

# 2020

**DLT** Department of Labor and Training  
RHODE ISLAND

## Annual Report

# 2020





## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Rhode Islanders:

I am thrilled to present the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's 2022 Annual Report to the people of Rhode Island, our partners and colleagues in state government, elected officials, business leaders, and community stakeholders.

I am delighted to share that 2022 was a year of low unemployment. We witnessed Rhode Island's economy start to rebound, as jobs increased in the state and Rhode Islanders went back to work. Our unemployment rate has remained equal to or lower than the national average for the last 15 months. At the end of 2022, we recovered almost 91 percent of the 108,100 jobs lost during the pandemic shutdown.

With customer service as a top priority at DLT, we focused on serving people better and serving them well. Last year's recovery efforts allowed us to implement effective program enhancements to thoughtfully serve our community. Our office launched the partial unemployment benefits program, 401 Works, which supported residents who transitioned back to work part-time, to still be eligible for a partial unemployment payment. We continue to see residents take advantage of this initiative, with a 16% increase in claimants working part-time, resulting in part-time worker claimants earning more and collecting less in benefits. This cost-savings program puts claimants in a better financial position, investing that money back into the state's economy, and ensures employers have access to more workers.

Our virtual career center — [backtoworkri.com](https://backtoworkri.com), allowed Rhode Islanders to access an array of virtual services, including one-on-one virtual job coaching, access to jobs and training programs, and more. Since the start of the program, more than 12,500 jobseekers have interacted with the website. The Workforce Development Services (WDS) Division hosted more than 100 virtual job fairs and more than 7,000 jobseekers attended a session with a job coach. The new unemployment insurance platform called UI Online, changed the way claimants communicated with the department. The department was able to process claims at a higher and more accurate rate. Claimants can follow the progress of their claims independently and navigate the self-service options, leading to a more positive customer experience.

The Office of Community Engagement was launched to lead the agency's commitment and strategy to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. The office will work across divisions and with community-based organizations to ensure DLT services and programs are made accessible to all Rhode Islanders. We will continue to prioritize partnering with the community to ensure DLT can effectively and efficiently meet their needs.

The Real Jobs RI program continues to play a major role in Rhode Island's rebound, as it saw an increase in enrollment and job placement numbers. With 52 active sector partnerships, across 19 industries, more than 5,000 individuals had been placed or upskilled in jobs through Real Jobs RI in 2022.

As we move forward in our work, the department is committed to growing our labor force, doing essential work to raise income levels for working families, and supporting businesses. The future of Rhode Island's economy is bright, and we've come a long way already. It continues to be a privilege for me to lead an agency working to rebuild our economy and serve the Rhode Island community with responsive action.

Sincerely,



Matthew D. Weldon  
Director  
Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

State of Rhode Island  
Department of Labor and Training  
2022 Annual Report

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# **Labor Market Information**

The **Labor Market Information (LMI) Division** is a central resource for a wide variety of data relating to the Rhode Island economy. The LMI Division is responsible for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on the state's labor market. LMI in cooperation with the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) operates four federal/state survey programs which collect information from RI-based employers and households concerning their employment situations. These federal/ state programs are operated in all states making data comparable across states and over time.

The types of information available from LMI includes employment and wage data by industry, location, and size of employer; long- and short-term industry and occupational projections, industry staffing patterns, wage rates, labor force statistics and demographic profiles of unemployment insurance claimants. LMI aims to make the latest information readily available to Rhode Island workers, businesses, economists, researchers, and the media so they can make informed inferences and decisions about the Rhode Island economy.

As the Rhode Island economy continues to recover from the effects of COVID-19, the need for reliable labor market information continues as well. The LMI Division presented a review of labor market conditions at the State Estimating Conference in May and October. In addition, the division responds to essential requests from the Governor's office, other public officials, various state agencies,



the media, and special researchers for information on employment, unemployment, and wages.

*For more information and resources, please visit [dlt.ri.gov/lmi](https://dlt.ri.gov/lmi).*

## Rhode Island Labor Market Conditions in 2022

The Rhode Island economy continued to improve in 2022 as the number of jobs in the state increased by 7,800 and the state's unemployment rate fell to 3.2 percent.. As the year ended, fewer Rhode Island residents were unemployed (-3,400) and more were employed (+ 900) Despite these improvements, the state is still hampered by the effects of the Coronavirus.

Rhode Island experienced record-breaking employment in February 2020, with an estimated 507,300 RI-based jobs, the highest job-count on record. Several economic sectors were at all-time highs and the state's unemployment rate was at a thirty-year low. However, in March 2020, the Coronavirus was detected in Rhode Island leading to total and partial shutdowns of business across all industry sectors.

During the state ordered two- month shut down the state lost a staggering 108,300 jobs: 21.3 percent of its total employment, fourth largest percentage loss in the nation and the largest in New England.

By the end of 2022, the state had regained a total of 98,400 jobs, 91 percent of the total lost.

Jobs in the state are still down 9,900 or 2.0 percent since February 2020's all-time employment high of 507,300. While the number of unemployed RI residents is down 2,800 from the pre-pandemic count, the number of employed RI residents is also down (-5,100) resulting in a 7,900 decrease in the size of the state's labor force.

# **Income Support**



The **Income Support Division** provides financial assistance to Rhode Islanders who are temporarily out of work, allowing them to support themselves and their families until they can return to work. The largest benefit programs within the Income Support Division are Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI). The Department's priorities and strategic direction are to ensure continuous improvements in all Income Support programs.

Regarding Unemployment Insurance, Rhode Island continues to enhance online access for our customers by providing individualized claim status and information. Rhode Island continues to work with our vendor to improve the claims process and provide customers with additional self-service options. These new features continue to reduce call volume, increase claimant independence, and improve the customer's experience.

Rhode Island applied and was approved for funding with the Equity grant. It is the

Department's priority to ensure that all customers have meaningful and equitable access to the UI program. We continue to work with the USDOL Data Pilot Partnership to better understand our underserved population and any barriers that may exist for our customers.

Rhode Island has partnered with the USDOL UI Modernization team to increase customer understanding of UI notices and application questions. We continue to review and update these communications using plain language frameworks.

Lastly, the Department is working with the USDOL Tiger Teams to identify which proposed recommendations will be a focus for Rhode Island. These efforts will improve equity and accessibility, fraud prevention and detection, and/or timeliness and backlog.

