

# Rhode Island

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

### OPPORTUNITY REPORT

Prepared by the American Institute for Full Employment • May 2019

**Rhode Island** has the opportunity to save millions of dollars and promote the overall well-being of its unemployed workers by implementing additional best practices in its Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. UI is an often overlooked, yet critical program for employers and employees. UI policy decisions involve not only significant expenditures in the economy, affecting the business climate and economic development, but also the financial, mental, and physical well-being of the unemployed. In designing their UI programs, federal law allows states substantial flexibility that is rarely used. The American Institute for Full Employment has the resources and personnel to help you design and implement innovative UI and workforce programs that make impact. For a comprehensive review and analysis of how to make a difference, please contact Bill Starks, Unemployment Insurance Project Director at 801-556-2942 or [bills@fullemployment.org](mailto:bills@fullemployment.org).

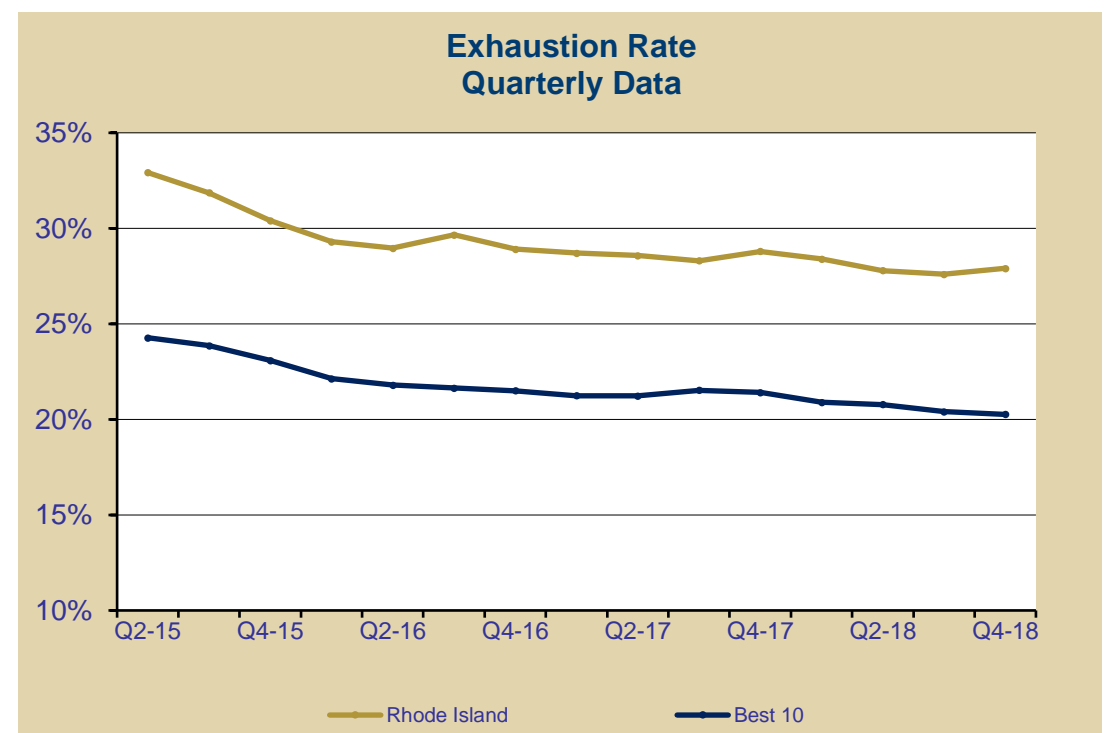
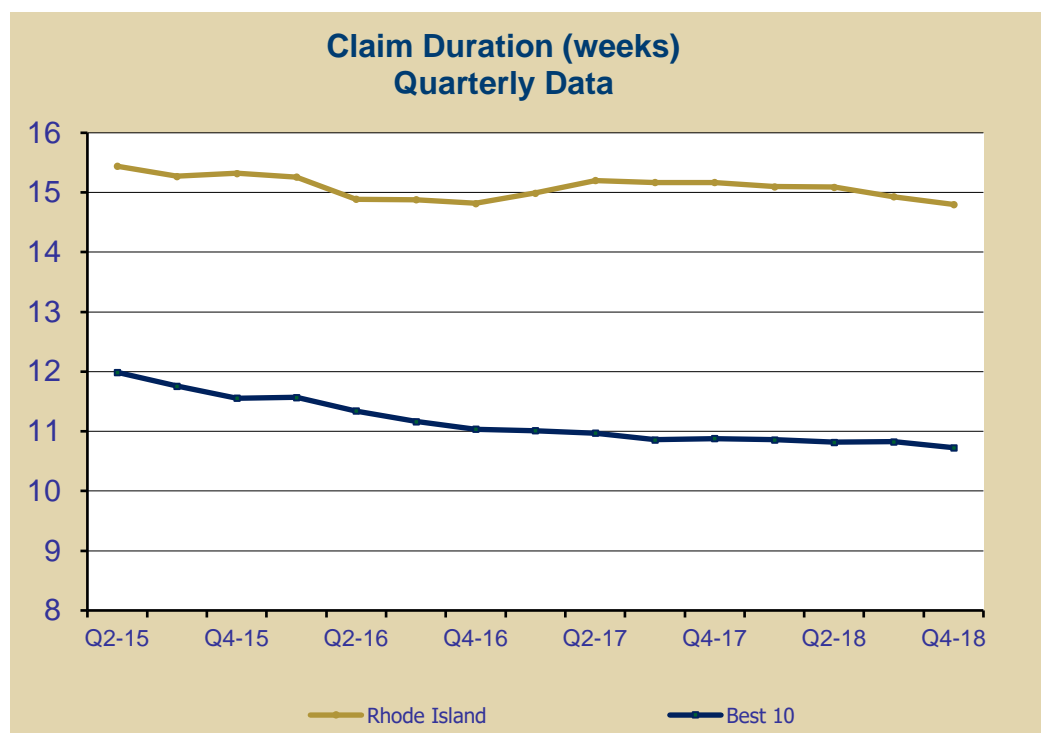
#### Unemployment Rate and Caseload

