.

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov/wc](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wc) or by calling (401) 462-8100.

## Workers' Compensation Activity 2009

Injury Statistics	
Indemnity Injuries*	5,420
Non-indemnity Injuries	14,714
Workers' Compensation Administrative Fund Reimbursements**	
Requests for Reimbursement	1,448
Total Reimbursements	\$2,529,500
<b>Self-Insured Employers Certified</b>	<b>32</b>
*Indemnity injuries are those that receive weekly compensation.	
**Reimbursement requests are limited to statutory restrictions.	

## Workers' Compensation Eligibility in 2009





In March, the Department of Labor and Training launched a Spanish language version of the Workers' Compensation web site in order to make information on Workers' Compensation law, coverage, compliance and education easily accessible to all Rhode Island employers and workers. Translating the site into Spanish has provided important data to the growing Hispanic workforce in Rhode Island. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 11.2 percent of the Rhode Island population self-identified as Hispanic in 2007.

## Education Unit

The Workers' Compensation Education Unit instructs interested parties on workplace safety and Workers' Compensation benefits and procedures. The unit is non-regulatory and all services are offered at no charge.

In 2009, unit representatives continued their outreach to employers, employee groups and medical professionals, offering employer education workshops and on-site consultations regarding their Workers' Compensation rights and obligations.

Other services include guidance in establishing safety committees,

Education Unit Activity 2009	
Telephone Calls to Information Line	7,117
Telephone Calls in Spanish	139
E-mails to Education Unit	1,504
Informational Letters Mailed to Injured Workers	20,242
Number of Seminars	4
Number of Seminar Attendees	270

a telephone information line and an extensive training video lending library. In addition, the Education Unit staff members provide employers with information on workers' compensation rights and responsibilities every year at the

annual Business Expo at the Providence Convention Center.

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/edunit.htm](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/edunit.htm) or by calling (401) 462-8100, option #1.

# Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation makes certain that businesses insure their employees against work-related injury or illness

## Fraud and Compliance Unit

The Fraud and Compliance Unit detects, prevents and refers for criminal prosecution any suspected fraudulent Workers' Compensation activity. The unit also ensures employer and insurer compliance with the requirements of the Workers' Compensation Act.

Once a lack of coverage complaint is registered with the Fraud and Compliance Unit, an investigator is assigned to the case, and the company involved is contacted. If an investigation reveals that an employer does not have the necessary Workers' Compensation insurance, the employer may be fined up to \$1,000 for each day of non-compliance. Companies that refuse to pay their fines in a timely manner may be subject to criminal penalties through the Workers' Compensation Court in Providence.

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/fraud.htm](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/fraud.htm) or by calling (401) 462-8100, option #7.

### Fraud and Compliance Activity 2009

<b>Investigative Inquiries</b>	6,466
Lack of Insurance Investigations	6,315
Carrier Failure to Report Investigations	10
First Report Penalty Investigations	120
Fraud Investigations	30
<b>Penalties Collected</b>	
From Employers Without Proper Workers' Compensation Coverage	\$112,777
From Insurers	\$250
Late First Report Filing Penalties	\$5,000
Employees Who Filed to Waive WC Rights	2,009
Independent Contractor Filings	6,963
Criminal Cases Referred to Attorney General	3
Court Ordered Restitution	\$18,047
"Stop Work" Orders	59



## John E. Donley Rehabilitation Center

The Dr. John E. Donley Rehabilitation Center was established under Section 28-38-19 of the Rhode Island Workers' Compensation law to provide rehabilitation programs to RI injured workers. Donley Center services include physical and occupational therapy, psychological counseling, aquatic therapy, work hardening (the simulation of the physical demands of the job), and vocational counseling. In 2009, 71 percent of the injured workers admitted to the Donley Center had a date of injury six months or older, with 44 percent of the admissions having a date of injury over one year. This represents a chronic population that is particularly challenging to return to work and, as research suggests, is best treated with a multidisciplinary approach, such as afforded by the Donley Center. In 2009, 59 percent of the injured workers who completed treatment returned to work and

Donley Rehabilitation Activity 2009		
	Total	Change from 2008
New Admissions	1,005	6%
Referrals	1,151	7%
Total Referring Physicians	390	7%
Percentage of Clients, from Injury to Admission > Three Months	88%	3%
Percentage of Clients, from Injury to Admission > Six Months	71%	5%
Percentage of Clients, from Injury to Admission > One Year	44%	4%

an additional 10 percent achieved a therapeutic endpoint with a functional level consistent with return to work.