For more information and resources, please visit [dlt.ri.gov/ui](https://dlt.ri.gov/ui) and [dlt.ri.gov/tdi](https://dlt.ri.gov/tdi).



# Unemployment Insurance

**Unemployment Insurance (UI)** is a federal/state insurance program financed by employers through payroll taxes. UI provides temporary income support to workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and have earned enough wages within a specific base period to qualify. The maximum benefit rate payable in 2022 was \$661 per week for up to 26 weeks from January 1, 2022, through June 30, 2022. On July 1, 2022, the maximum benefit rate payable increased to \$680 per week for up to 26 weeks

The Department received 49,426 regular UI claims in 2022. The average weekly benefit was \$412, and the average duration was 14 weeks. Overall, 330,849 payments were issued, totaling \$136.4 million.

The balance of the UI trust fund, which employers pay into, through unemployment insurance taxes, was \$214,117,201.03 on January 2, 2022, and ended the year at \$430,892,649.26 on December 31, 2022.

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## WorkShare

When Rhode Island employers experience a temporary, non-seasonal slowdown in business, the WorkShare program helps them to avoid layoffs by allowing employees to work a reduced workweek while collecting a percentage of UI.

Usage of the WorkShare program decreased substantially in 2022 as companies began recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the WorkShare program averted 99 layoffs at 63 Rhode Island companies. The Department received 253 initial WorkShare claims and issued 15,829 payments. In comparison, in 2021 the Department received 1,918 initial claims and issued 66,282 payments, averting an estimated 1,248 layoffs.

## RESEA Program

The **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)** program aims to help UI claimants with the highest risk of exhausting benefits return to work faster by providing reemployment services. Traditionally, this has been offered through in-person assessments and job search assistance. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, RESEA has been offered via a Virtual Career Center. All appointments are held virtually or by phone. RESEA also helps to maintain the integrity of the UI program by ensuring that claimants meet eligibility requirements and preventing improper payments.

In 2022, RESEA received \$1,667,483 in federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, in anticipation of serving 6,800 Rhode Islanders.

## Federal Claims

Rhode Island administers two federal unemployment compensation programs aimed at assisting former federal employees and servicemembers. Individuals in both programs must meet the same eligibility requirements as other unemployment insurance claimants.

The **Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE)** program provides unemployment compensation for federal employees who lost their employment through no fault of their own. There were 91 initial UCFE claims in 2022, with a total of \$548,045 in benefits paid.

The **Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers (UCX)** program provides unemployment compensation benefits to individuals transitioning from military service to the civilian labor market. In 2022, there were 54 initial UCX claims, with a net payment of \$565,890.

## Temporary Disability Insurance

The **Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI)** program is a state-administered insurance program designed to provide financial protection to those unable to work due to illness or injury. Unlike workers' compensation insurance, which protects against income loss caused by job-related disabilities, TDI covers disabilities that are not work-connected or are otherwise not covered by workers' compensation. Together, the two programs ensure that virtually all Rhode Island wage and salary workers will receive a weekly income while they are medically unable to work.

In 2022, the Department received 52,682 TDI claims, a decrease of 3,340 from 2021, and issued 369,018 payments. Payments totaled \$224,336,990, with an average weekly benefit amount of \$6084 (\$34 higher than in 2021). The average claim duration was 9.4 weeks, a decrease of 2% percent from 2021.

The TDI program is financed entirely by workers who are protected by the program. 428,700 total workers were paying TDI taxes in 2022. The TDI Trust Fund had an income of \$235,926,174, and expenditures totaled \$230,591,257. The year-end fund balance was \$121,739,770.

## Temporary Caregiver Insurance

In 2014, Rhode Island established the **Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI)** program, becoming one of the first states in the country to enact paid family leave. In 2022, TCI provided up to five weeks of benefits (up from four weeks in 2021) for individuals taking time out of work to bond with a new child or care for an ill family member.

As in 2021, many Rhode Islanders used the TCI program in 2022 to care for family members who were impacted by COVID-19.

*“The average claim duration was 9.4 weeks, a decrease of 2% percent from 2021.”*

The Department received 15,044 total TCI claims in 2022 and issued 32,851 payments. The total amount of payments was \$21,351,599 – with an average weekly benefit amount of \$650 (\$24 higher than in 2021). The average claim duration was 4.1 weeks.

## Central Adjudication Unit

The **Central Adjudication Unit (CAU)** conducts initial interviews and research into disputed unemployment insurance claims to determine whether the claimant is eligible for benefits.

The CAU rendered 17,849 adjudication decisions in 2022. Of these decisions, 10,231 involved separation issues, meaning that the circumstances of the job termination were in question. 44.0 percent of separation-related claims resulted in the denial of UI benefits.

Additionally, 7,636 decisions involved non-separation issues, which relate to standard qualifications or continued eligibility (such as evidence of work or availability for work). 90.8 percent of these claims resulted in the denial of benefits.

## Fraud Unit

To preserve the integrity of the UI and TDI programs, the **UI/TDI Fraud Unit** investigates suspicious activity.

In 2022, the UI/TDI Fraud Unit investigated 145 overpayment cases and detected \$1,802,706.00 in overpayments. The Department recovers UI and TDI overpayments obtained through fraudulent means by intercepting state and federal income tax refunds and lottery winnings, benefit payment offset, direct payment, and court-ordered restitution. \$826,471 was recovered in UI overpayments.

The Department's Legal Division criminally prosecuted 8 UI fraud cases in 2022, with \$122,730 in restitution ordered.

Additionally, the Department continues to use robust fraud prevention and detection efforts to combat imposter fraud, which is when a fraudster illegally files for unemployment benefits using someone else's previously stolen information. Imposter fraud is a national issue that became widespread as a result of the pandemic.



## Benefit Accuracy Measurement

The U.S. Department of Labor's **Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM)** program is a diagnostic tool used to audit the accuracy of UI claims. Analyzing a sample of weekly benefits and denied claims, BAM identifies overpayments and underpayments and then determines the cause and party responsible for the error. In 2022, the BAM sample of 433 claims in Rhode Island found that 58.00 percent of claims were paid properly, whereas 42.00 percent were overpaid, and 0.66 percent were underpaid. Full results can be found on the U.S. Department of Labor website.

