

US Labor Market Trends

January 2026

Indeed Hiring Lab



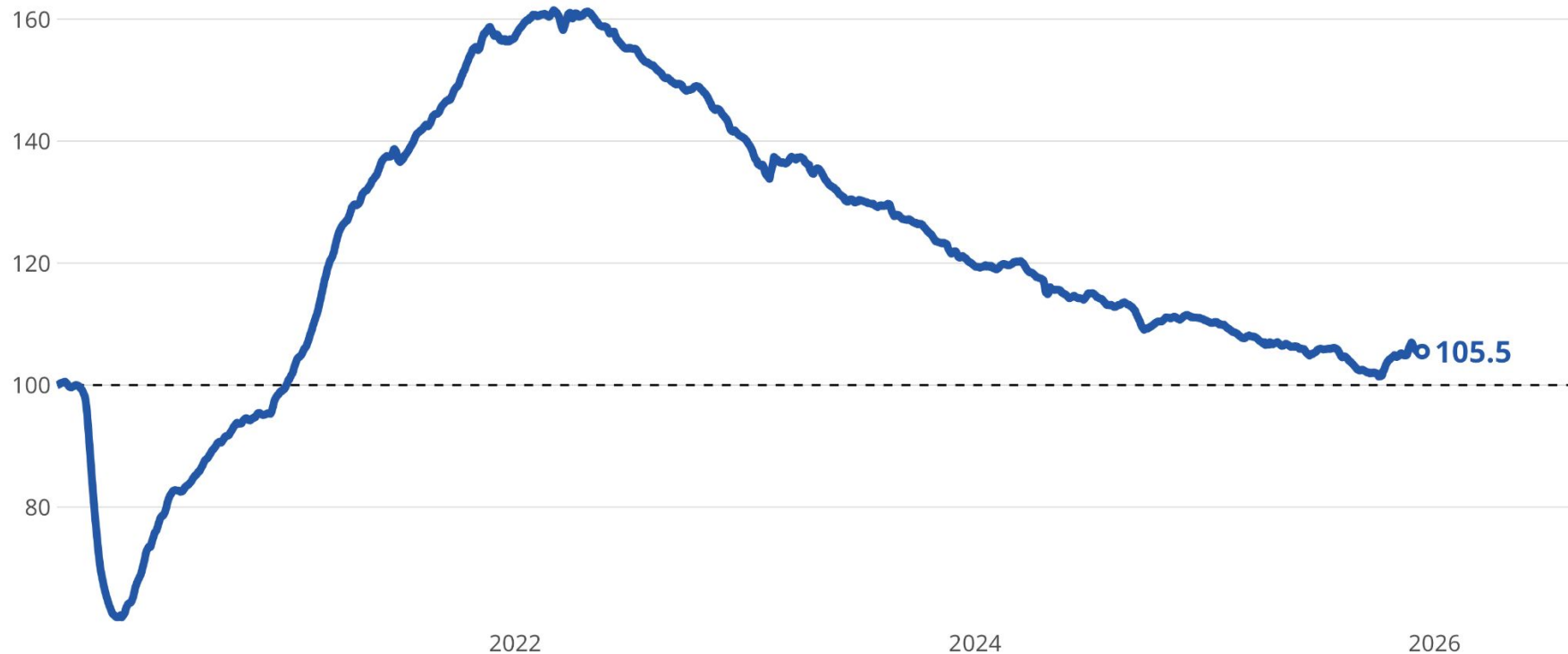
US labor market overview

- As of January 9, 2026, US job postings stood 5.5% above their pre-pandemic level and were up 0.6% month-over-month.
- Postings were higher than pre-pandemic levels in around half (56%) of sectors analyzed as of early-January.
- 8.3% of job postings advertised remote positions at the end of December, up from 8.1% at the end of August.
- Annual posted wage growth slowed to 2.1% in December.
- The overall unemployment rate was 4.4% in December.
- The share of job postings with AI-related terms rose to 4.2% by the end of December.



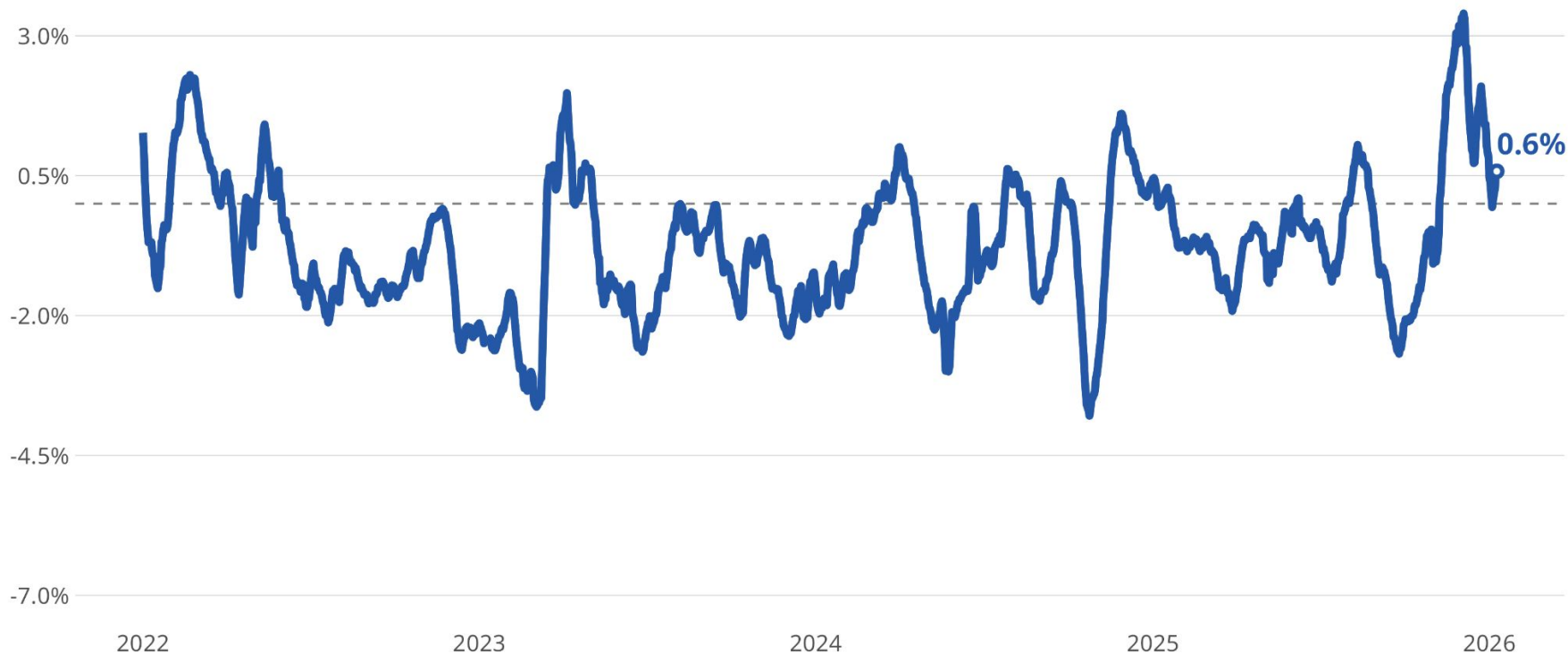
Job postings return close to pre-pandemic levels