Vocational services are offered when an injured worker does not have a job to return to upon completion of their multidisciplinary rehabilitation. Vocational services go beyond traditional vocational counseling to include daily job clubs, job seeking skills workshops, and basic computer skills to prepare an in-

jured worker for an independent job search in today's online job market. There was a one percent decrease in utilization of vocational services in 2009; twenty-one percent of injured workers receiving vocational services found new jobs, and 73 percent were discharged having completed the skills necessary to continue an independent job search.

# Workforce Regulation and Safety



Workforce Regulation and Safety protects the rights of RI workers with fair wages, safe workplaces and trade licensing

The Workforce Regulation and Safety Division is charged with enforcing the safety laws that protect the RI workforce, including:

- Fair collection of wages
- Child labor laws
- Safety in public buildings
- Trade licensing
- Apprenticeship training
- Hazardous substance exposure
- Weights and measures
- Prevailing wage laws

This is accomplished through licensing, inspection programs, educational programs and labor law enforcement.

## Labor Standards

The Labor Standards Unit enforces workplace laws and ensures that employees receive the benefits due them. Labor Standards investigates wage complaints involving minimum wage, payment of wages, overtime, Sunday/holiday premium pay and vacation pay upon termination, as well as child labor, parental and family medical leave and industrial homework. The unit also

enforces record-keeping requirements. Labor Standards reaches out to the approximately 33,000 employers in the state, educating them on compliance with labor laws, before violations occur.

In 2009, Labor Standards received 716 claims. Of those, 446 were closed and 270 are currently in the investigation process, waiting to be assigned, or are in the pre-hearing conference or hearing process.

### Labor Standards Activity 2009

Total Claims Filed	716
Claims Closed	446
Claims in Process	270

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov/ls](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ls) or by calling (401) 462-8550.

## Professional Regulation

The Professional Regulation Unit is responsible for the monitoring and enforcing of prevailing wage and safety laws, as well as testing and licensing a number of technical professions.

In 2009, the **Safety Awareness Law Section** experienced a decrease in violations, which can be attrib-

uted to the success of the OSHA 10-hour training program offered to public works employees. Two companies were cited, with fines totaling \$3,200.

RI General Law 37-13 mandates that any contractor awarded a bid on a public works construction project of more than \$1,000 must pay pre-

valing wage rates. During 2009, 43 prevailing wage cases were filed with the **Prevailing Wage Section**. The total amount of back wages collected for employees in 2009 was \$73,610, and the total amount of penalties collected by the Prevailing Wage Section was \$73,610.



**Professional Regulation, continued**

The **Trade Licensing Section** licenses 26,775 technical professionals, many with multiple licenses. It also monitors and enforces trade laws pertaining to electricians, hoisting engineers, pipefitters, refrigeration technicians, sprinkler fitters, plumbers, sheet metal workers and telecommunications technicians.

Professional Regulation boards include:

- Board of Examiners of Hoisting Engineers

- Board of Examiners of Electricians
- Board of Examiners and Licensing of Telecommunications System Contractors, Technicians and Installers
- Board of Examiners of Plumbers
- Mechanical Board
- Safety Awareness Board

**Trade Licensing Activity 2009**

Examinations Performed	3,031
Total Licenses (issued or renewed)	30,527
Electrician	8,239
Hoisting Engineer	8,392
Pipefitter, Refrigeration Technician, Fire Protection Sprinkler Fitter, Sheet Metal Worker	7,783
Telecommunication	2,911
Plumbers and Irrigators	2,463
Burglar Alarm	739

**State Apprenticeship Council**

The State Apprenticeship Council regulates and safeguards apprenticeships in the licensed trades and fosters open communication among the RI Department of Labor and Training, industry and educational institutions. Support of these programs assures the future

of a skilled workforce by directing qualified individuals toward various apprenticeship programs that can lead to high-paying, high-demand careers.

In 2009, the council oversaw 701 apprenticeship programs and 1,337 individual agreements.

More information may be found by visiting [www.dlt.ri.gov/profregs](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/profregs) or by calling (401) 462-8580.