	Dec-17	Dec-18
Unemployment Rate *	4.40%	4.00%
Civilian Labor Force*	555,230	556,234
Unemployed*	24,472	22,181
Avg Paid Caseload during the Quarter**	6,262	6,498
Total Benefits Paid ***	\$151 mil	\$146 mil

\* Seasonally Adjusted \*\* Regular UI Claims \*\*\* Annual

## Effectiveness

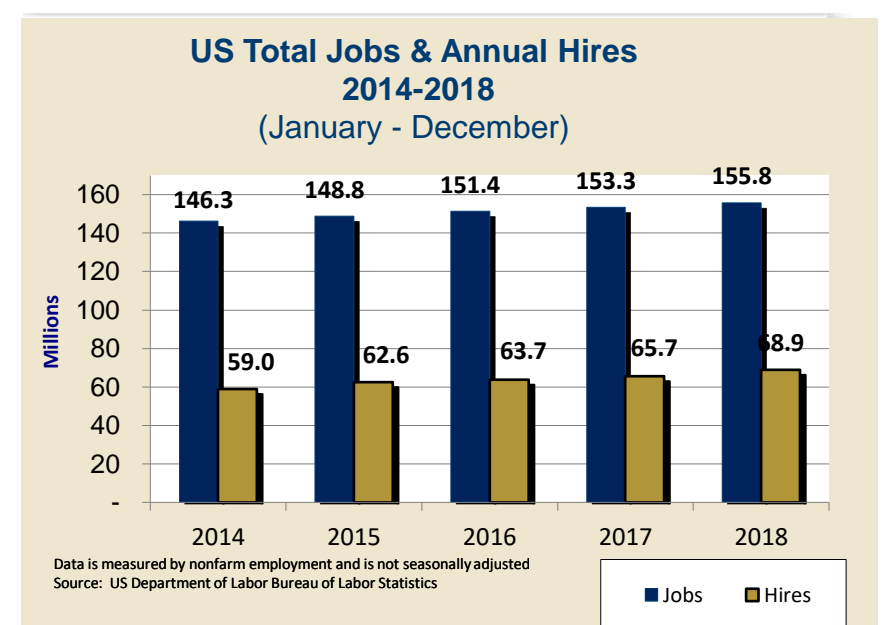
On average, UI claimants in Rhode Island did not find their way off of unemployment insurance for nearly three and a half months, and over one quarter of all claimants exhausted their benefits.



January 2017 - December 2018 Average	Best 5	Best 10	RI	RI Rank
<b>CLAIM DURATION</b> The average number of weeks UI claimants received benefits	9.4	10.7	14.8	25
<b>EXHAUSTION RATE</b> The average percentage of UI claimants who exhausted their benefits	16.2%	20.3%	27.9%	17

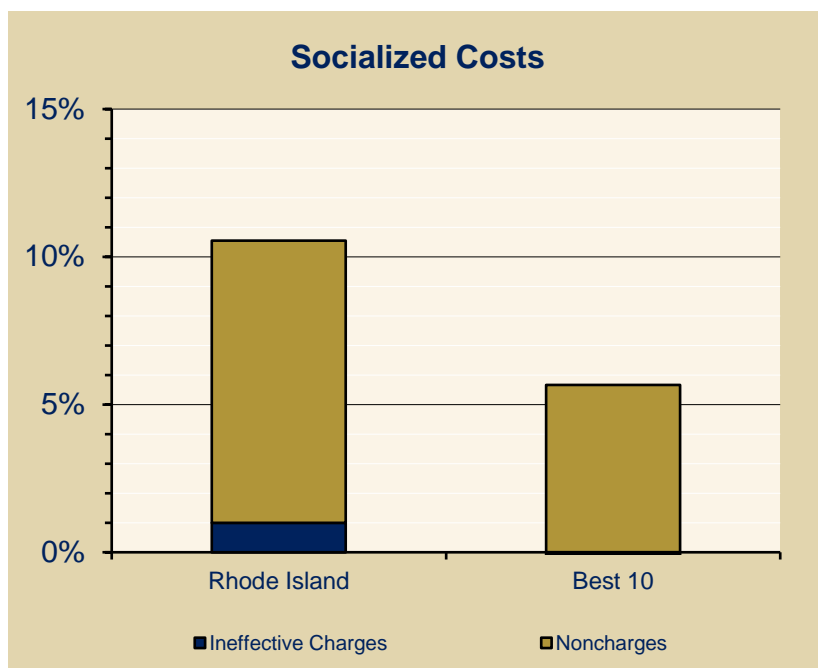
#### US Total Jobs & Annual Hires Summary