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

The **Police Officers' Relief Fund** and **Firefighters' Relief Fund** provide financial support to the families of deceased or permanently disabled first responders. If an active or retired police officer or firefighter dies in the line of duty or from certain health conditions, the fund remits a monthly annuity to the surviving spouse and each dependent child until they reach the age of 18. In 2022, there were 189 recipients of police officers' annuity benefits, totaling \$680,800.00 and there were 642 recipients of firefighters' annuity benefits, totaling \$2,389,800.00.

The Police Officers' and Firefighters' Relief Funds also offer tuition payment for permanently disabled firefighters as well as the dependents of deceased or permanently disabled police officers at any Rhode Island state college or university. 16 dependents received tuition benefits from the Police Officers' Relief Fund, as well as 36 dependents and 0 firefighters received tuition benefits from the Firefighters' Relief Fund. The total tuition expenditures were \$114,603.00 for the Police Officers' Relief Fund and \$301,698.50 for the Firefighters' Relief Fund.



# **Workers'** **Compensation**

All Rhode Island employers are required to maintain workers' compensation insurance, which provides workers with protection in the event of a work-related injury or illness by covering missed wages and medical expenses. At the Department of Labor and Training, the **Workers' Compensation Division** monitors the state's workers' compensation system, ensuring that all required employers have insurance coverage, that appropriate documents are filed to protect injured workers and employers, that claims are paid correctly, and that measures are taken to detect and prevent fraud.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Division's Cranston office moved to a remote-first posture in mid-April, with rotating socially distanced staff onsite for essential activities. This approach allowed the Division to maintain same-day response times to claimant questions and all other inquiries. In addition, the Claims Unit began accepting electronic document submissions to better accommodate claim administrators navigating their own teleworking challenges. The Division continues to regularly collaborate remotely with industry stakeholders, national standards bodies, and counterpart agencies.

For more information and resources, please visit [dlt.ri.gov/wc](https://dlt.ri.gov/wc).



# Workers' Compensation Claims

The number of workplace injuries increased by 0.6 percent from 2021. In 2022, there were 5,429 reported indemnity injuries – meaning that the worker was paid weekly benefits – and 9,988 non-indemnity injuries, also referred to as “no lost time” or “medical-only” injuries because the disability did not exceed the waiting period of three days from earning full wages.

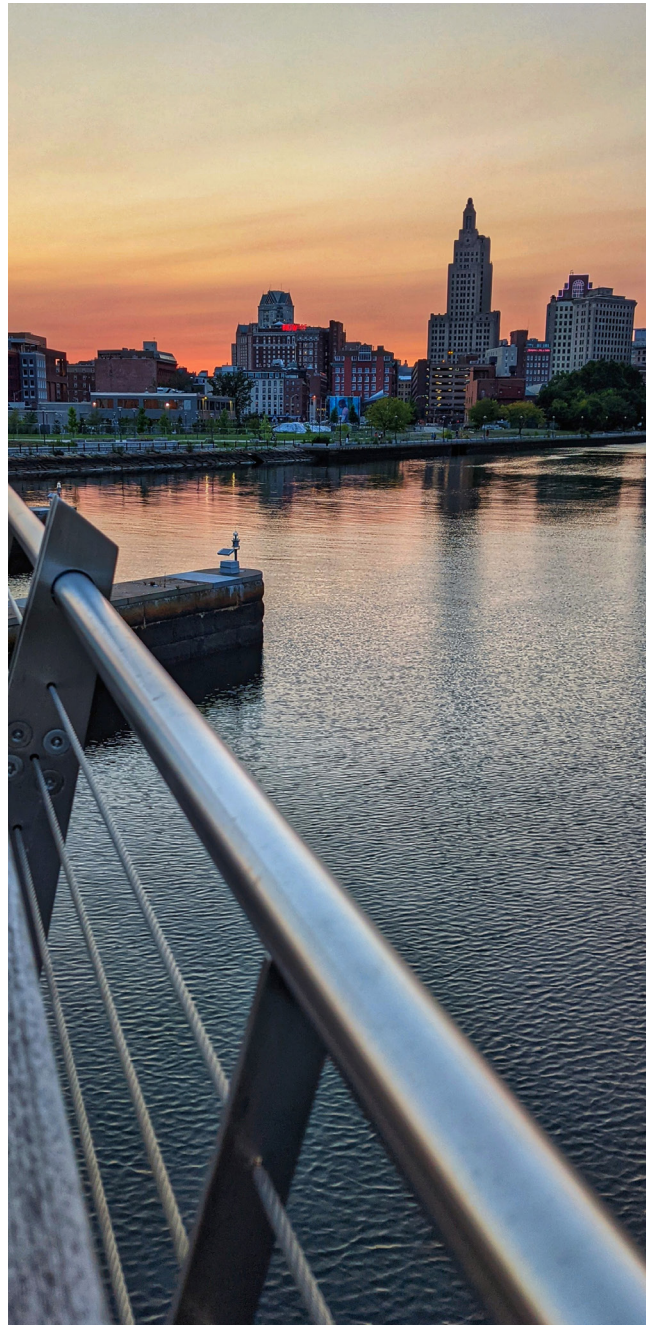
The number of COVID-related workers' compensation claims filed was 740, constituting roughly 4.8 percent of the overall volume. New filings were consistently tracked in frequency with the spring and fall surges of the virus. Claim demographics were concentrated in healthcare, congregate care, and other close-contact professions and industries.

Rather than submitting claims to an insurance company, certain Rhode Island employers can opt to self-insure and pay workers' compensation claims out of their own funds. The Department certified 22 self-insured employers in 2021.

## Education Unit

The **Workers' Compensation Education Unit** keeps employers and employees informed about workplace safety and workers' compensation benefits and procedures. Unit representatives reach out to employers, employee groups, and medical professionals, offering employer education workshops and on-site consultations. The pandemic has hampered our in-person trainings but in 2022 we conducted three (3) Medical trainings for approximately 26 new Residents.

The Education Unit has a dedicated information line to field questions regarding workers' compensation or workforce health and safety. In 2022, the Education Unit received over 4000 telephone calls to the information line as well as over 600 emails.





# 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 workers' compensation requirements, to ensure that Rhode Island's workers are protected.