Indexed level of job postings (100 = February 1, 2020), through January 9, 2026



Job postings on Indeed are up 0.6% from a month ago

Month-over-month growth in Indeed Job Postings Index (US), through January 9, 2026

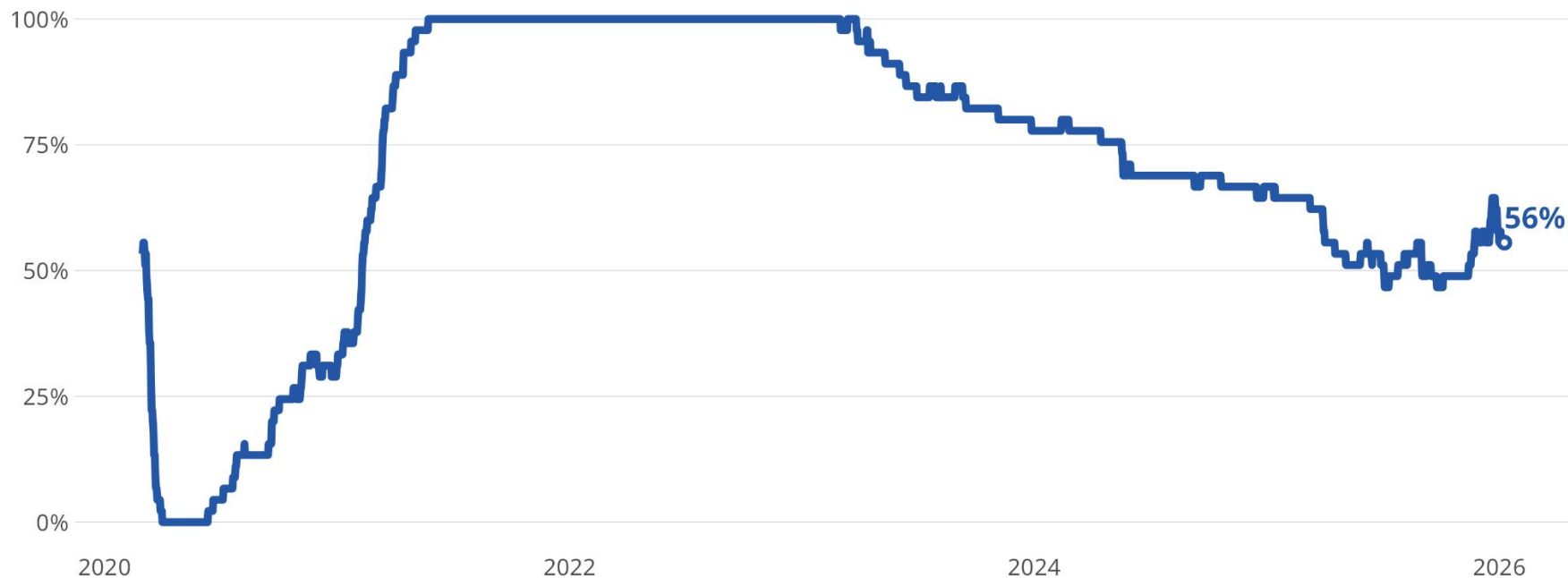


Source: Indeed



Job postings are above pre-pandemic levels in the majority of sectors

Share of sectors in the US with number of job postings above pre-pandemic baseline, through January 9, 2026



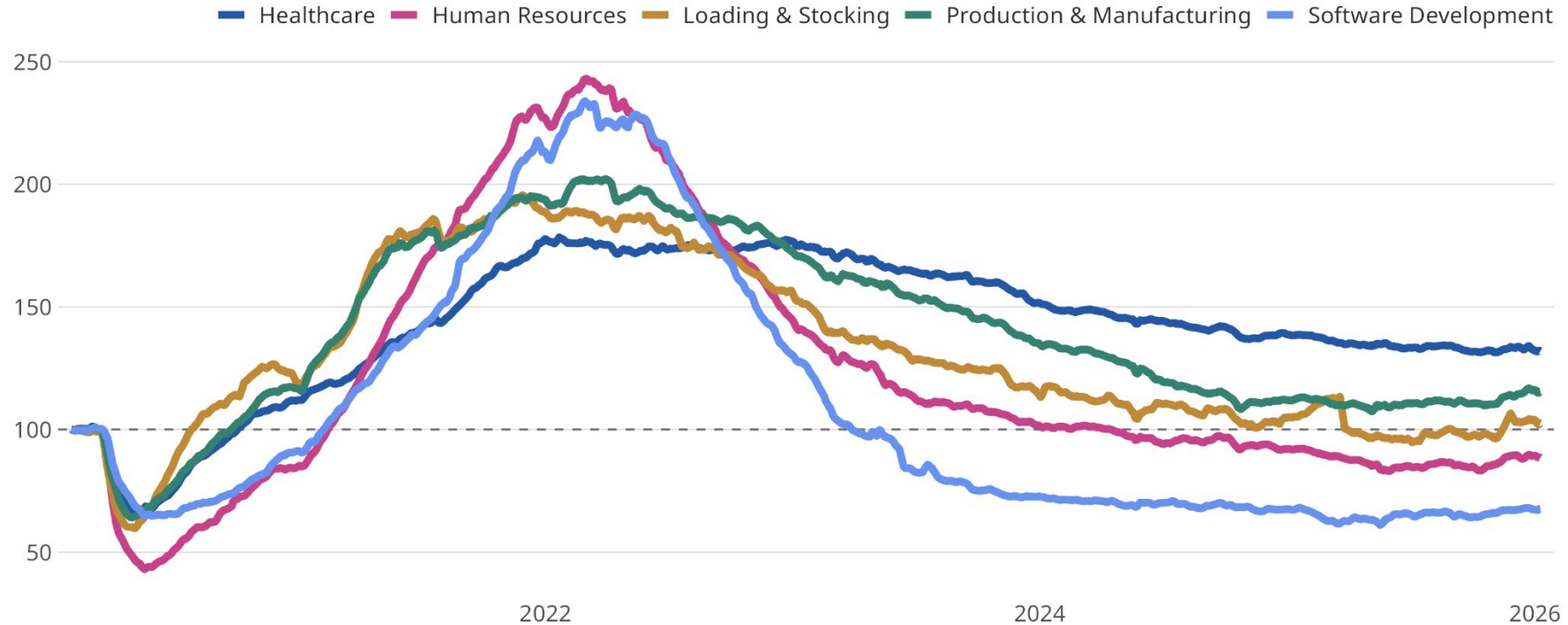
Remote postings have largely stabilized

Share of U.S. job postings that contained keywords associated with remote, hybrid and flexible work arrangements, January 2019 to December 2025



