FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2020

Rhode Island-Based Jobs Rose 1,700 from September; October Unemployment Rate Decreases to 7.0 Percent

CRANSTON, R.I. - The state’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 7.0 percent in October, the Department of Labor and Training announced Thursday. The October rate was down 3.5 percentage points from the September rate of 10.5 percent. Last year the rate was 3.5 percent in October.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 6.9 percent in October, down from 7.9 percent in September. The U.S. rate was 3.6 percent in October 2019.

The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents — those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment — was 37,800, down 20,800 from September. Over the year, the number of unemployed residents increased by 18,500.

The number of employed Rhode Island residents was 503,500, up 2,400 from September. Last October there were 537,600 employed Rhode Island residents.

The Rhode Island labor force totaled 541,300 in October, down 18,400 from September and down 15,600 from October 2019 (556,900).

Rhode Island-Based Jobs

Rhode Island’s total nonfarm payroll employment level rose to 468,400 in October, an increase of 1,700 from the revised September figure of 466,700. The October nonfarm job level is 40,000 or 7.9 percent below the February record high level of 508,400. Rhode Island has now regained just over 59 percent or 58,100 of the 98,100 jobs lost in March and April. Over the year, Rhode Island-based jobs are down by 36,300.

The number of jobs in the Professional & Business Services sector rose by 1,400 in October, led by gains reported within the Administrative & Waste Services subsector.

A gain of 700 jobs was reported in the Transportation & Utilities sector which was fueled by the return of school bus drivers who had been idle since April.

The Retail Trade sector added 500 jobs from September and now has recovered three-quarters or 7,100 of the 9,400 jobs lost during the March and April economic shutdown.

In addition, the Accommodation & Food Services sector added 500 jobs in October and has reclaimed 22,400 or nearly two-thirds of the 34,200 jobs lost during the pandemic.

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<th>Oct 20</th>
<th>Sept 20</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R.I. Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.I. Job Count (in thousands)</td>
<td>468.4</td>
<td>466.7</td>
<td>504.7</td>
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Highlights:
- The Rhode Island unemployment rate was 7.0 percent in October, down 3.5 percentage points from last month’s rate of 10.5 percent.
- Through October, the Rhode Island economy has recovered 58,100 or 59.2 percent of the 98,100 lost jobs during the pandemic shutdown.
October job gains were also noted in the Construction (+400), Other Services (+300) and Wholesale Trade (+200) sectors, as well as the Manufacturing and Information sectors, which added 100 jobs each.

The Health Care & Social Assistance sector reported its first job loss since the April shutdown, shedding 1,000 jobs in October. All four subsectors within the sector reported job declines. Overall, Health Care & Social Assistance has regained 9,600 or 61 percent of the 15,800 jobs lost in March and April.

Employment in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation fell by 600 in October as many seasonal jobs at area golf courses and marinas came to an end.

Educational Services and Government employment decreased by 400 and 300, respectively, while Financial Activities employment decreased by 200 in October.

Due to the unprecedented pandemic-related employment declines in March and April, nearly all employment sectors reported year-over-year declines in October. The Accommodation & Food Services (-10,900) sector led all sectors in year-over-year jobs losses, followed by the Professional & Business Services (-5,300), Health Care & Social Assistance (-5,100) and Other Services (-3,300).

Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-2,500), Government (-2,100), Retail Trade (-1,800), Transportation & Utilities (-1,700), and Educational Services (-1,400) also reported sizable job declines between October 2019 and October 2020. Smaller annual declines were noted in the Construction (-800), Manufacturing (-700), Wholesale Trade (-400) and Information (-400) sectors.

Financial Activities (+100) was the lone employment sector to report an over-the-year job gain.

### Manufacturing Hours and Earnings

In October, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned $21.29 per hour, up eighty-three cents from September, and up two dollars and eight cents from October 2019.

Manufacturing employees worked an average of 36.9 hours per week in October, down eight-tenths of an hour over the month, and down one and eight-tenths hours from a year ago.

**About DLT:** The Department of Labor and Training (DLT) offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunities to both individuals and employers. DLT protects Rhode Island’s workforce by enforcing labor laws, prevailing wage rates and workplace health and safety standards. The department also provides temporary income support to unemployed and temporarily disabled workers. For more information, please call the Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the website at [www.dlt.ri.gov](http://www.dlt.ri.gov).

The Department of Labor and Training is scheduled to release the November 2020 labor force figures and job counts at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2020.