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Rhode Island-Based Jobs Rose 2,100 from August; September Unemployment Rate Decreases to 10.5 Percent

CRANSTON, R.I. - The state’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 10.5 percent in September, the Department of Labor and Training announced Thursday. The September rate was down 2.4 percentage points from the revised August rate of 12.9 percent. Last year the rate was 3.5 percent in September.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 7.9 percent in September, down from 8.4 percent in August. The U.S. rate was 3.5 percent in September 2019.

The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents — those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment — was 59,000, down 10,500 from August. Over the year, the number of unemployed residents increased by 39,500.

The number of employed Rhode Island residents was 502,000, up 31,100 from August. Last September there were 537,000 employed Rhode Island residents.

The Rhode Island labor force totaled 561,000 in September, up 20,600 from August and up 4,600 from September 2019 (556,400).

Rhode Island-Based Jobs

Rhode Island’s total nonfarm payroll employment level rose to 468,000 in September, an increase of 2,100 from the revised August figure of 465,900. The September nonfarm job level was below the February record high level by 40,400, or 7.9 percent. Rhode Island has now reclaimed nearly 59 percent or 57,700 of the 98,100 jobs lost in March and April. Over the year, Rhode Island-based jobs are down by 34,800.

The number of jobs in the Health Care & Social Assistance rose by 1,800 in September. After shedding 15,800 jobs between March and April, the sector has recovered 67 percent or 10,600 of those jobs.

Through the gain of 1,600 jobs in September, the Professional & Business Services sector has recovered just over half of the 11,100 jobs lost during the economic shutdown.

The Retail Trade sector added 700 jobs from August, while the Accommodations & Food Services and Other Services sector each added 600 jobs.

Rounding out the September job gains were increases noted in the Wholesale Trade (+400), Construction (+300) and Information (+100) sectors.

	<u>Sept 20</u>	<u>Aug 20</u>	<u>Sept 19</u>
R.I. Unemployment Rate	10.5%	12.9%	3.5%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	7.9%	8.4%	3.5%
R.I. Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	468.0	465.9	502.8
Highlights:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rhode Island unemployment rate was 10.5 percent in September, down 2.4 percentage points from last month’s revised rate of 12.9 percent. • Through September, the Rhode Island economy has recovered 57,700 or 58.8 percent of the 98,100 lost jobs during the pandemic shutdown. 			

Offsetting the September job gains was a loss of 2,000 jobs reported in the Educational Services sector due in part to a decrease in the number of student workers at the state's private colleges universities.

Government employment and Transportation & Utilities employment each shrunk by 700 in September, while a loss of 600 jobs was reported in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation.

The number of jobs in three sectors, Financial Activities, Manufacturing and Mining & Logging, remained unchanged in September.

Due to the unprecedented pandemic-related employment declines in March and April, nearly all employment sectors reported year-over-year declines in September. The Accommodation & Food Services (-11,100) sector led all sectors in year-over-year jobs losses, followed by the Professional & Business Services (-5,200), Other Services (-3,800) and Health Care & Social Assistance (-3,700).

Retail Trade (-2,300), Transportation & Utilities (-2,300), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-2,100), Government (-1,500), Construction (-1,400) and Manufacturing (-1,000) also reported sizable job declines between September 2019 and September 2020. Smaller annual declines were noted in the Wholesale Trade and Information sectors, shedding 500 jobs each.

Educational Services (+300) and Financial Activities (+300) were the lone employment sectors to report an over-the-year job gain.

Manufacturing Hours and Earnings

In September, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$20.32 per hour, down twenty-six cents from August, but up eighty-six cents from September 2019.

Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.7 hours per week in September, up one and four-tenth hours over the month, but down one-tenth of an hour 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.

The Department of Labor and Training is scheduled to release the October 2020 labor force figures and job counts at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 19, 2020.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Sep-20	Aug-20	Sep-19	Net Change From	
				Aug-20	Sep-19
Total Nonfarm	468.0	465.9 *	502.8	2.1	-34.8
Total Private	404.3	401.5 *	437.6	2.8	-33.3
Mining & Logging	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0
Construction	18.6	18.3	20.0	0.3	-1.4
Manufacturing	38.7	38.7 *	39.7	0.0	-1.0
Wholesale Trade	16.1	15.7	16.6	0.4	-0.5
Retail Trade	45.6	44.9 *	47.9	0.7	-2.3
Transportation & Utilities	10.2	10.9 *	12.5	-0.7	-2.3
Information	5.3	5.2 *	5.8	0.1	-0.5
Financial Activities	35.7	35.7 *	35.4	0.0	0.3
Professional & Business Services	62.9	61.3 *	68.1	1.6	-5.2
Educational Services	26.3	28.3 *	26.0	-2.0	0.3
Health Care & Social Assistance	78.7	76.9	82.4	1.8	-3.7
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	5.9	6.5	8.0	-0.6	-2.1
Accommodation & Food Services	40.9	40.3 *	52.0	0.6	-11.1
Other Services	19.1	18.5 *	22.9	0.6	-3.8
Government	63.7	64.4	65.2	-0.7	-1.5

**Revised estimates*