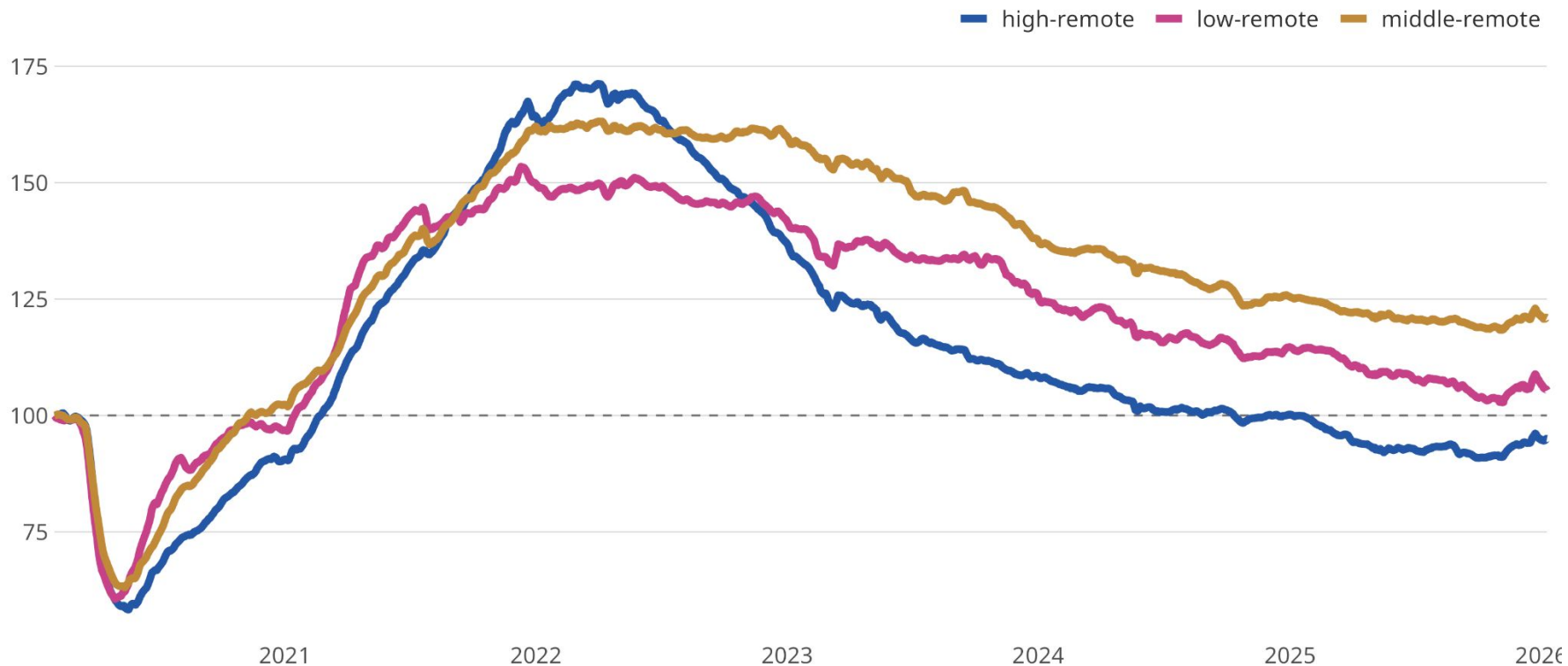
Healthcare-related postings are well above pre-pandemic levels

Indexed change in job postings by selected sector (100 = February 1, 2020), through January 9, 2026



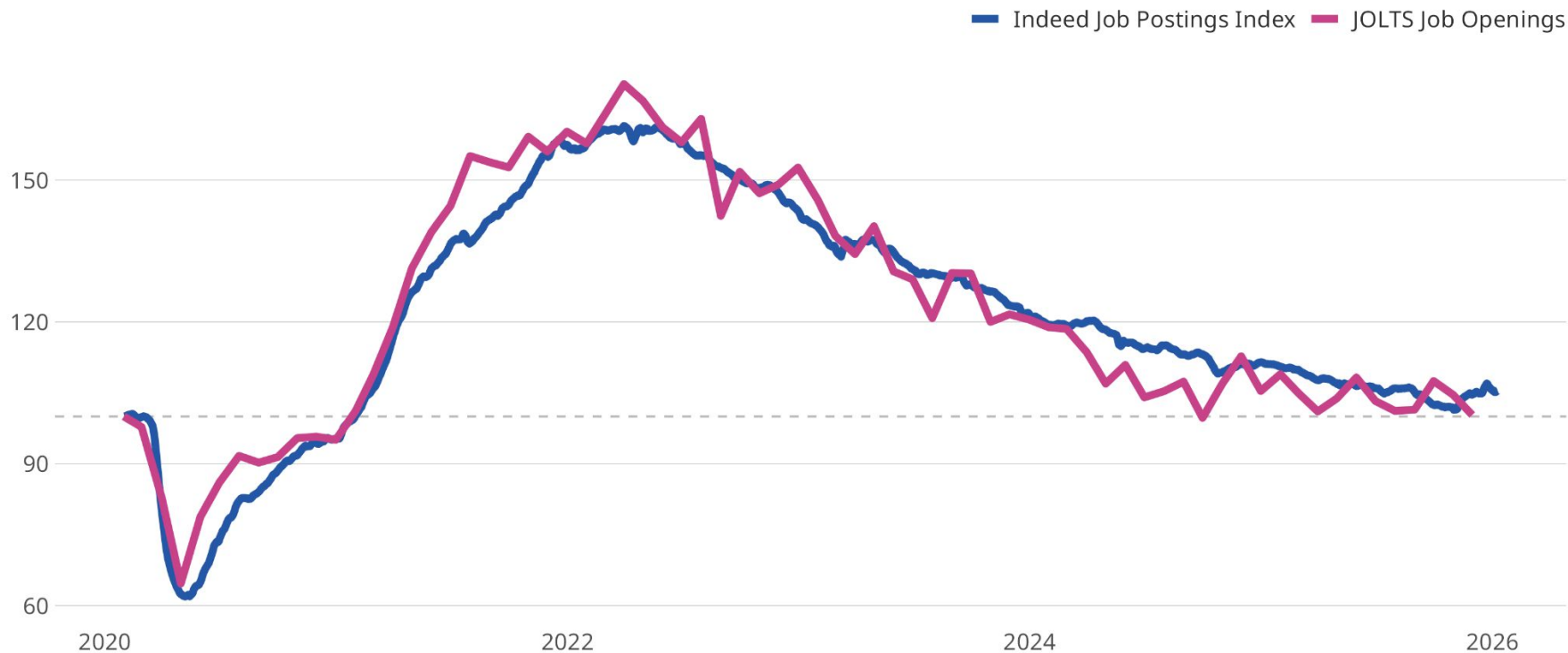
Postings are weakest in high work-from-home sectors

