

# US Labor Market Trends

January 2026

Indeed Hiring Lab

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# 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

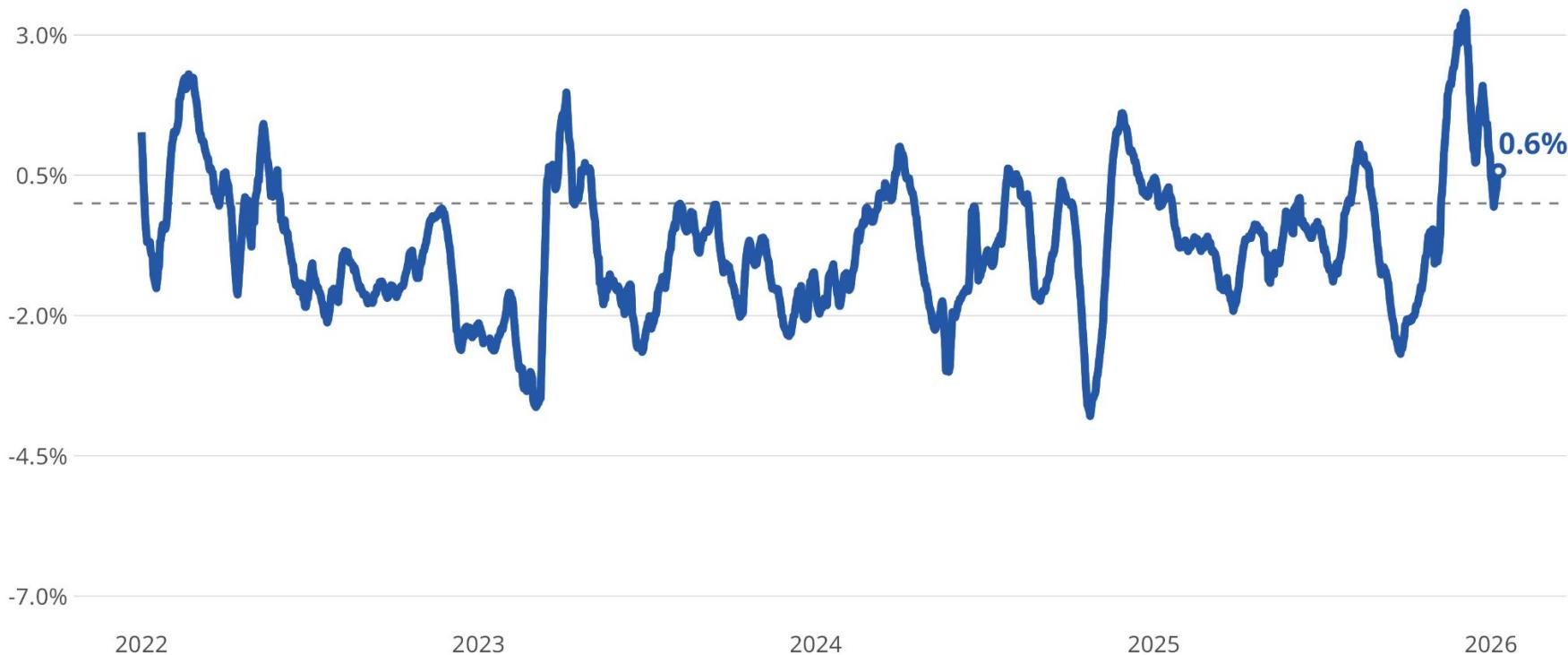


Source: Indeed

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# 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