In 2022, the Unit investigated 5,335 compliance cases and 11 fraud cases. We saw a slight increase in the number of employers penalized for failing to carry workers' compensation insurance to 162. Of these lack of insurance violations, 113 came into compliance and were penalized in-house for a total of \$88,013.19, of which \$55,247.35 has already been collected. We almost doubled the number of petitions filed in Workers' Compensation Court for civil prosecutions to 49. This resulted in \$258,920.85 in restitution ordered, of which \$16,920.85 has been collected.

One of the strongest tools the Unit has to get employers into compliance is the Immediate Stop Work Order. In 2020 our process changed from serving a notice to attend a hearing for Lack of Insurance to an Immediate shutdown of the business until they come into compliance. In 2022 the Unit issued a record 46 Immediate SWOs. We have updated our internal process in several ways which have led to the increase. As in previous years, most businesses that are closed immediately obtain coverage, and the Order is lifted to allow them to re-open. The average business that is closed by the Division remains closed for only 1 day.

Of the 11 Fraud cases we investigated, six were referred to the Attorney General for prosecution, two of which were declined. There was also a resolution of one prior year filing that resulted in probation and a suspended sentence for the defendant and approximately \$3,000 in restitution being ordered and paid in installments.

Since the Department is the Record Keeper for Workers' Compensation, it is vital that our records are reflective of the entire claim. The starting point is the First Report of Injury (FROI). Without that document our data is flawed. There is a \$250 penalty for failing to file the FROI within the statutory time frame. In 2022 we penalized 72 employers/carriers for violations regarding the FROI and collected \$20,000.00 in penalties.

In addition to penalizing employers for failing to have workers' compensation insurance coverage or failing to file the FROI, the Unit also penalizes insurance carriers for failing to report active coverage, also within the statutory time frame. In 2022, 875 carrier penalties were issued, resulting in fines of \$218,500.00.

Another responsibility of this Unit is to ensure that all workers are protected, either as employees or as independent contractors, and that the necessary forms are filed. In 2022, the Unit processed 3885 independent contractor forms. We have also made our online form and instructions available for our Spanish-speaking contractors to ensure they understand what they are filing.

# Uninsured Protection Fund

The **Rhode Island Uninsured Protection Fund (UPF)**, formerly the Uninsured Employer Fund, was established in 2007 to provide relief to individuals injured while working for employers who failed to maintain workers' compensation insurance. The UPF has been capitalized through filing fees at the Workers' Compensation Court per RI General Law §28-35-32. As of December 31, 2022, the balance in the UPF was \$923,087.09. The UPF received 11 applications for claims in 2022 and made payments in the amount of \$104,600.12.

# Workers' Compensation Administrative Fund (WCAF)

The **Workers' Compensation Administrative Fund (WCAF)** collects a mandated assessment on premiums within the workers' compensation system. This assessment provides appropriations for the Division of Workers' Compensation, the Workers' Compensation Court, the Medical Advisory Board, and the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council.

In 2022, there were 454 requests for reimbursement from the WCAF and \$981,706.98 in total reimbursements. Some reimbursements that should normally have been received and paid in 2021 were delayed and processed in 2022 due to the pandemic. Office closures, insurer staffing issues, and remote working have delayed the submission of reimbursement requests.



# Chief Judge Robert F. Arrigan Rehabilitation Center

Established through the Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Act, the **Chief Judge Robert F. Arrigan Rehabilitation Center** integrates treatment from medical doctors, physical and occupational therapists, psychologists, and vocational counselors to rehabilitate workers who have been injured on the job.

Injured workers must be referred by a physician or by the Workers' Compensation Court, and services are offered at no cost to patients covered by workers' compensation insurance.

In 2022 Arrigan Center received 1046 referrals for treatment resulting in 784 patient admissions, 118 patient cancellations, 16 patient no show appointments and 33 patients unable to attend appointments due to medical issues unrelated to work injury (secondary medical issues). Of the 784 admissions, 608 patients committed to a treatment program and 176 didn't. Out of the 608 patients that were in treatment, 242 successfully completed a treatment program with 222 completing treatment and verified that they have either returned to work with employer of injury or with a new employer. 309 patients did not complete treatment with 140 patients as evaluation only, and 169 patients being discharged prior to the completion of their program. Sixty-eight percent of patients reported having no prior workers' compensation injuries.

Arrigan Center Treatment Activity 2022	
<b>Total Treatments all patients*</b>	<b>1432</b>
<b>Functional Capacity Evaluations</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Therapeutic Treatment (All programs)</b>	<b>608</b>
Evaluation Only	140
Completed Treatment	242
Did Not Complete Treatment	169
In Treatment at Time of Data Collection	57
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	<b>181</b>
Completed Program	50
Did Not Complete Program	80
In Treatment at Time of Data Collection	51
<b>Chronic Pain Management</b>	<b>95</b>
Evaluation Only	11
Completed Treatment	43
Did Not Complete Treatment	27
In Treatment at Time of Data Collection	14
*Patients typically participate in several disciplines during treatment. Subsequently, the number of total treatments (1432) is higher than the <u>total</u> number of individuals receiving treatment (608).	

# **Workforce Regulation and Safety**

The **Workforce Regulation and Safety Division** is charged with enforcing the safety laws that protect Rhode Island’s workforce, including a fair collection of wages, child labor laws, trade licensing, apprenticeship training, hazardous substance exposure, weights and measures, and prevailing wage laws. This is accomplished through licensing, inspection programs, educational programs, and labor law enforcement.

During 2022, the staff worked diligently to perform their tasks, to minimize the disruption of services to the public. This involved performing investigations, inspections, and conducting trade license examinations.

For more information and resources, please visit [dlt.ri.gov/wrs](https://dlt.ri.gov/wrs).



## Workplace Fraud Unit

The **Workplace Fraud Unit** enforces workplace laws and ensures that Rhode Island’s employees receive the wages they have earned. The Unit 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, industrial, and Prevailing Wage violations.

In 2022, there were 489 claims filed. 534 claims were closed in 2022, and 358 claims were still in process at the time of the reporting. During 2022, 65 prevailing wage cases were filed and \$317,531 was recovered in back wages and penalties.



## Occupational Safety

The **Occupational Safety Unit** directs, coordinates, and enforces the safety inspections of boilers and elevators, the storage and handling of hazardous substances, and the accuracy of weights and measures within Rhode Island’s business establishments. State inspections are synchronized with local government requirements to ensure that Rhode Islanders have a safe environment in which to work and live.