US Job Postings Index by remote-work tier, through December 31, 2025



Job openings and postings track each other

US data, Index (100 = January 31, 2020)

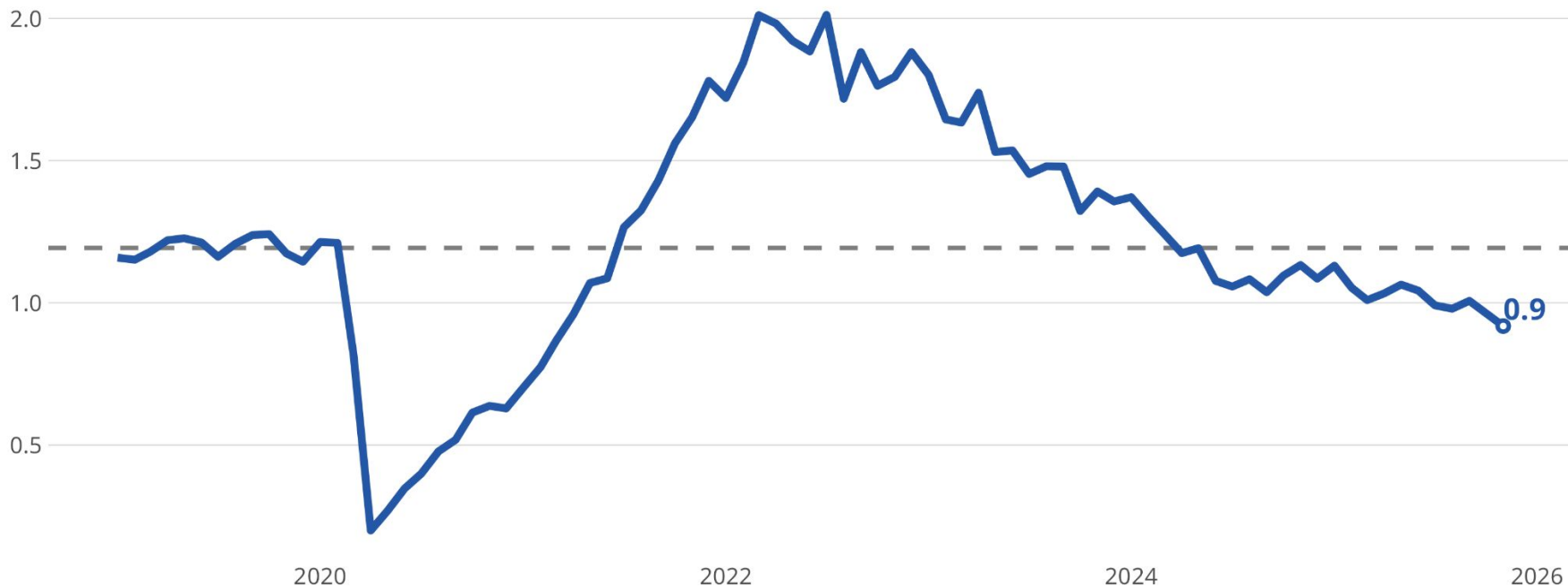


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics-January 31, 2020 to November 2025
Indeed-January 31, 2020 to January 9, 2025



The ratio of openings to unemployment is now below 2019 levels

Job openings per unemployed worker, U.S. data, January 2019 - November 2025



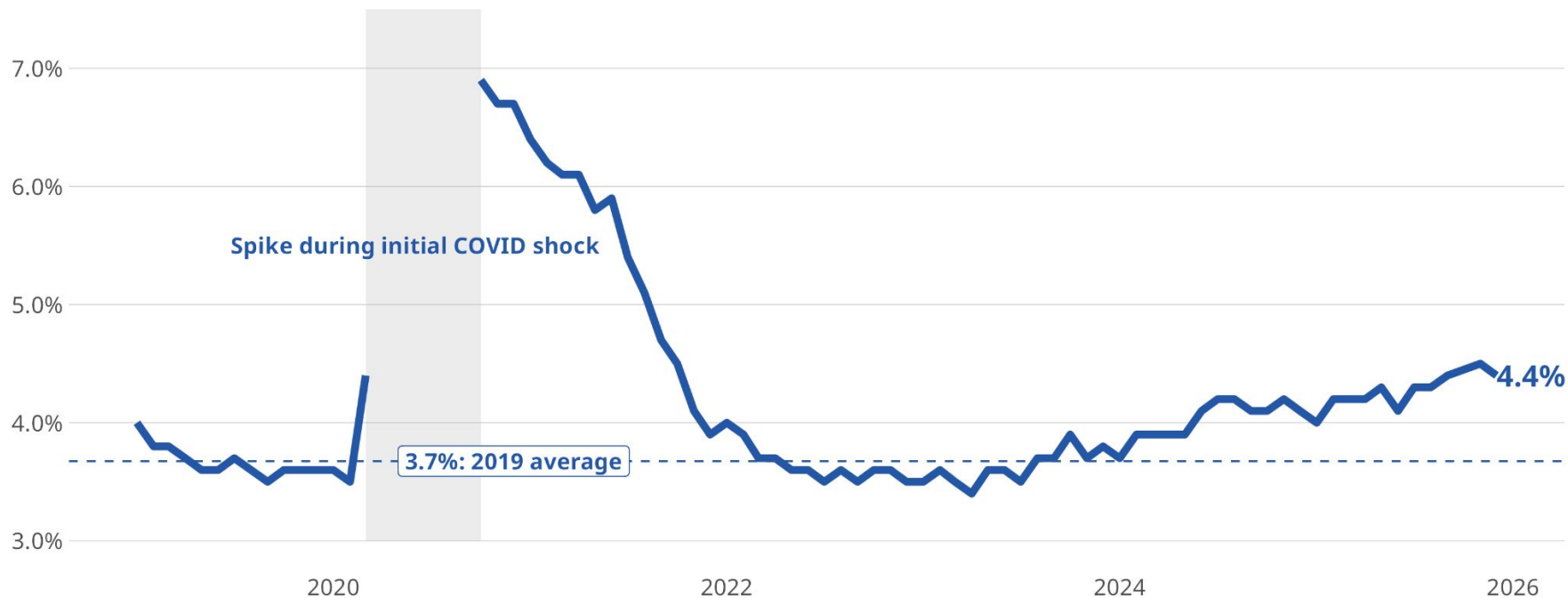
Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Unemployment remains low but has crept upward

Unemployment in the US as a percentage of labor force, January 2019 - December 2025