# Workforce Regulation and Safety



Workforce Regulation and Safety protects the rights of RI workers with fair wages, safe workplaces and trade licensing

## Occupational Safety

The Occupational Safety Unit directs, coordinates and enforces the lawful inspection of the safety of boilers and elevators, the lawful storage and handling of hazardous substances and the accuracy of weights and measures within the state's business establishments. Inspections are synchronized with local government requirements that reinforce a safe atmosphere for the public.

The **Boiler Section** inspects and assesses all pressure vessels in the state, certifying that all new installations, reconditioned vessels, repairs and hydrostatic testing meet all safety codes. The Boiler Section partners with numerous state, city and town agencies to coordinate programs, mandates, licensing requirements,

Boiler Activity 2009	
Certificates of Operation	7,463
Inspections	8,473
Permits for New Installations	158

inspection procedures and enforcement measures to further educate and inform the public.

The **Elevator Section** inspects and assesses all elevator devices in the state, issuing licenses to companies and their employees who engage in the installation, construction, servicing, repair or modernization of elevator devices. Elevator devices include:

- escalators
- wheelchair lifts
- material lifts
- vertical reciprocating conveyors
- other means of vertical transportation

Elevator Activity 2009	
Certificates of Operation	1,651
Inspections	2,238
Permits for New Installations	234

The Elevator Section also certifies the safety of new installations, construction sites and repairs, and de-

commissions devices when they are no longer safe to operate.

The **Weights and Measures Section** inspects and assesses all gasoline measuring systems and measuring devices used in retail/wholesale establishments; it also licenses all oil dealers. To properly calibrate such measuring devices, sealers receive certification after completion of highly technical course training requirements. There are 21 state-appointed sealers and 18 city/town-appointed sealers.

The **Right-to-Know Section** inspects and assesses all businesses with employees who are exposed to hazardous substances or businesses that store hazardous substances on the premises. The training and education of employers and employees

Right-to-Know Activity 2009	
Employers Registered	9,483
Inspections	1,235



### **Occupational Safety, continued**

in safety practices is an ongoing function. It is mandatory that each Rhode Island business submit a list of hazardous substances to the Occupational Safety Unit and to the local fire department. Each month, new employers in the state are notified of the Right-to-Know law and receive an informational packet to assist them in understanding the law.

The **Safety Compliance Section** inspects and assesses all school buildings, both public and private, on an annual basis. Additionally, all state, city and town buildings are under the jurisdiction of this section.

Complaint and accident investigations are triggered upon incident or request. Public sector employers are required to keep occupational safety injury and illness records.

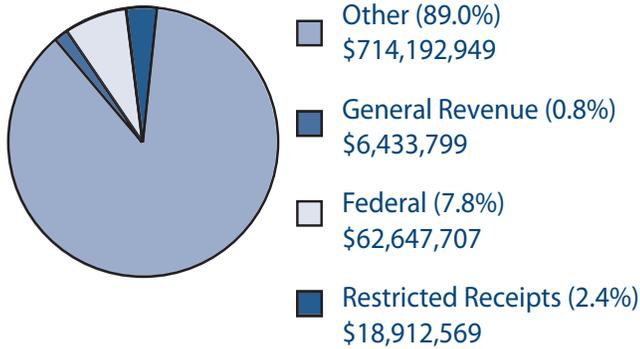
Policies relating to respiratory standards, confined space, blood-borne pathogens and chemical hygiene plans are constantly under revision with the input of other departments and schools. In 2009, 850 sites were inspected and 65 complaints were filed.

More information may be found at [www.dlt.ri.gov/occusafe](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/occusafe) or by calling (401) 462-8570.

# Expenditures

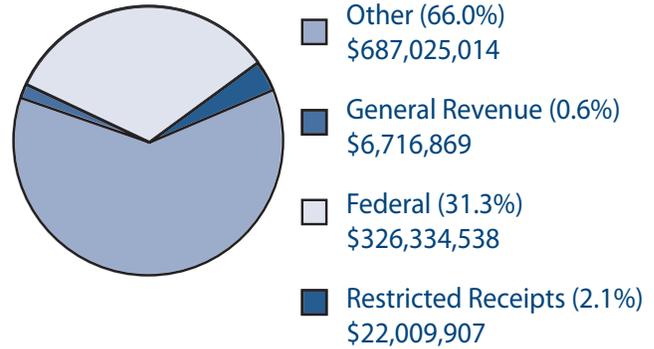
## Actual Expenditures by Fund Fiscal Year 2009