In 2022, the Elevator Section performed 3,521 inspections and issued 2,750 certificates of operation. One Hundred Forty-Five (145) permits for new installations and 220 licenses were granted. The Elevator Section also issued 3,763 violation letters.

The Boiler Section issued 7,737 Certificates of Operation and conducted 9,323 inspections. Two Hundred Seventy-Two (272) permits were granted for new installations, and 105 commission licenses were issued.

The Right-to-Know Section registered 6,033 employers in 2022 and completed 234 inspections.

# Professional Regulation

The **Professional Regulation Unit** is responsible for testing and licensing several technical occupations and regulates all registered Apprenticeship Programs in Rhode Island.

## Trade Licensing Section

The **Trade Licensing Section** licensed 32,079 technical professionals in 2022, 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.

Trade Licensing Activity 2022	
Examinations Performed	516
Licenses (issued or renewed)	32,079
Electrician	8,271
Hoisting Engineer	9,790
Pipefitter, Refrigeration Technician, Fire Protection Sprinkler Fitter, Sheet Metal Worker	7,735
Telecommunication	1,746
Plumbers and Irrigators	2,237
Burglar Alarm	2,300

## Apprenticeship Section

The **Apprenticeship Section** registers, regulates, and provides technical assistance to training programs in which an apprentice receives technical instruction while employed in a full-time occupation, thereby achieving wage gains and a nationally recognized Apprenticeship Completion Certificate. The proven success of the registered apprenticeship training model has been recognized by many industries seeking to build a skilled workforce. There were 514 program sponsors and 2152 active registered apprentices at the close of 2022. The Apprenticeship Section processed 1000 new apprentice registrations, 516 apprentice cancelations, and 500 apprenticeship completions in calendar 2022.

The Apprentice Section is the state registration agency fulling state responsibilities under the USDOL Registered Apprenticeship System. The Apprentice Section convenes the State Apprenticeship Council to review new program submissions and advise the department on Registered Apprenticeship matters. The Apprentice Section oversees training activities in licensed trades, such as electricians, non-licensed construction trades, such as roofers, and all other apprentice-able occupations. In 2022 64% of Apprenticeship completions awarded were in construction trades and 36% in occupations beyond construction. The USDOL awarded RIDLT a competitive 4-year grant starting in July 2022 to continue the Apprenticeship RI partnership with a non-profit intermediary, Building Futures. This work will continue technical assistance to support sponsors and participating Rhode Island employers with program quality, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Workforce  
Development Services**



The **Workforce Development Services (WDS) Division** is dedicated to the support and advancement of all who comprise the workforce: those who perform the work and those who hire them. The division oversees a variety of programs that guide job seekers to suitable employment and introduce employers to qualified workers.

The global pandemic challenged WDS to rethink its approach to serving Rhode Islanders throughout 2021 and beyond. The Division implemented virtual services for all customers to assure access to the level of service WDS has historically provided. While in-person services resumed in the latter half of 2021, WDS continues to serve job seekers and employers virtually to advance access to services and better prepare job seekers to meet the demands of today's digitized world. Through this platform, WDS also provides services to un/underemployed individuals via the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program. This federal program aims to reduce the unemployment insurance duration of claimants to facilitate gainful and sustainable employment. In 2022 WDS served 6960 participants in the RESEA program

To better serve our clients and ensure full access to services post-COVID, Workforce Development Services began a pilot program to co-locate members of the Workforce Development Services team in community center locations. In mid-2022, two team members began part-time co-location at the Woonsocket Education Center. WDS intends to expand this model in 2023 to include additional locations and communities based on capacity and need.

WDS remains a core partner in Rhode Island's American Job Centers – the local centers of the national network of American Job Center's CareerOne locations. In 2022, 1,848 job seekers were served in total, including 1,720 unemployed individuals. Additionally, 586 employers were served.

Throughout 2022 substantive renovations and upgrades were initiated at the Greater Rhode Island American Job Centers to address needed structural deficits, and growth plans, and create an accessible, effective, and collaborative space where workforce partners agencies and clients are supported. These renovations will continue in 2023.

For more information and resources, please visit [Jobseeker Resources | RI Department of Labor & Training](#)



## WIOA Title 1B Programs

The **Workforce Development Services** division supports programs under Title IB of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Governor’s Workforce Board disburses WIOA Title IB funds to Rhode Island’s two Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), who, as subgrantees, provide Title IB program services in the State of Rhode Island. The LWDBs—the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island and Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston—are responsible for the operations of the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and WIOA Youth programs under the Act. In 2022, there were 79 adults, 243 dislocated workers, and 663 youths served in Rhode Island under WIOA Title IB.

## Trade Adjustment Assistance

Trade **Adjustment Assistance (TAA)** provides monetary benefits and educational assistance to workers who have lost their jobs or whose hours of work and wages have been reduced due to foreign competition including increased imports or a shift in production out of the United States. TAA services may include educational and occupational training, on-the-job training, job search and relocation allowances, income support, and other reemployment services. In 2022, there were eight (8) TAA program participants, with seven (7) participants enrolled in training. Workforce Development Services is responsible for submitting petitions to the US Department of Labor on behalf of workers, as well as connecting with and providing services to impacted employees if/when a petition is approved.

The TAA program entered its sunset period on June 30, 2022. The US Department of Labor is not currently reviewing petitions and certain program benefits have ended. However, clients covered under previously approved petitions may continue to access services, and Workforce Development Services continues outreach and case management for those employees certified under an existing approved condition.