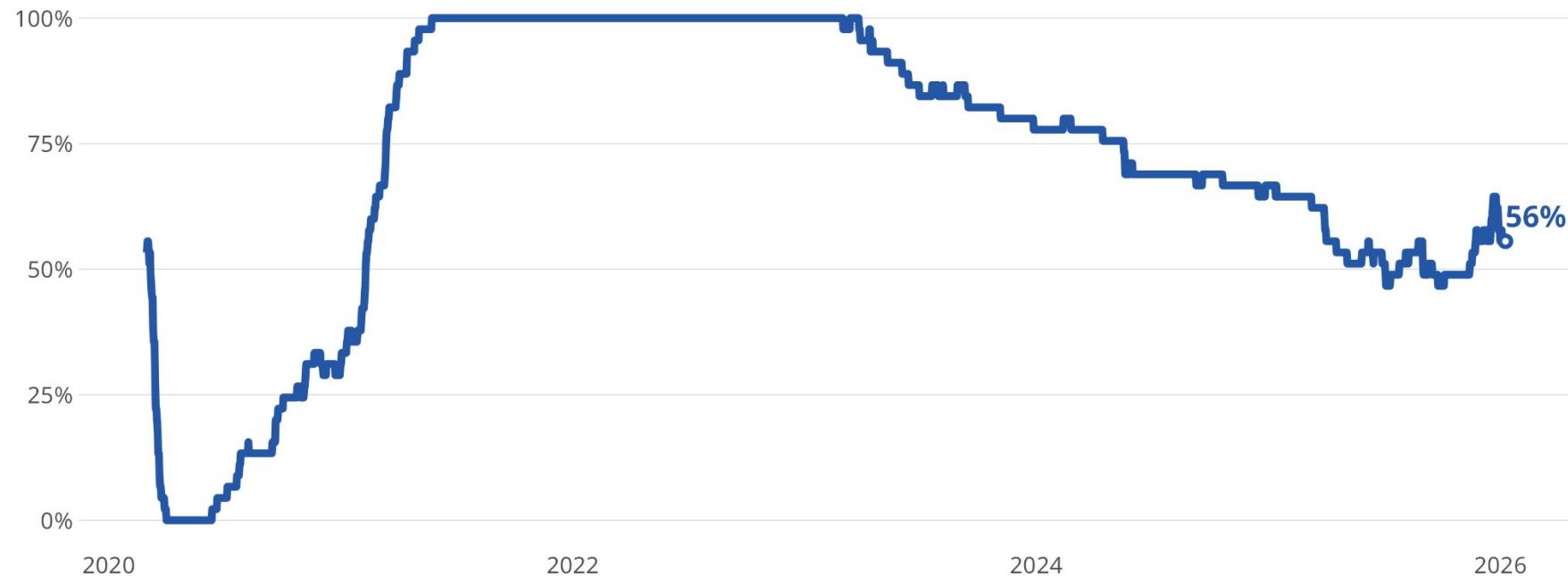


Source: Indeed

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# 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



Source: Indeed

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# 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