Department Total \$802,187,024



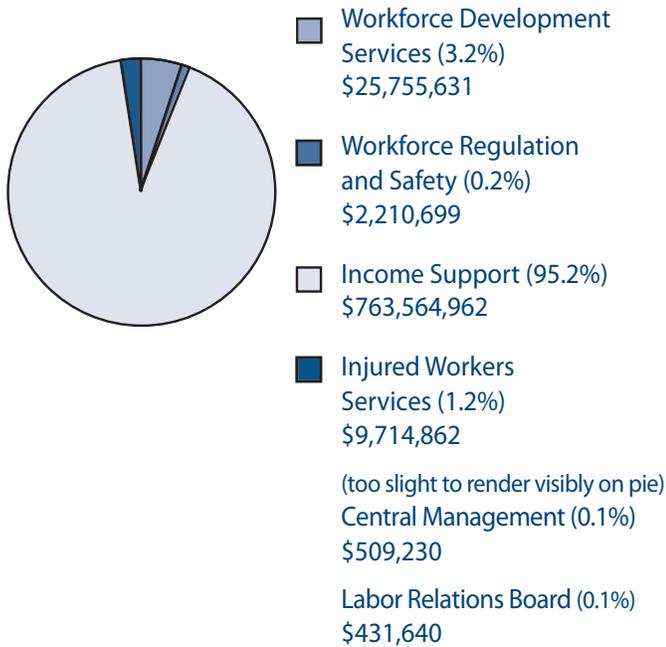
## Budgeted Expenditures by Fund Fiscal Year 2010

Department Total \$1,042,086,328



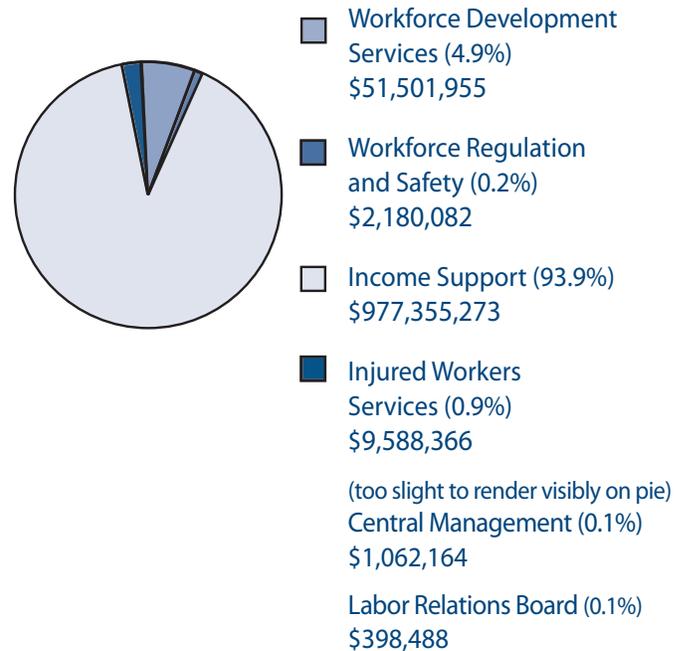
## Actual Expenditures by Program Fiscal Year 2009