## Veterans Service Unit

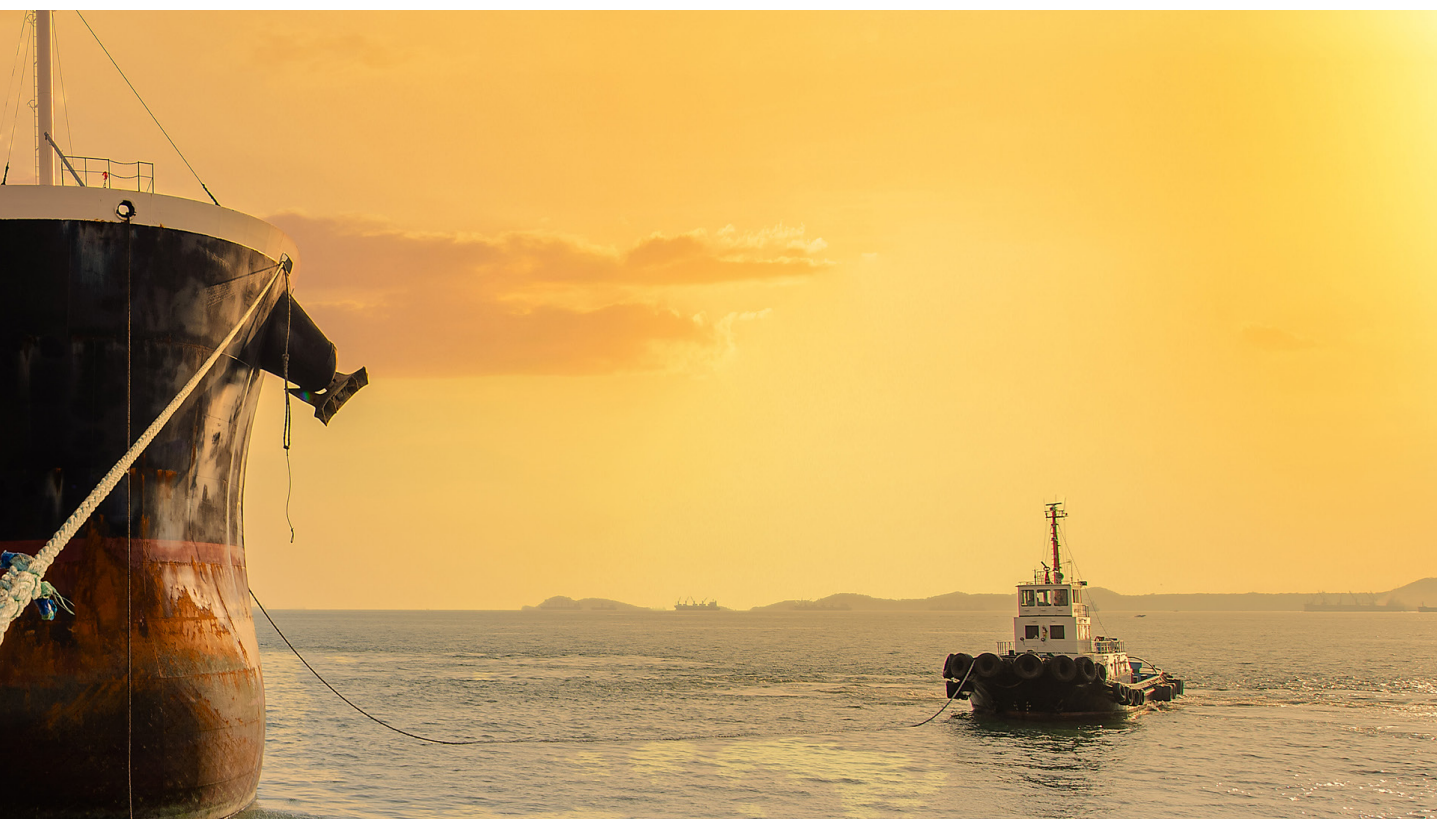
The **Veterans Service Unit** employs a two-pronged approach: 1) directing veterans to meaningful employment through job placement services and training opportunities and 2) educating RI's employer community on the wealth of skills and experience veterans bring to the civilian workforce.

In 2022, despite the challenges of the post-pandemic and shutdown era and its effects on veterans and employers, the Veterans Service Unit maintained its presence as a resource for Veterans serving 158 veterans in total, placing 119 in gainful employment through more than 15 community partnerships.

## Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)** is a federal tax credit available to employers as an incentive to promote hiring among individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced, "significant barriers to employment" (SBE), such as people with disabilities, returning citizens, and veterans.

Rhode Island received 15,951 WOTC applications in 2022. WOTC certified 3,435 applications which provided RI employers with a potential \$13,931,800 for hiring new employees.



# Rapid Response Program

The **Rapid Response Program** proactively assists with all cycles of business health, from rapid growth and direct recruitment to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing assistance to companies and employees, maximizing public and private resources, and minimizing disruptions associated with job loss.

Rapid Response staff members provide intensive assistance to impacted employees, explaining how to apply for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, outlining American Job Centers' (AJC) reemployment services, and reviewing available training opportunities. Other services include coordinating job fairs, ensuring hiring visibility, and offering customized reemployment workshops, such as resumé development and interviewing strategies.

In 2022, the Rapid Response team facilitated workshops to educate impacted employees about employment and wrap-around services available to them. The in-person and virtual workshops offered information and resources in English, Spanish, and ASL.

The Rapid Response team also accelerated Employer Outreach efforts in 2022 through proactive and reactive strategies such as working with employers to ensure their business demands were met through the following rapid response services:

- Multi-state job fair: Workforce Development Services collaborated with the New England states for the New England Job Fair. Rhode Island had 42 Employers participate in the event with 1,699 people virtually visiting the RI employers.
- Workforce Development Services collaborated with Doctors Testing Center to host a multi-employer job fair focused on the healthcare industry in February 2022. Ten employers and 45 employees participated in the event.
- In 2022, Workforce Development hosted 99 virtual, and in-person job fairs with more than 115 employers from across the state at our local American Job Centers and employer sites.
- From September 2022-October 2022 Workforce development services delivered 3 Rapid Response events to assist with planned employee transitions in Rhode Island's manufacturing industry.



# Foreign Labor Certification and Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers

The **Foreign Labor Certification (FLC)** process enables employers to hire foreign workers who have been preauthorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service to temporarily live and work in the United States through the H-2A and H-2B guest visa programs. However, before employing a foreign worker, a business must demonstrate its inability to fill the position with a qualified citizen at prevailing wages. The Department guides the employer in complying with U.S. Department of Labor regulations and requirements, offers training on placing job orders through the EmployRI website, reviews job orders for compliance with content requirements, and monitors the appropriate referral of domestic workers. DLT is dedicated to the protection of and advocacy for America's workforce, including guest workers and migrants, who historically have been a disadvantaged demographic.

Farmworkers who meet federal definitions of migrant and/or seasonal are served by the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) program, which assists with making career and labor market decisions that can help them achieve economic self-sufficiency while improving their living and working conditions. DLT's dedicated MSFW Outreach Worker is aware of and sensitive to socio-economic and cultural issues faced by agricultural communities. In-person outreach activities foster and reinforce beneficial relationships between farmworkers, farmers, non-profit organizations, and the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) reviews the delivery of services and protections afforded by Rhode Island's three American Job Center (AJC) offices. AJCs are monitored for compliance with federal regulations, to ensure that MSFWs receive services that are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to those provided to all other job seekers. Regular field visits and annual migrant housing inspections are performed at all farms that host H-2A workers.