Monthly series

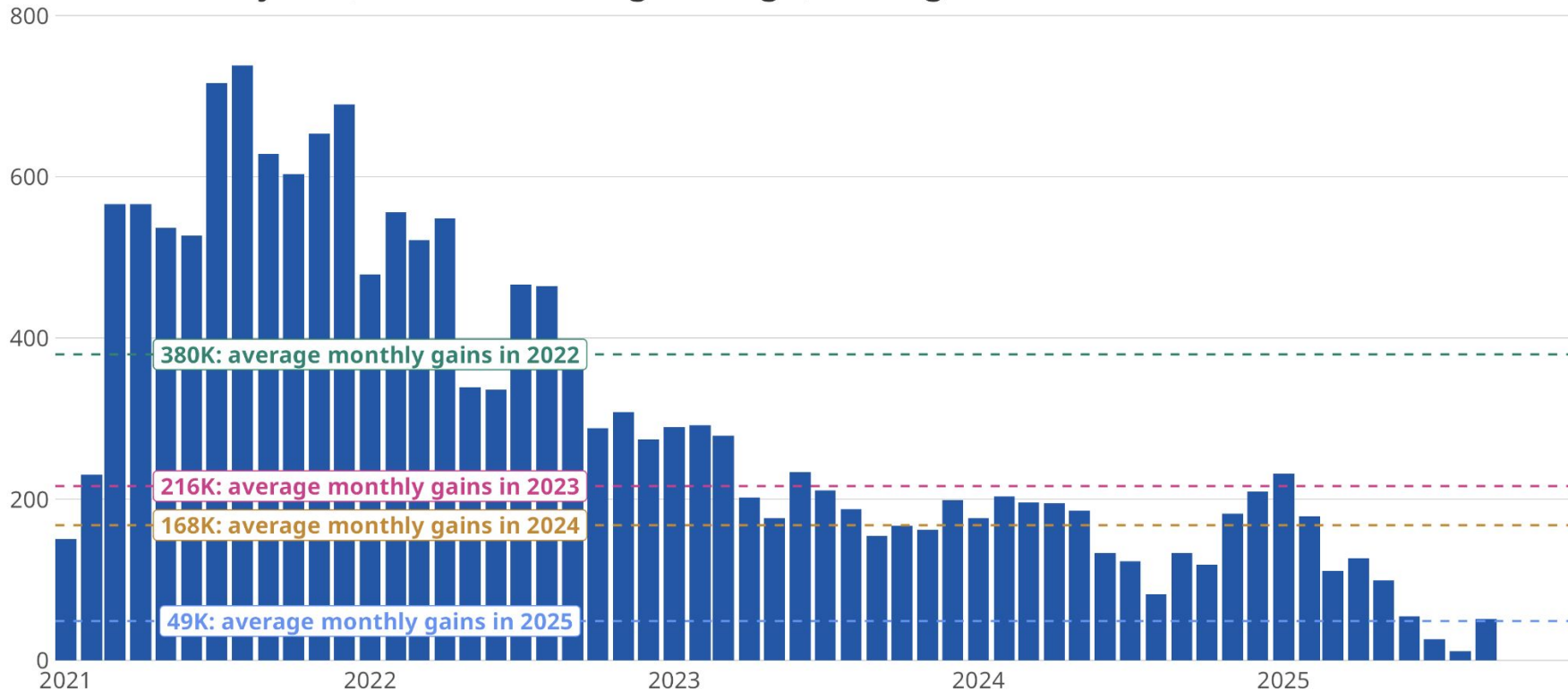


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Monthly job gains in the United States slowed significantly in 2025