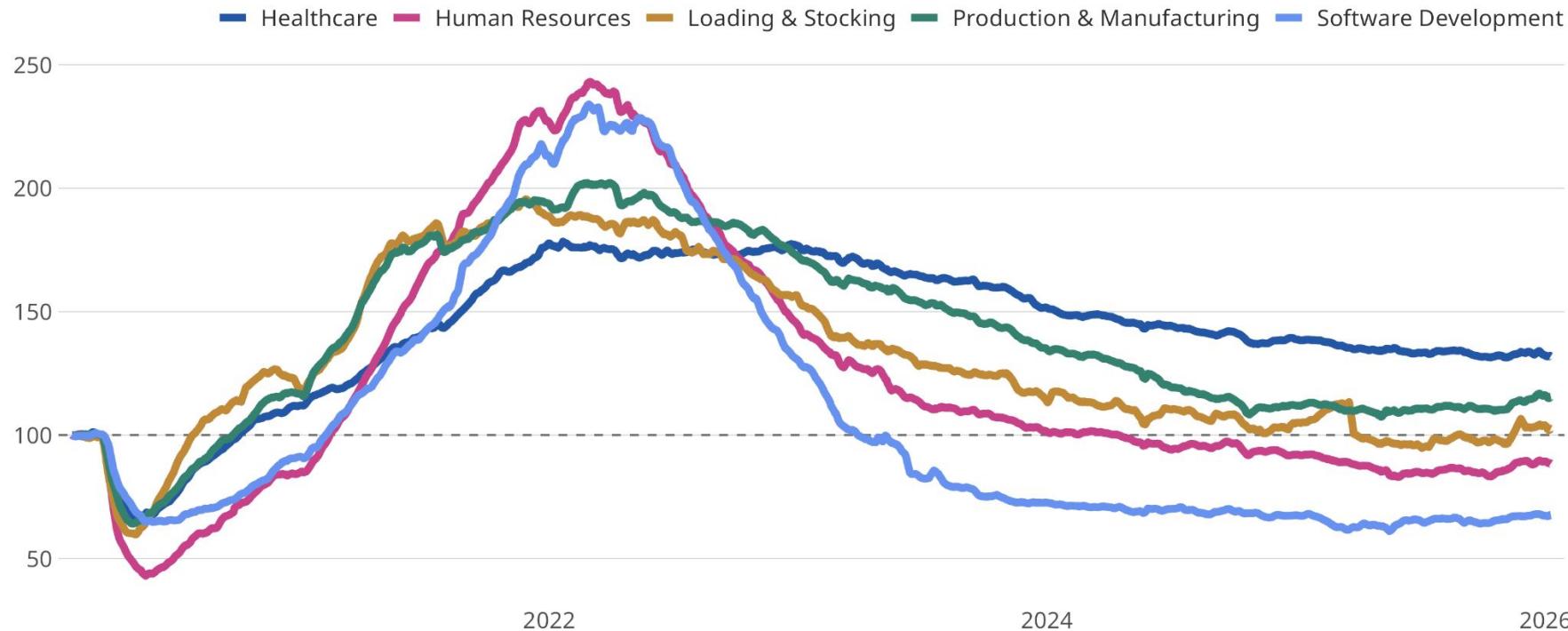


Source: Indeed

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# 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