# **Governor's Workforce Board**

The **Governor's Workforce Board (GWB)** was established under RI General Law 42-102 as the state's primary policy-making body on workforce development matters. The GWB coordinates and oversees numerous workforce development programs through the administration of the state's Job Development Fund (JDF) and the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Board consists of 23 members representing business, labor, education, community, and government with the statutory responsibility and authority to plan, coordinate, fund, and evaluate nearly all statewide workforce development activities.

In 2022, the Governor's Workforce Board streamlined and expanded program and service offerings to meet the needs of workers and employers in the current economy, and increased investments in career exploration activities for youth.

For additional details on the programs within the Governor's Workforce Board, please visit the Governor's Workforce Board at [gwb.ri.gov](http://gwb.ri.gov).



*Students leaning about chemical processing to prepare for a career as a Process Technologist. This is an in-demand job sought after in multiple industries including pharmaceuticals, plastics, brewing, and more.*

# Real Jobs Rhode Island

**Real Jobs RI** is a demand-driven workforce development initiative that supports partnerships consisting of employers, training providers, and community-based organizations to address specific workforce needs and challenges. Solutions can include:

- Placing new employees into immediate job openings;
- Upskilling current employees to advance skills and/or remain competitive;
- Helping business owners and entrepreneurs advance their ventures;
- Creating pipelines of talent for the future.

Real Jobs RI is a win-win because companies get the talent they need to compete globally and grow locally, and Rhode Islanders get opportunities to thrive in the economy. Currently, there are 60 Real Jobs RI partnerships.

In 2022, Real Jobs RI served 9,800 Rhode Islanders through its programs and services, which directly helped over 2,000 local businesses.

## Youth Programs

In 2022, the Governor's Workforce Board streamlined and revamped its youth workforce initiatives, increasing its collective financial investments for calendar year 2023 with an elevated focus on career exploration.

### Real Skills for Youth

The Real Skills for Youth program supports partnerships consisting of schools, youth organizations, employers, and others to develop and implement high-quality, paid work-based learning activities for high school students and career exploration for our youth that are in middle school or in their early stages of high school but not ready for a job that pays hourly wages just yet. Concluding its 5th implementation year, 17 partnerships supported over 1,200 youth participants.

In the Fall of 2022, a new grant was released, and adjustments were made to the program, including increasing the minimum hourly wage to remain competitive in the market and making slight adjustments to the minimum 80 hours requirement for WBL opportunities. In the year 2023, a total of \$2.5 million was allocated to twenty-one (21) local non-profits, businesses, and schools, eight of whom are new. The Real Skills for Youth program is expected to work with over 3,000 youth in 2023. Continuing recovery from COVID-19, youth providers shifted their programs back to in-person and got creative with how youth were engaged with and retained. Challenges that providers continue to work through include youth participant recruitment, staff turnover and lack of retention and competing against other job opportunities youth are being offered.





*New Real Skills For Youth logo  
unveiled March 2023*

## **Prepare RI Summer High School Internship Program**

With the continued commitment from American Student Assistance, GWB state funding and other funding sources, the Prepare RI Summer High School Internship Program wrapped up its fifth implementation year. Spearheaded by Skills for RI's Future, the program delivered robust and engaging in-person internships for high school juniors. Over two hundred (200) youth completed their internship experiences, working with over 60 employers across industry sectors.

## **Prepare RI 8th Grade Career Exploration Fair (JA Inspire)**

GWB was the primary funder of the 2022 8th Grade Career Exploration Fair. Over 4,500 8th graders from 26 schools across 13 districts participated in the fair after completing a preparatory 6-week curriculum in their respective classrooms. With over 75 exhibitor booths for students to visit during the experience, youth interacted with employers that represented an array of industries including but not limited to public law enforcement, health & human services, construction, culinary, marine trades, IT & computer science, and more. Students also got to engage in robust conversations with high school students from over 15 CTE schools with the goal of bolstering CTE enrollment for the start of the 2023 academic year.

## **VEC Program (Voluntary Extension of Care)**

The Voluntary Extension of Care (VEC) program provides foster youth between the ages of 18-21, who have not achieved permanency, with continued support. In collaboration with the Youth Development Services Division (YDS) of the Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF), Communities for People, and other stakeholders, the GWB supports the efforts in strengthening pathways for youth involved the foster care system and get them re-connected to education, training, or employment. Through several programs including Real Jobs RI and Youth WIOA, the GWB continues to work with this population, providing job opportunities and connecting them to CAP agencies that offer wrap around support services.

**Office of  
Community Engagement**

The **Office of Community Engagement (OCE)** leads the Department of Labor and Training's (RIDLT) commitment and strategy to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization, both internally and externally in serving the public. The mission of the OCE is to build meaningful, two-way relationships with community representatives in order to ensure that all DLT services and programs are accessible, inclusive, and equitably distributed; with a focus on eliminating barriers and promoting access for marginalized populations.

The OCE works across agency divisions and with outside community stakeholders to:

- Identify and eliminate barriers to fair treatment and quality services for clients;
- Establish diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals for all public-facing services provided by the Department;
- Share best practices in equitable delivery of services; and
- Ensure that the Department internally implements equitable, inclusive, and culturally-responsive practices.

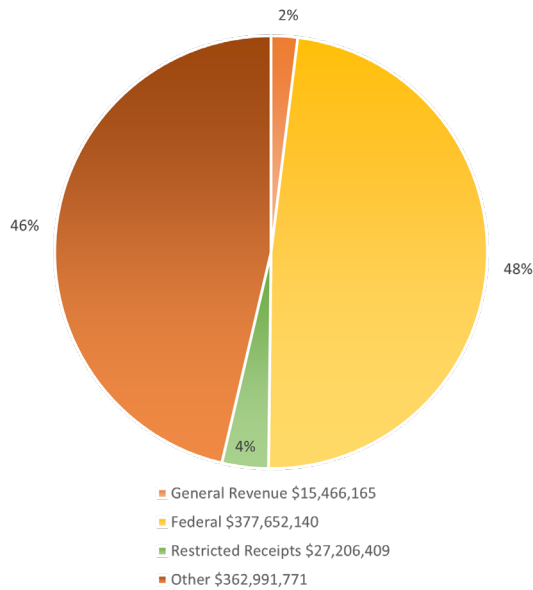
In March 2023, the OCE launched a new Community Engagement Partners initiative to better serve all Rhode Islanders. The grant, funded up to \$500,000, identifies up to 30 community-based organizations (CBOs) to advise the RIDLT on culturally- and linguistically-appropriate programming and to engage in general education and outreach to better serve historically marginalized populations and populations with barriers to employment. Selected CBOs are tasked to represent the interests and needs of their communities in reviewing and advising on RIDLT policies and program delivery, and outreach to and educate their community about RIDLT services and programs.

