

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS in New Hampshire



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Labor Day: A Tribute to the American Worker

Why did we celebrate Labor Day? Some say it's a chance to get together again before summer ends. According to the US Department of Labor, Labor Day is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the "contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country."¹

Two men are generally credited for the holiday. Matthew Maguire, a machinist from Paterson, N.J., and Peter J. McGuire, a New York City carpenter who helped found the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, are said to have suggested a holiday to honor working people in the United States. In 1887, Oregon became the first state to make Labor Day a legal holiday, and in 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed a bill making the first Monday in September, Labor Day, a national holiday. The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union.²

Who did we celebrate?

☆ Seven of every ten people in the state over age 16 were in the labor force in 2000.

- ☆ 97.2 percent of New Hampshire's labor force was employed in 2000.
- ☆ About four of every five employees worked full-time in 2000.³
- ☆ Three of every five full-time employees in the state in 2000 were male.⁴
- ☆ The male and female shares of workers in the state in 2000 were relatively close, 53 percent and 47 percent, respectively.⁵
- ☆ The same held true when looking at employees working in both Sales and Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations in the state.⁶
- ☆ However, women dominated the Administrative support (including clerical) occupational group in 2000 while men dominated the Precision production, craft, and repair group.⁷
- ☆ Almost 42,000 people in the state's labor force held more than one job in 2000.⁸
- ☆ Manufacturing production workers in the state, on average, worked 41.1 hours.
- ☆ The average weekly wage for all employees was \$667.90 in 2000.

Elisabeth Picard

¹ "Labor Day: How it Came About; What it Means". *The History of Labor Day*. US Department of Labor. Accessed August 27, 2002 <www.dol.gov/opa/aboutdol/laborday.htm>

² *ibid*

³ "States: Employed and unemployed persons by full- and part-time status, sex, age, race, and Hispanic origin, 2000 annual averages." *Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment*. June 2002: pg. 60.

⁴ *ibid*, p. 61.

⁵ "States: Percent distribution of employed persons by sex, race, Hispanic origin, and occupation, 2000 annual averages." *Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment*. June 2002: pg. 71-73.

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ "Multiple jobholding data by state." *Current Population Survey (unpublished data)*, received July 18, 2001.