Thousands of jobs (3 month moving average) through November 2025

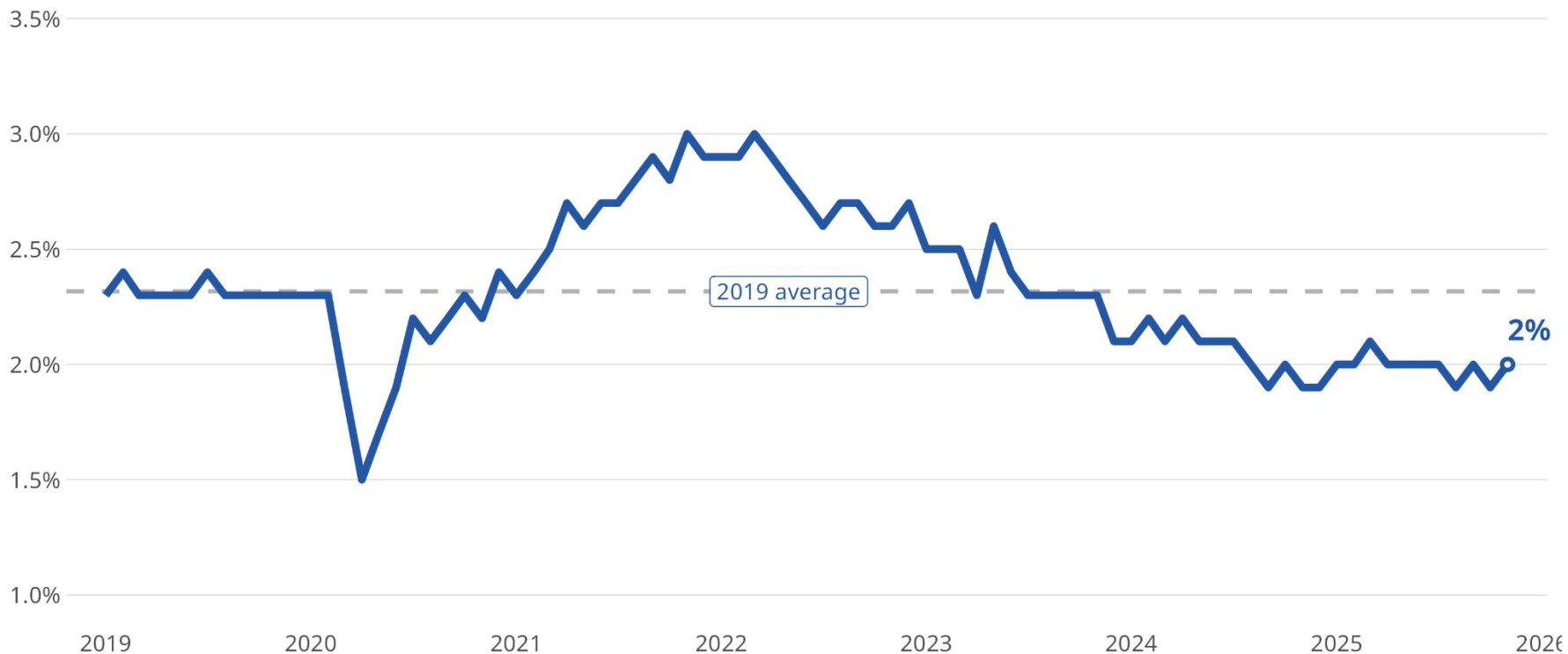


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



The quits rate is low as workers hold onto their jobs

Quits as percentage of employment in US, January 2019 - November 2025

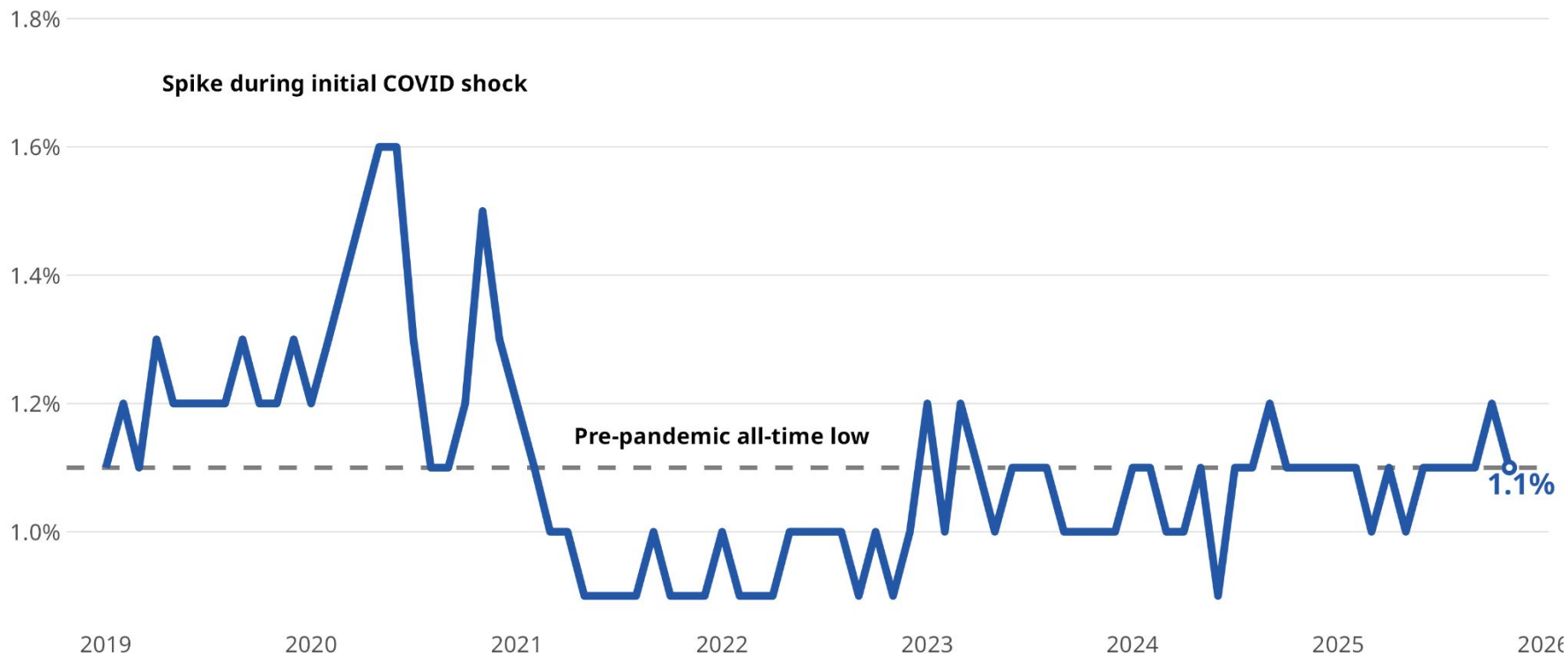


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Layoffs remain low as employers face an uncertain future