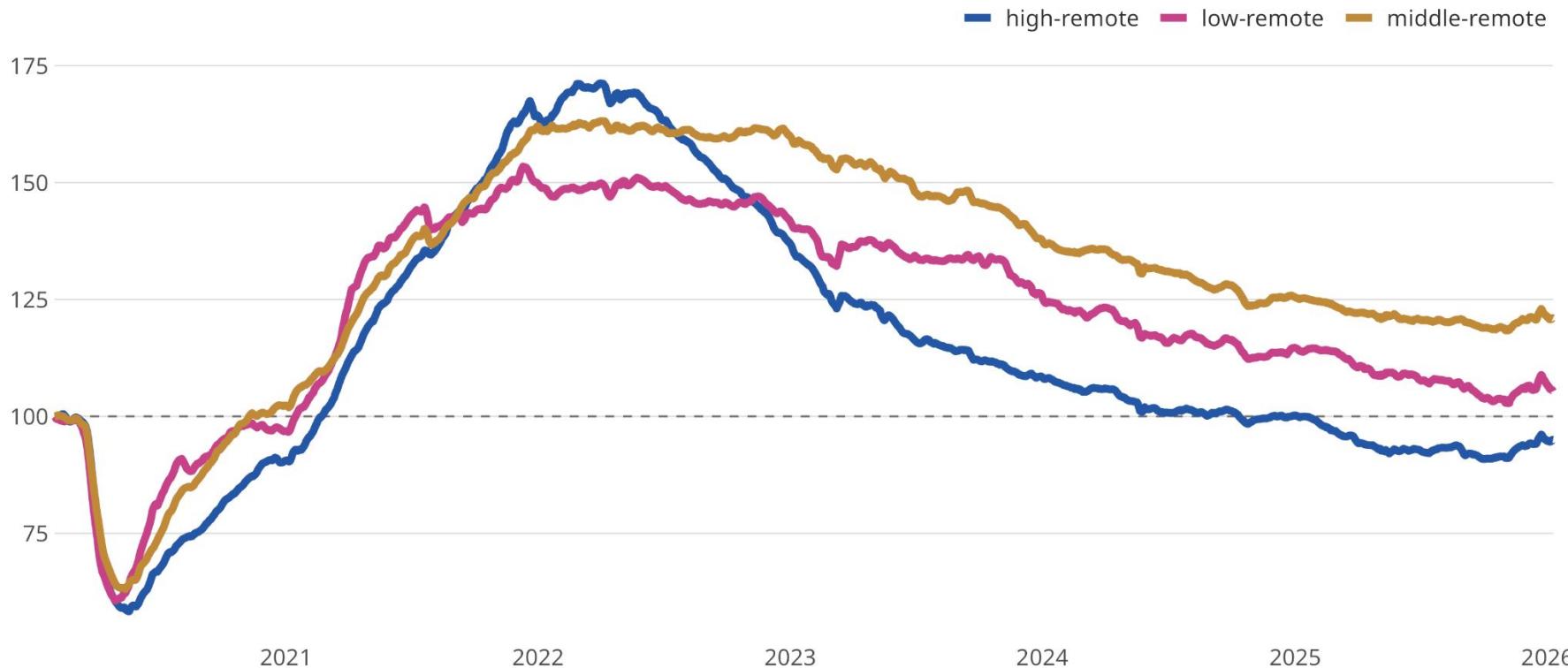


Source: Indeed

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# Postings are weakest in high work-from-home sectors