In an economy of approximately 156 million jobs, US employers made over 69 million hires - more than one hire for every three jobs. Common statistics track only net new jobs, but our dynamic economy creates many more opportunities than just those from net new jobs. Job openings and hiring activity come from a variety of sources normally, including: 1) quits, 2) retirement, 3) moves, 4) firing, 5) total new job creation and other causes



# Efficiency

Compared with Rhode Island, the average Best 10 state promoted more employment through a UI tax structure that had 90% less in socialized costs.



	2018	Best 5	Best 10	RI	RI Rank
<b>SOCIALIZED COSTS *</b>		3%	6%	11%	13

The percentage of benefit costs not charged to responsible employers, but instead socialized as:

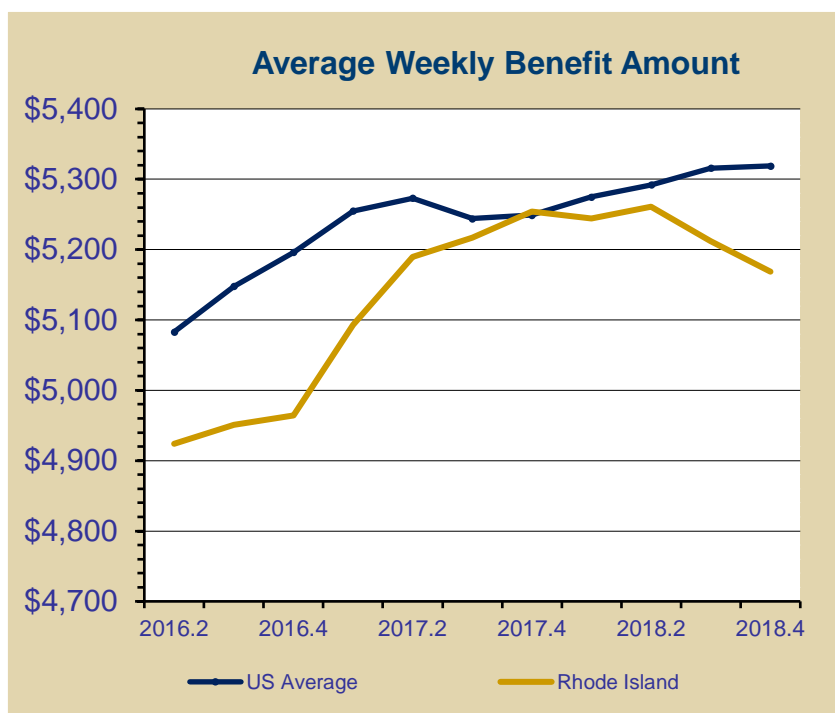
- 1) Noncharges - the total amount of benefit payments not charged to individual employer experience rating accounts. They often shift to the UI tax system social program costs; such as payments to workers who voluntarily quit . and
- 2) Ineffective Charges - the yearly amount of benefit charges assigned to individual employers that exceed the amount of contributions paid by those same employers in the following year. These charges tend to lessen some employers' responsibility to pay the full cost of their claims, due to e.g. a maximum tax rate that is too low or an otherwise less responsive tax structure.

The levels of both noncharges and ineffective charges are largely within the control of state policy makers and affect the state's unemployment rates by raising or lowering: 1) the cost of employing a worker and 2) the cost of laying off a worker.

\* Data from the 2018 Significant Measures Report - U.S. Department of Labor Office of Workforce Security

# Cost

The average UI claim cost in Rhode Island was 3% less than the US average.



	January 2018 - December 2018 Average	RI	US Average
<b>AVERAGE COST PER CLAIM</b>	Benefits Paid for all weeks compensated divided by the number of first payments.	\$5,169	\$5,319
<b>WAGE REPLACEMENT RATE</b>	The average amount of weekly UI benefits paid per claimant divided by the average amount of weekly wages earned.	35.1%	33.0%

## How We Can Assist Your State in Improving Performance

- Analysis of claimant information flow between agencies and job sources
- Evaluation of performance measures and incentives
- Examination of coordination of all agencies involved with UI claimant
- Integration of claimant work search rules, incentives and assistance
- Analysis of a subsidized wage program for employers willing to train UI claimants

For a more detailed evaluation contact our consultants at

**800-562-7752**

or visit us on the web at [fullemployment.org](http://fullemployment.org)

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