The RIDLT received 31 applications and ultimately selected the 25 organizations listed below. For one year (April 2023-April 2024) those organizations will attend meetings with RIDLT staff, convene focus groups and distribute surveys to their community, and will implement regular outreach and education activities about RIDLT services. Grantees will be funded up to \$15,000 each (\$12,000 payment for deliverables and up to \$3,000 reimbursement for materials and supplies).

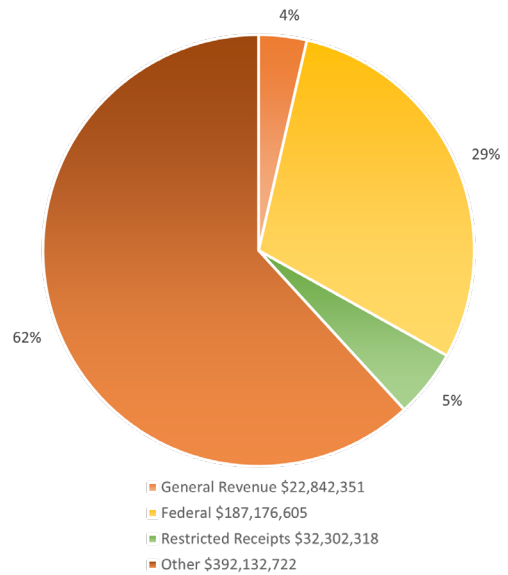
- Amos House
- The Autism Project
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Providence
- Cape Verdean American Community Development
- Center for Southeast Asians
- Crossroads Rhode Island
- Foster Forward
- Fuerza Laboral
- Genesis Center
- Justice Assistance
- Multicultural Innovation Center
- New Bridges for Haitian Success (NB4HS)
- Newport Community School
- Oasis International
- Progreso Latino
- Providence Public Library
- Refugee Dream Center
- Revive Therapeutic Services
- Rhode Island Black Business Association
- Rhode Island Regional Adult Learning (RIRAL)
- Women's Refugee Care
- Workforce Ready Solutions LLC
- YMCA of Pawtucket
- Youth Moving Forward
- Young Voices

# **Budgetary Expenditures**

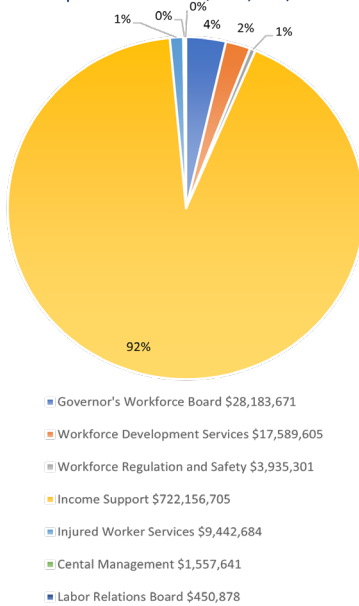
**Actual Expenditures by Fund  
Fiscal Year (July 2021 - June 2022)**  
Department Total: \$783,316,485



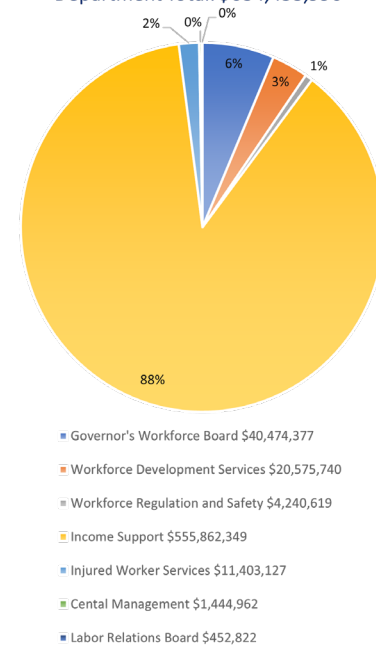
**Budgeted Expenditures by Fund  
Fiscal Year (July 2022 - June 2023)**  
Department Total: \$634,453,996



**Actual Expenditures by Program  
Fiscal Year (July 2021 - June 2022)**  
Department Total: \$783,316,485



**Budgeted Expenditures by Program  
Fiscal Year (July 2022 - June 2023)**  
Department Total: \$634,453,996



# **Photography**

## **Credits**

**LITTLENY/STOCK.ADOBE.COM**

Cover Page, Sailboat along the coast of Newport, Rhode Island

**ANDREY POPOV**

Analyst Woman Looking, p. 6

Executive Hand Giving Payment Check, p. 8

**GALEANU MIHAI**

Security Concept, p. 11

**AIJOHN784**

Police Badge, p. 12

**ISTOCKPHOTO.COM**

Paycheck, p. 14

**DALE FORNOFF**

Providence at sunset, p. 15

**SAMUEL ABOH, JR.**

Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, p. 20

**ISTOCKPHOTO.COM**

Safety helmets, p. 21

**PETER SCHREIBER**

Top view of a white desktop, p. 24

**JAKKAPANT TURASEN**

Resume on table with laptop, p. 27

**IAM ANUPONG**

Mooring men and ship leaving harbor, p. 25 and 26

**DMITRIY SHIRONOSOV**

Farm worker arm putting livestock feed for cows by paddocks with cattle, p. 28

**ELLIE ROMANO**

Students leaning about chemical processing to prepare for a career as a Process Technologist, p. 30

**SAMUEL ABOH, JR.**

Real Skills For Youth Logo, p. 32

**STUART MONK**

Back Cover, Newport, Rhode Island, Castle Hill Lighthouse



**DLT**  
RHODE ISLAND