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

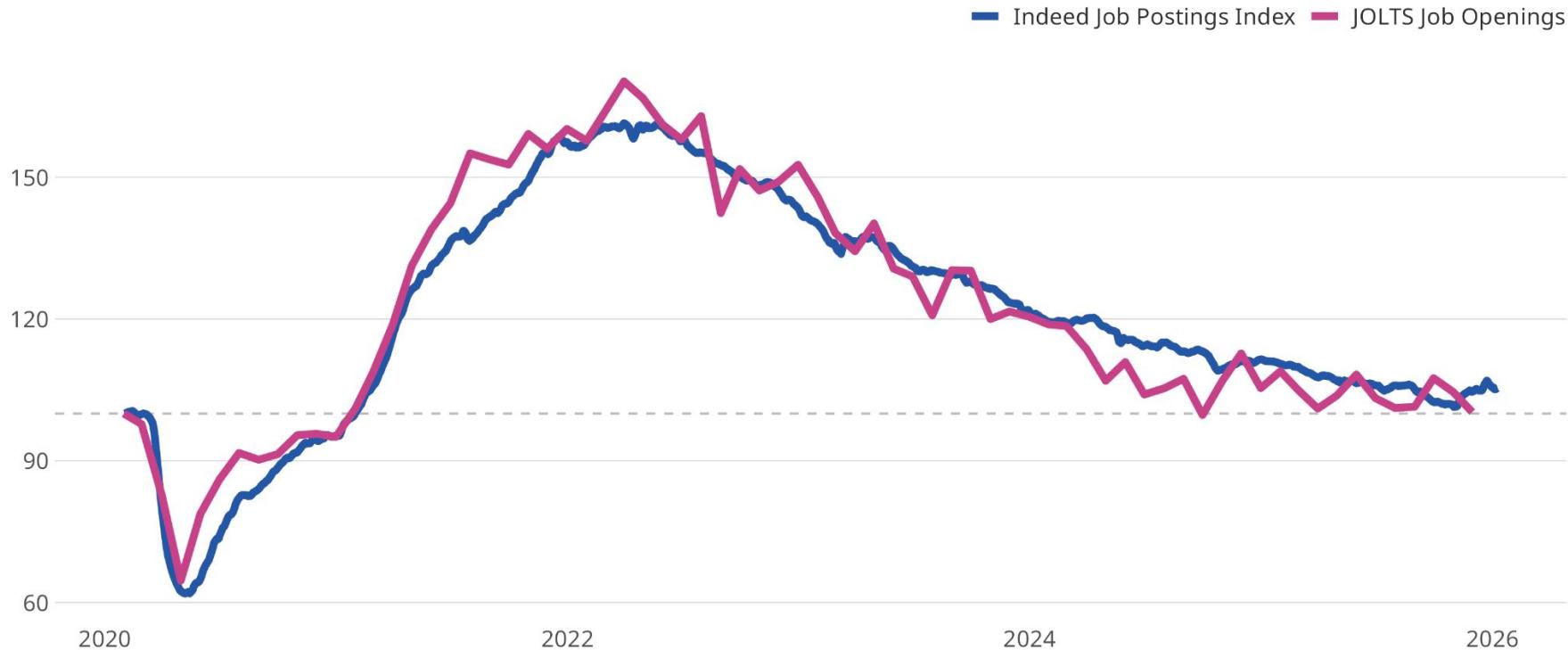


Source: Indeed

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# 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

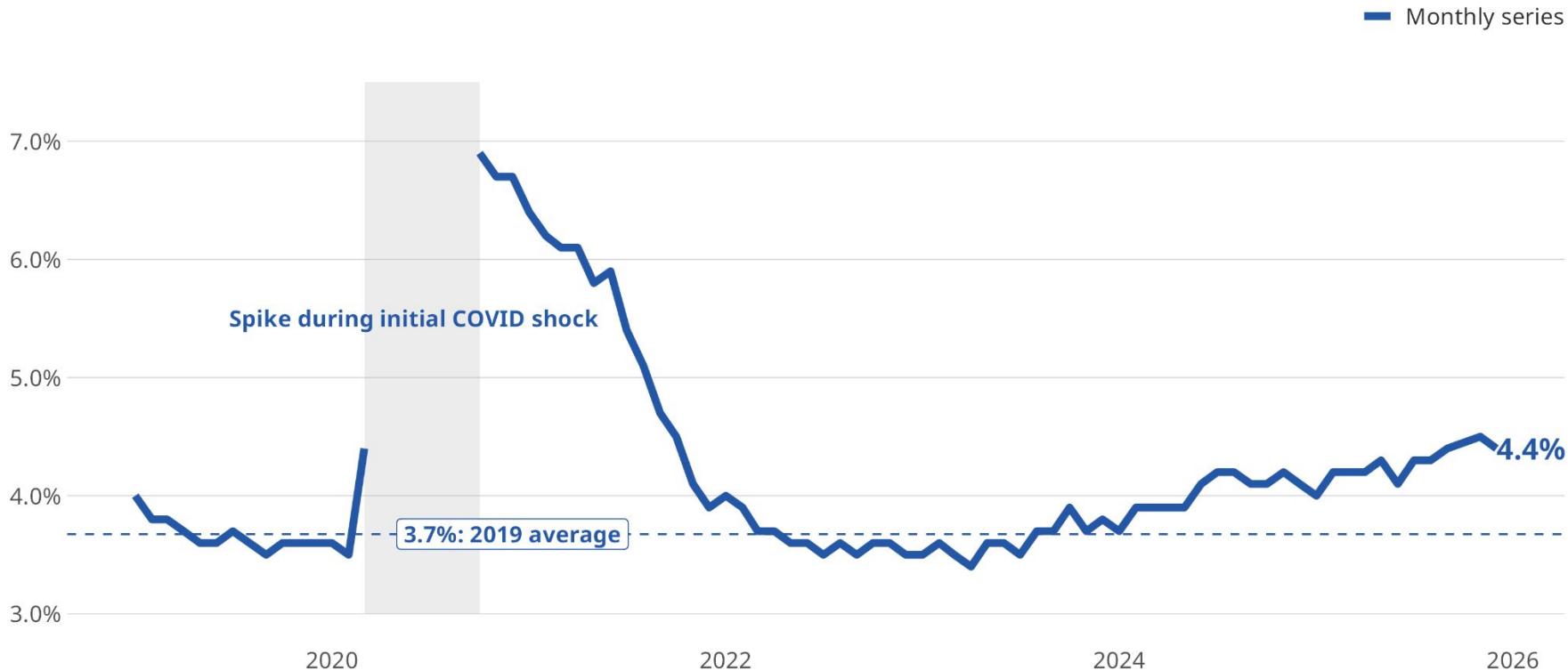


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# Unemployment remains low but has crept upward