Department Total \$802,187,024

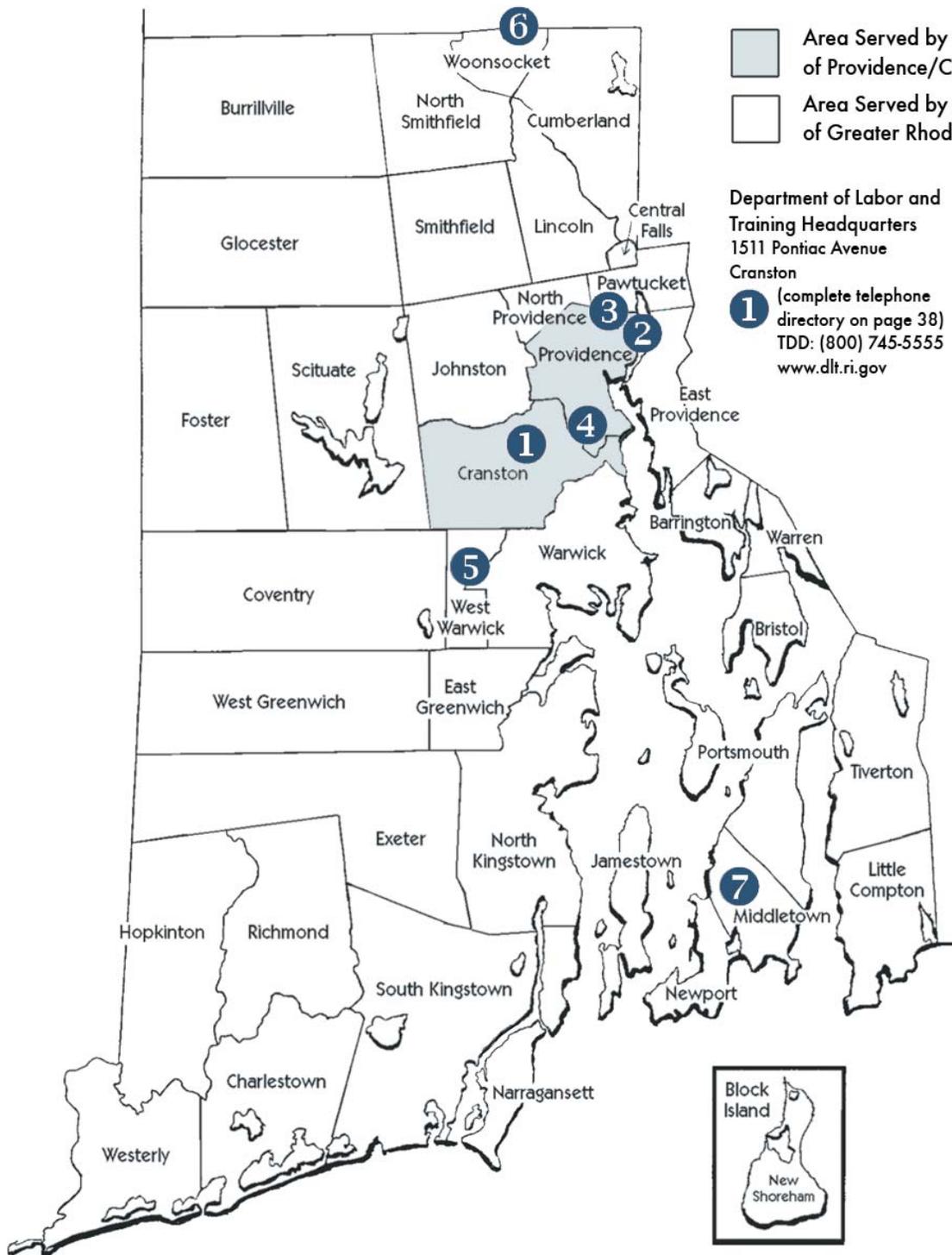


## Budgeted Expenditures by Program Fiscal Year 2010

Department Total \$1,042,086,328



# Office Map



- Area Served by Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston
- Area Served by Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island

**Department of Labor and Training Headquarters**  
 1511 Pontiac Avenue  
 Cranston  
**1** (complete telephone directory on page 38)  
 TDD: (800) 745-5555  
 www.dlt.ri.gov

**Dr. John E. Donley Rehabilitation Center**  
 249 Blackstone Blvd  
 Providence  
**2** tele: (401) 243-1200  
 fax: (401) 222-3887  
 www.dlt.ri.gov/donley

**netWORKri Career Centers**  
 www.netWORKri.org

**Pawtucket netWORKri**  
 175 Main Street  
**3** tele: (401) 721-1800  
 fax: (401) 721-1890

**Providence netWORKri**  
 One Reservoir Avenue  
**4** tele: (401) 462-8900  
 fax: (401) 462-8947

**West Warwick netWORKri**  
 1330 Main Street  
**5** tele: (401) 828-8382  
 fax: (401) 826-8991

**Woonsocket netWORKri**  
 219 Pond Street  
**6** tele: (401) 235-1201  
 fax: (401) 235-1228

**DLT Reemployment Office**  
 73 Valley Road  
 Middletown  
**7** tele: (401) 847-2038  
 fax: (401) 846-9705  
 (temporarily closed Jan. 2010)