Layoffs and discharges rate in the US, January 2019 - November 2025

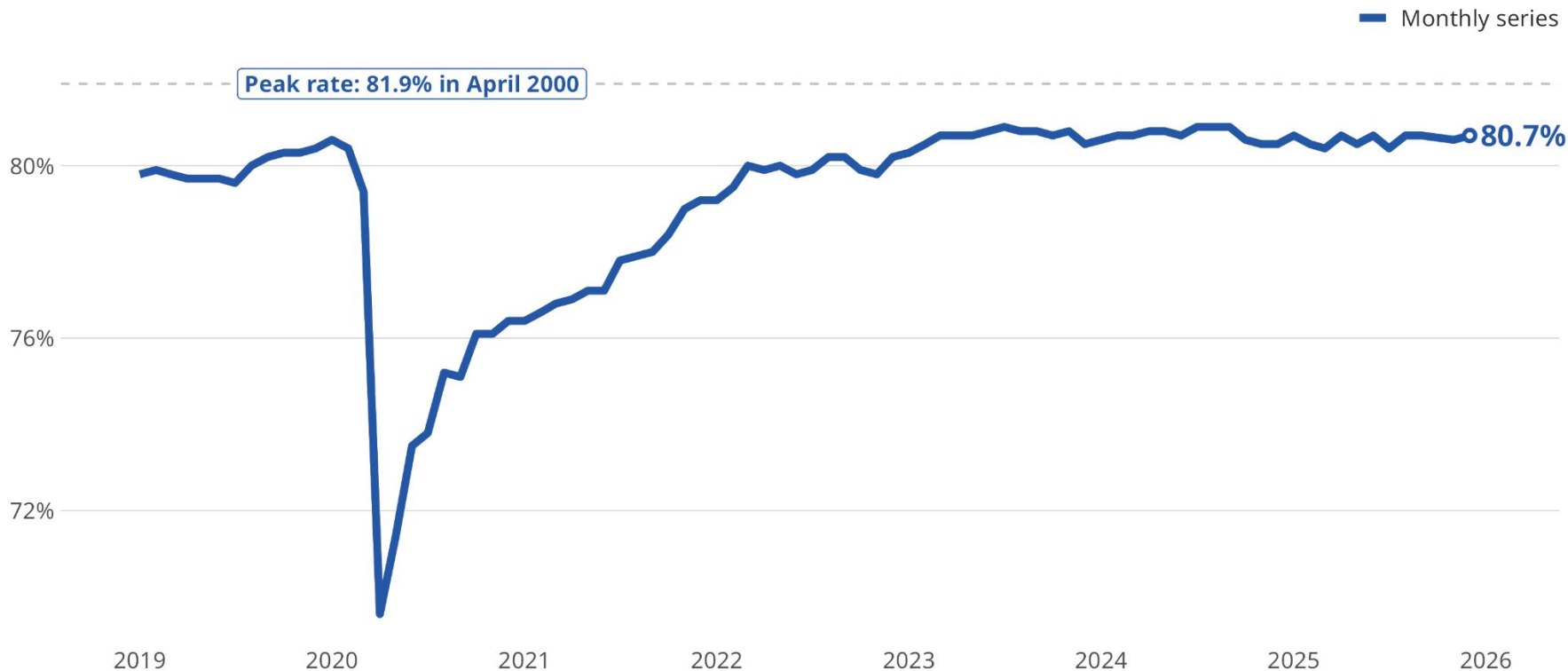


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



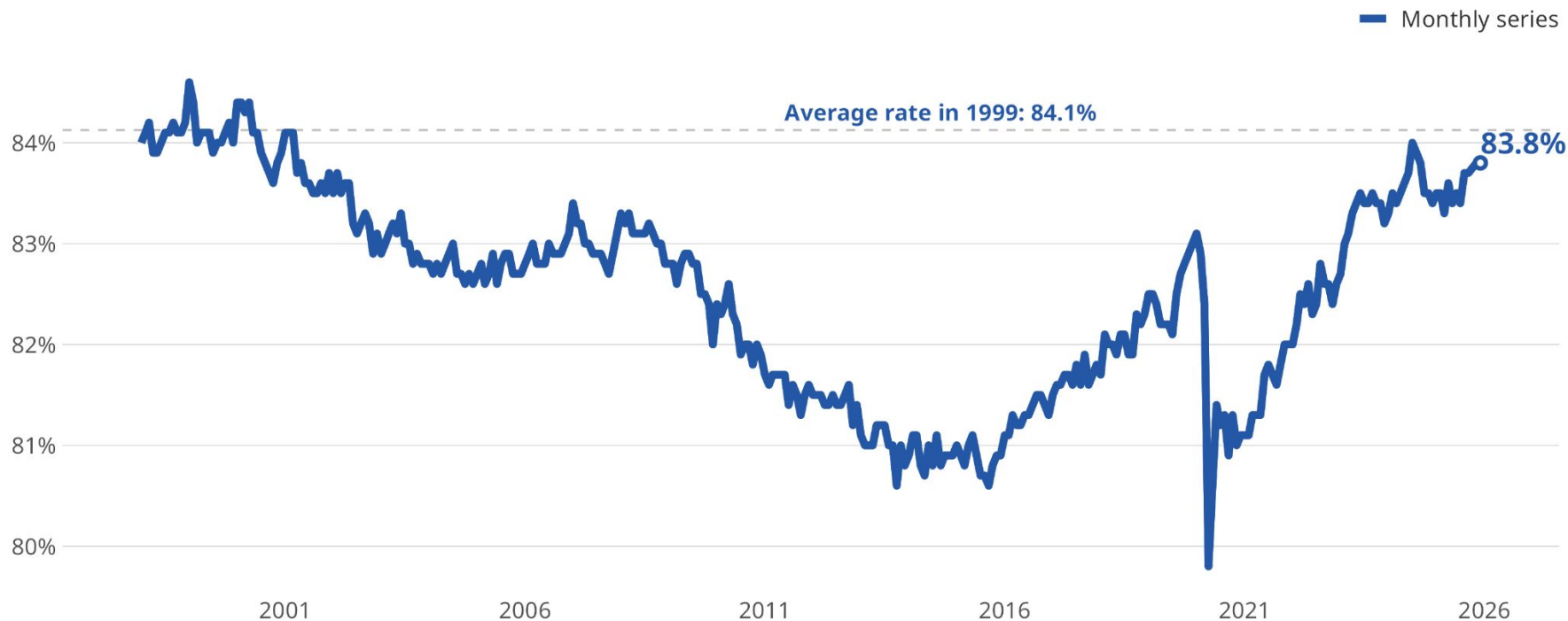
The prime-age employment rate is plateauing

Share of people ages 25 - 54 with a job in the US, January 2019 - December 2025



Prime-age labor force participation dipped but has begun to rebound in recent months

Share of workers aged 25 - 54 in the US labor force, January 1998 - December 2025



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Posted wage growth is slowing

Year-over-year growth in posted wages in the US, through December 2025

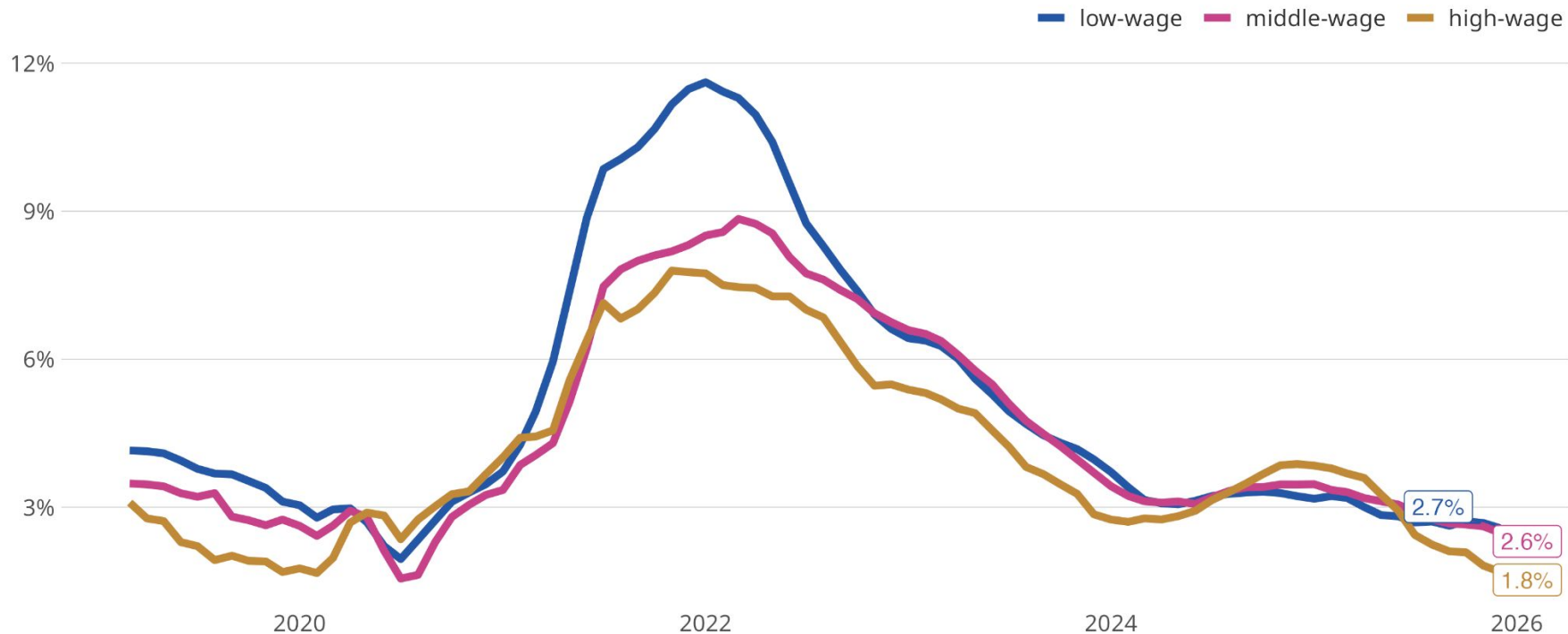


Source: Indeed Wage Tracker



Wage growth is declining across sectors

3-month average of the year-over-year growth in posted wages in the US, through December 2025