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



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# Monthly job gains in the United States slowed significantly in 2025

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

800

600

400

200

0

380K: average monthly gains in 2022

216K: average monthly gains in 2023

168K: average monthly gains in 2024

49K: average monthly gains in 2025

2021

2022

2023

2024

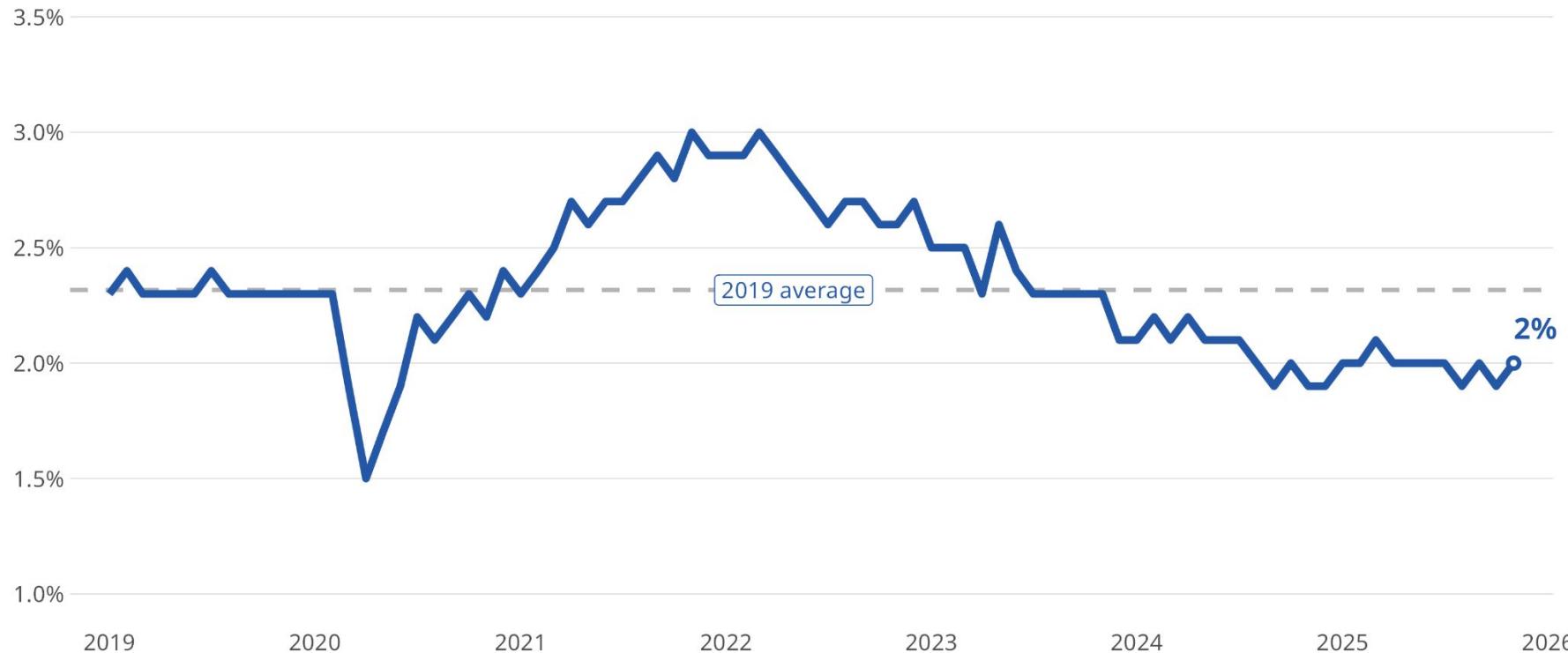
2025

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# 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

