

Multiple Job Holders

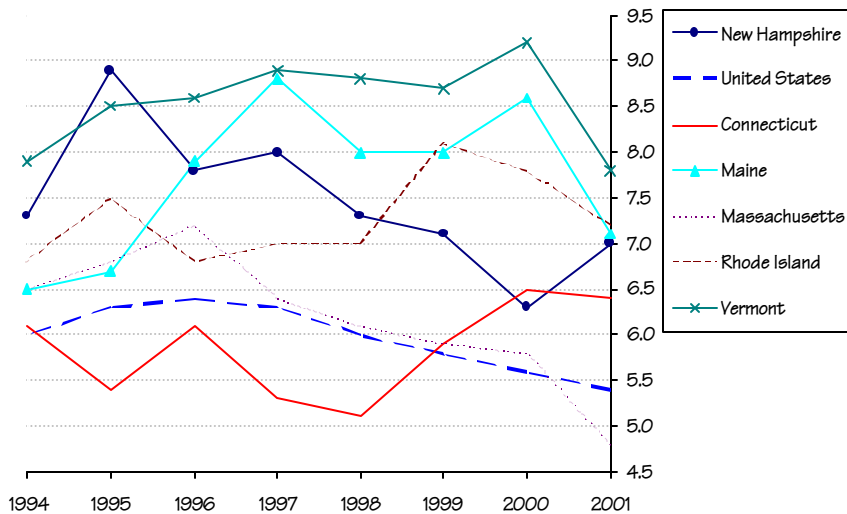
New Hampshire's rate ranked 17th in the country in 2001 and, since 1994, has averaged 1.5 percentage points higher than the national rate.

More people in New Hampshire are working at more than one job. After falling for the last three years, New Hampshire's multiple jobholder rate – the proportion of all employed persons with two or more jobs – rose from 6.3 percent in 2000 to 7.0 percent in 2001. The multiple jobholder rate for the United States was 5.4 percent. New Hampshire's rate ranked 17th in the country in 2001 and, since 1994, has averaged 1.5 percentage points higher than the national rate.

The lack of specific data for New Hampshire requires us to look at multiple jobholding at the national level for any detail. Nationally, 6.4 percent of individuals in the Services industry worked multiple jobs, the highest percent of all private industries.

Growth in multiple jobholding rates has exhibited both cyclical and secular trends. During periods of economic expansion, both the increased availability of jobs and the desire by persons to recoup income contribute to higher rates. Multiple jobholding rates have also grown steadily over the last thirty years averaging 4.8 percent during the 1970's, 5.5 percent over the 1980's, and 6.1 percent for the 1990's. The growth in multiple jobholders was especially pronounced during the decade of the 1980's, jumping from 4.9 percent in 1980 to 6.2 percent in 1989.

From 1994 to 2001 New Hampshire's multiple jobholding rate has averaged 1.5 percentage points higher than the national rate.



Economic necessity is the best explanation for multiple jobholding. The long-term growth in multiple jobholding rates, and its acceleration in the 1980's, mirrors the erosion of hourly real wages during the same time period. From 1973 to 1995, a period of time spanning four business cycles, private sector non-agricultural average hourly earnings (in 1982 dollars) fell by 13.6 percent from \$8.55 to \$7.39.¹ The unprecedented economic expansion of the 1990's has brought hourly earnings to \$8.00 (in 1982 dollars) in 2001 – still 6.4 percent lower than 1973. Concurrently, multiple jobholding rates dipped below 6.0 percent in the years 1999-2001. The national rate of 5.4 percent in 2001 is the lowest it's been since 1985.

Multiple jobholding rates are derived from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of approximately 60,000 households, which is used primarily to determine the nation's unemployment rate. In his analysis of the 1989 CPS, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) economist John Stinson found that 44 percent of multiple jobholders cited financial considerations (meeting regular household expenses or paying off debt) as the primary reason for working more than one job.² Additional analysis of the 1989 CPS by Lawrence Mishel et al found that 77 percent of the growth in multiple jobholding rates from 1979 to 1989 could be attributed to financial considerations.³ Furthermore, Harvard University professor Juliet Schor believes that the 1989 multiple jobholding rate could have actually been twice as high as reported as "...tax evasion, illegal activities, and employer disapproval of second jobs make people reluctant to speak honestly."⁴

According to current unpublished BLS data, the primary occupations with the most multiple jobholders are professional specialties at 7.3 percent and services at 6.2 percent. College and university teachers, all other teachers, and health assessment and treatment professionals are the professional specialty occupations with the highest rates of multiple job-

holders at 10.2 percent, 8.6 percent and 8.2 percent respectively. Topping the services occupational category is protective services with a rate of 10.6 percent.

The direct relationship between multiple jobholding and earnings/education, indicated by the preceding occupational statistics, is explained by Thomas Amirault. He concludes that "...relatively well paid, highly educated persons have more than one job because their schedule allows it, because their expertise is in demand, or because their financial reasons extend beyond meeting basic living expenses and paying off debts."⁵

The most prevalent secondary occupations are professional specialties, services and sales at 21.4 percent, 21.3 percent and 15.9 percent respectively. Technicians (health, engineering and all other) and precision production, craft and repair are the least common secondary occupations, comprising 2.5 percent and 4.6 percent of all second jobs.

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- 1 Economic Report of the President, February 2002. Washington, DC: United States Printing Office, 2002. Table B-47.
- 2 Stinson, John F. "Multiple Jobholding Up Sharply in the 1980's" Monthly Labor Review July 1990: P. 4.
- 3 Mishel, Lawrence, Jared Bernstein and John Schmitt. The State of Working America 2000/2001. Economic Policy Institute. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 2001. Pp. 254-255.
- 4 Schor, Juliet B. The Overworked American. Basic Books, 1991. P. 31.
- 5 Amirault, Thomas "Characteristics of Multiple Jobholders, 1995." Monthly Labor Review March 1997: P. 9.