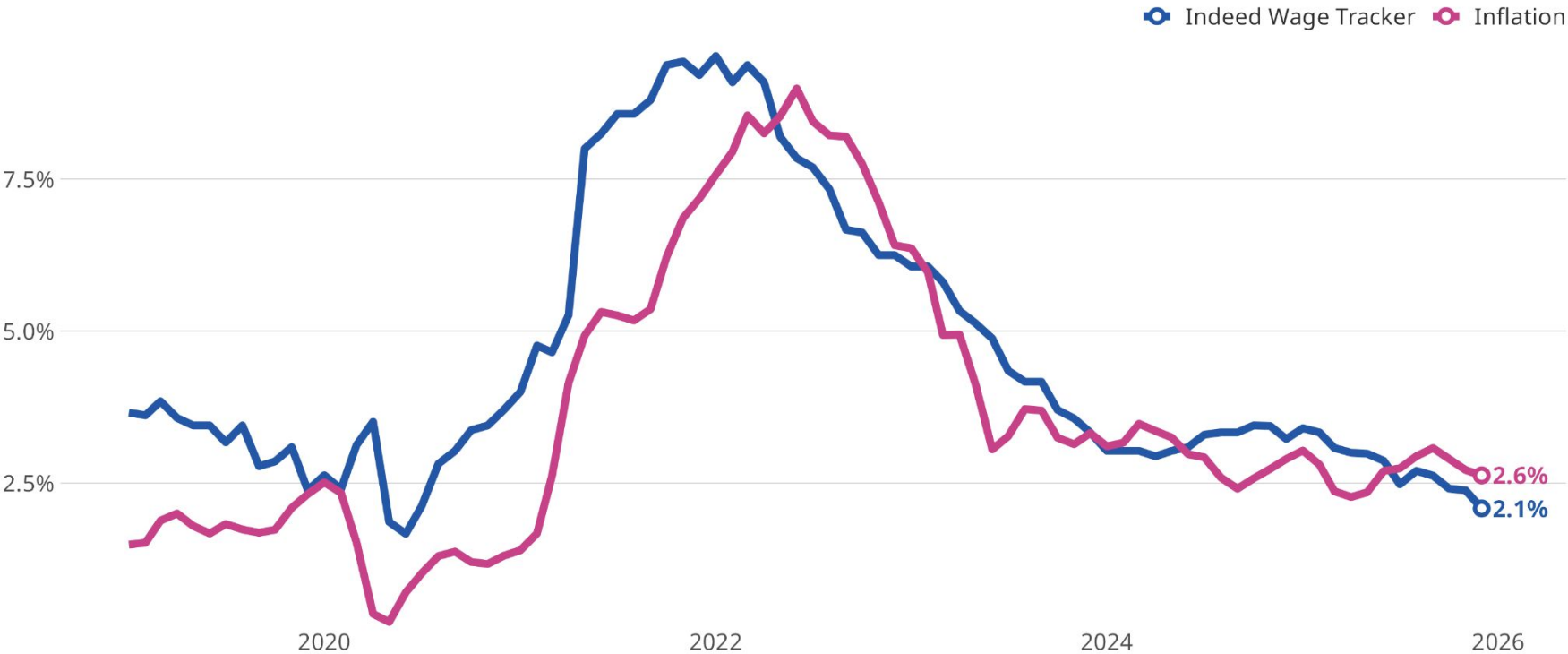


Source: Indeed Wage Tracker. Wage tiers based on a category's median posted wage in 2023



Inflation is once again growing faster than posted wages

Year-over-year growth, CPI vs Indeed Wage Tracker

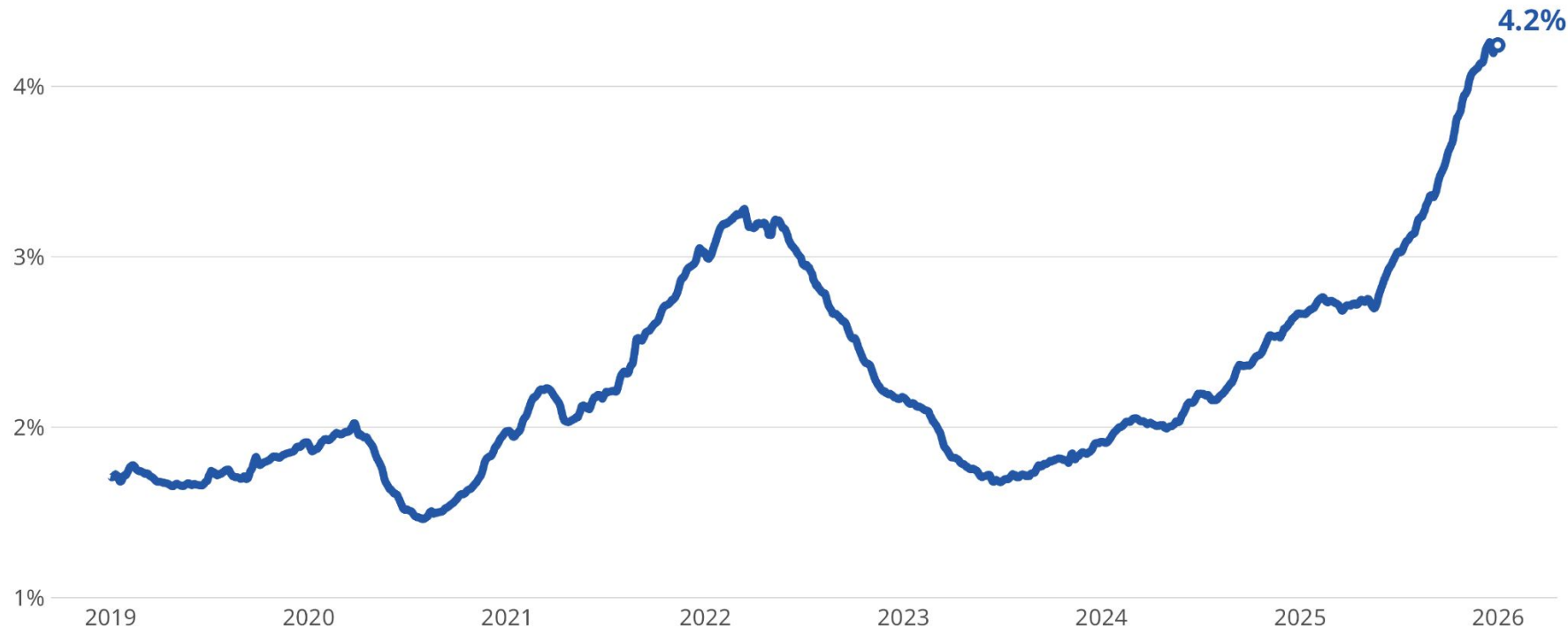


Source: Indeed Wage Tracker (January 2019-December 2025),
Consumer Price Index (January 2019-December 2025)



US jobs mentioning AI rise past their 2022 peak

Job postings on Indeed containing Artificial Intelligence (AI) terms as a share of all US job postings, through December 2025



Source: Indeed



→ hiringlab.org

→ data.indeed.com