

# CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



The Rhode Island Economy  
February 2020 - August 2021



## The Shutdown

National and local economies came to a halt in April 2020 as businesses across the country were shut down in order to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Rhode Island experienced record-breaking employment in February 2020, but by March, the coronavirus had come to Rhode Island, thousands of workers were suddenly unemployed as the state experienced a recession level loss of 108,000 jobs in just two months.

## Job Recovery

In May 2020, Rhode Island began the process of reopening the state's economy. Reopening occurred in "Phases" with the state moving from one phase to the next based on pre-established criteria which monitored the spread of the virus. Between April 2020 and August 2021, the state has regained 78,700 jobs or 72.9 percent of the total lost. Not surprisingly, nearly 60 percent of the job gains occurred in the sectors that were most negatively impacted by the social distancing orders - Accommodations & Food Services (+24,400), Health Care & Social Assistance (+12,100) and Retail Trade (+9,200). The Accommodation & Food Services sector has recouped 74.8 percent of the 32,600 jobs it lost during the shutdown, accounting for 31 percent of the 78,700 total jobs recovered to date. Employment in this sector is still down 15.6 percent as 8,200 of the jobs lost have yet to be recovered. Since the reopening began the Construction sector has added 5,200 jobs, reporting more jobs in August 2021 than it did prior to the pandemic. Overall, jobs in Rhode Island are down 29,300 compared to February 2020, a drop of 5.8 percent.

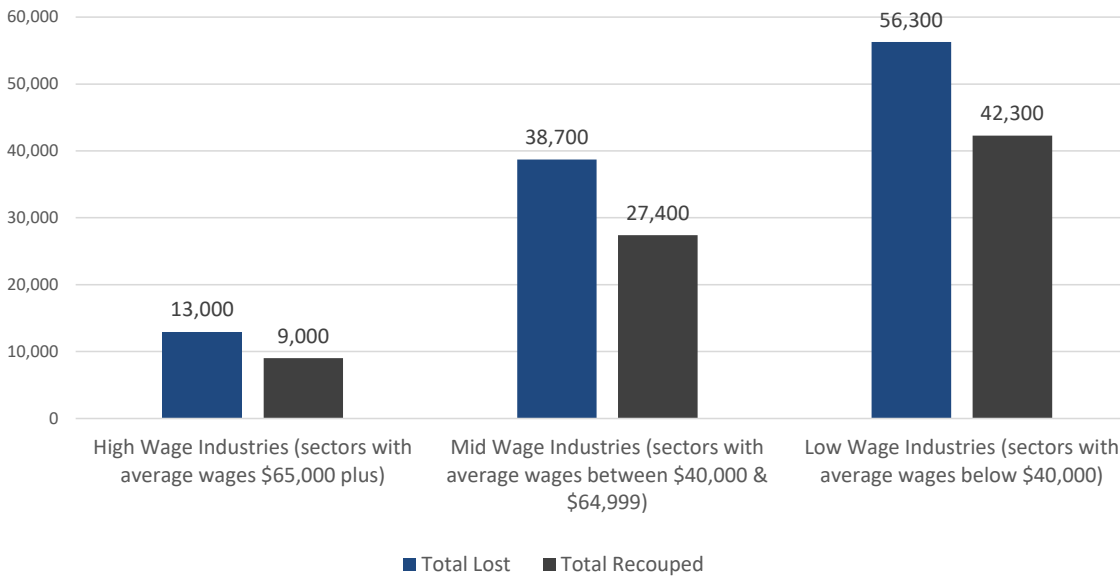
## Across the Nation

Nationally, 70.6 percent of the jobs lost between March and April 2020 (pandemic shutdown) have been recovered. Through July 2021, only two states, Idaho and Utah, have fully recovered all jobs lost during the pandemic-related shutdown. Rhode Island's 72.9 percent recovery rate is the 26th highest in the nation and the 4th highest in New England. Vermont has recovered 76.5 percent of their lost jobs, followed by Maine (75.9%) and New Hampshire (74.7%). Connecticut (68.9%) and Massachusetts (66.8%) are lagging behind Rhode Island's recovery on a percentage basis.

**Rhode Island Jobs – Reopening the Economy During the Pandemic**  
(Numbers in Thousands)

	Number of Jobs			Jobs Lost			Jobs Recovered			Overall Change	
	Feb'20	Apr'20	Aug'21	Feb'20 - Apr'20			Apr'20 - Aug'21			Feb'20 - Aug'21	
				Number	% of Total	% of Sector	Number	% of Total	% of Sector	Number	% of Sector
Total Nonfarm	507.2	399.2	477.9	-108.0	100%	72.9%	78.7	19.7%	73.6%	-29.3	-5.8%
Accommodation & Food Services	52.6	20.0	44.4	-32.6	30.2%	74.8%	24.4	122.0%	71.8%	-8.2	-15.6%
Health Care & Social Assistance	83.4	66.0	78.1	-17.4	16.1%	69.5%	12.1	18.3%	71.3%	-5.3	-6.4%
Retail Trade	47.9	36.7	45.9	-11.2	10.4%	82.1%	9.2	25.1%	81.3%	-2.0	-4.2%
Other Services	23.0	15.3	20.3	-7.7	7.1%	64.9%	5.0	32.7%	67.5%	-2.7	-11.7%
Manufacturing	39.8	33.2	39.9	-6.6	6.1%	101.5%	6.7	20.2%	110.6%	0.1	0.3%
Administrative & Waste Services	29.2	22.9	27.6	-6.3	5.8%	74.6%	4.7	20.5%	69.8%	-1.6	-5.5%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	8.2	3.4	7.1	-4.8	4.4%	77.1%	3.7	108.8%	75.0%	-1.1	-13.4%
Construction	20.3	16.1	21.3	-4.2	3.9%	123.8%	5.2	32.3%	123.8%	1.0	4.9%
Transportation & Utilities	13.4	9.8	13.0	-3.6	3.3%	88.9%	3.2	32.7%	97.2%	-0.4	-3.0%
Educational Services	27.0	23.8	23.9	-3.2	3.0%	3.1%	0.1	0.4%	6.2%	-3.1	-11.5%
Professional & Technical Svcs.	26.4	23.8	24.9	-2.6	2.4%	42.3%	1.1	4.6%	30.8%	-1.5	-5.7%
Government	65.5	63.1	63.0	-2.4	2.2%	-4.2%	-0.1	-0.2%	41.7%	-2.5	-3.8%
Wholesale Trade	15.8	13.6	15.8	-2.2	2.0%	100.0%	2.2	16.2%	113.6%	0.0	0.0%
Financial Activities	35.7	33.8	34.6	-1.9	1.8%	42.1%	0.8	2.4%	31.6%	-1.1	-3.1%
Information	5.8	5.0	5.3	-0.8	0.7%	37.5%	0.3	6.0%	25.0%	-0.5	-8.6%
Management of Companies	13.0	12.5	12.6	-0.5	0.5%	20.0%	0.1	0.8%	20.0%	-0.4	-3.1%

## Jobs Lost and Recovered by Wage Category



Over half (55%) of the jobs lost during the March to April 2020 shutdown were in low wage industries, a little more than a third (35.5%) were in mid-wage industries and less than 10 percent were in high wage industries. To date, 75.1 percent of the low wage industries jobs, 70.8 percent of the mid-wage industry jobs and 69.2 percent of the high-wage industry jobs have been recovered.

## RI Based Jobs - January 2020 through August 2021