# Departmental Directory

Unit	Phone*	Web Address	E-Mail Address
Adult and Dislocated Workers	462-8811	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds/adworkers.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds/adworkers.htm</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Benefit Charge	462-8015	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov
Benefit Accuracy Measurement	462-8610	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov
Business Affairs	462-8140		businessaffairs@dlt.ri.gov
Central Adjudication	462-8300	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov
Central Overpayment	462-8010	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov
Crossmatch	462-8510	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov
Donley Rehabilitation Center	243-1200	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/donley">www.dlt.ri.gov/donley</a>	WCEdUnit@dlt.ri.gov
Employer Service	462-8710	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/esu">www.dlt.ri.gov/esu</a>	ESU@dlt.ri.gov
Executive Office	462-8870		office@dlt.ri.gov
Foreign Labor/Migrant Seasonal	462-8800	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ets/ForeignLabor.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/ets/ForeignLabor.htm</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Human Resources	462-8840		
Jobs Network	1-888-616-JOBS	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/esu/esucontact.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/esu/esucontact.htm</a>	(multiple, see web)
Labor Market Information	462-8740	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi">www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi</a>	LMI@dlt.ri.gov
Labor Standards	462-8550	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lis">www.dlt.ri.gov/lis</a>	LaborStandards@dlt.ri.gov
Legal Counsel	462-8890		legal@dlt.ri.gov
Marketing and Public Relations	462-8810		marketing@dlt.ri.gov
netWORKri	462-8800	<a href="http://www.netWORKri.org">www.netWORKri.org</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Occupational Safety	462-8570	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/occusafe">www.dlt.ri.gov/occusafe</a>	OccuSafe@dlt.ri.gov
Police and Fire Unit	462-8855		pf@dlt.ri.gov
Professional Regulation	462-8580	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/profregs">www.dlt.ri.gov/profregs</a>	ProfRegs@dlt.ri.gov
Rapid Response	462-8811	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui/RapidResponse.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui/RapidResponse.htm</a>	ESU@dlt.ri.gov
TDD	462-8006		
Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI)	462-8420	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/tdi">www.dlt.ri.gov/tdi</a>	TDI@dlt.ri.gov
Fraud	462-8419	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/tdi">www.dlt.ri.gov/tdi</a>	TDI@dlt.ri.gov
Trade Adjustment Assistance	243-9166	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui/trade.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui/trade.htm</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	462-8400	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/ui">www.dlt.ri.gov/ui</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov
Call Center	243-9100		
Fraud	462-8419		
TDD	243-9149		
Veterans' Services	462-8800	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds/vetserv.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds/vetserv.htm</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Weights and Measures	462-8580	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/occusafe/WeightsMeasures.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/occusafe/WeightsMeasures.htm</a>	OccuSafe@dlt.ri.gov
Work Opportunity Tax Credit	462-8717	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/esu/TaxCredits.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/esu/TaxCredits.htm</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Workers' Compensation	462-8100	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wc">www.dlt.ri.gov/wc</a>	WCEdcUnit@dlt.ri.gov
Education Unit	462-8100	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/edunit.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/edunit.htm</a>	WCEdcUnit@dlt.ri.gov
Fraud	462-8100	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/fraud.htm">www.dlt.ri.gov/wc/fraud.htm</a>	WCFraud@dlt.ri.gov
Workforce Development	462-8800	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds">www.dlt.ri.gov/wfds</a>	WDS@dlt.ri.gov
Workforce Investment Office	462-8780	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wio">www.dlt.ri.gov/wio</a>	WIO@dlt.ri.gov
Workforce Regulation and Safety	462-8580	<a href="http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lis">www.dlt.ri.gov/lis</a>	LaborStandards@dlt.ri.gov
Workshare	243-9177	<a href="http://www.dlt.state.ri.us/ui/ws.htm">www.dlt.state.ri.us/ui/ws.htm</a>	UnemploymentInsurance@dlt.ri.gov

\* All telephone numbers are within Rhode Island's 401 area code.



# Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

Administrative Offices: 1511 Pontiac Avenue • Cranston, RI 02920-4407

(401) 462-8000 • TDD: (401) 462-8006 • [www.dlt.ri.gov](http://www.dlt.ri.gov)

Governor Donald L. Carcieri • Director Sandra M. Powell

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