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# Layoffs remain low as employers face an uncertain future

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

1.8%

**Spike during initial COVID shock**

1.6%

1.4%

1.2%

**Pre-pandemic all-time low**

1.0%

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

2025

2026

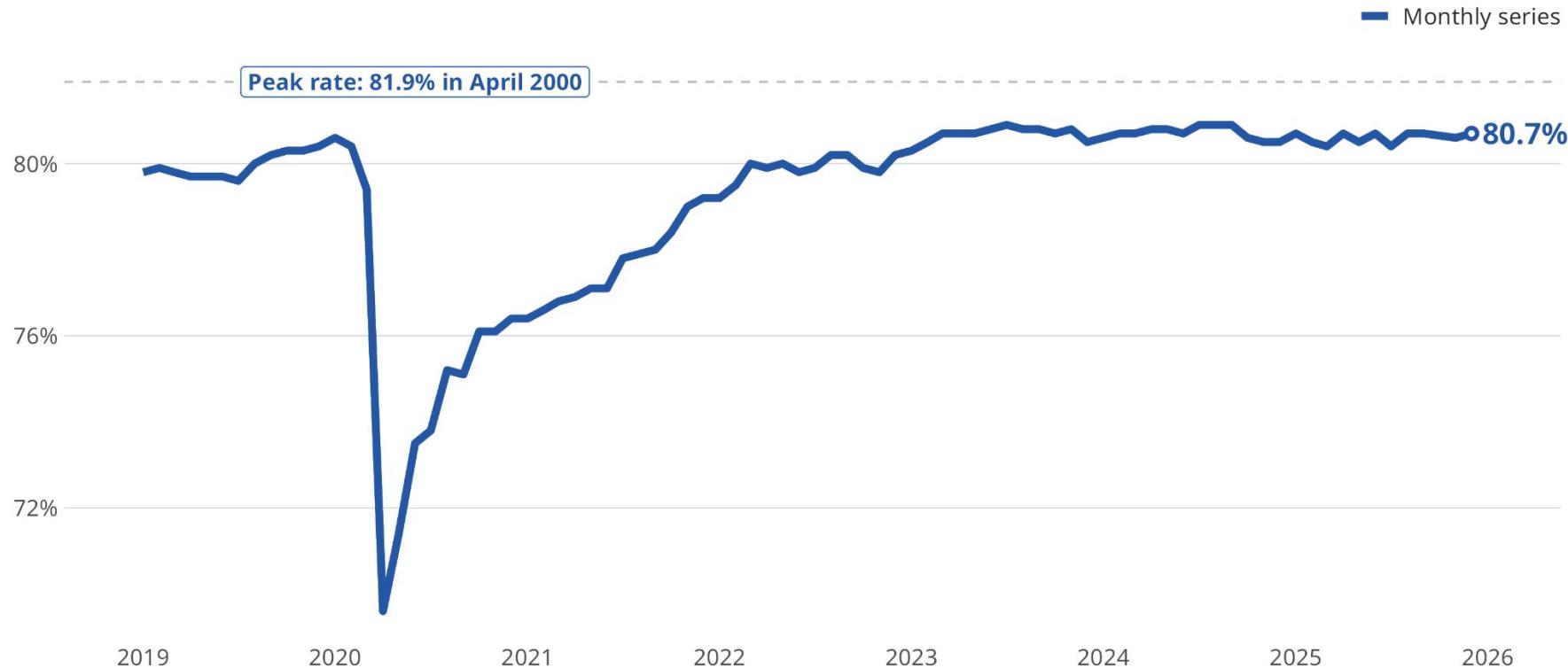
1.1%

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# The prime-age employment rate is plateauing

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

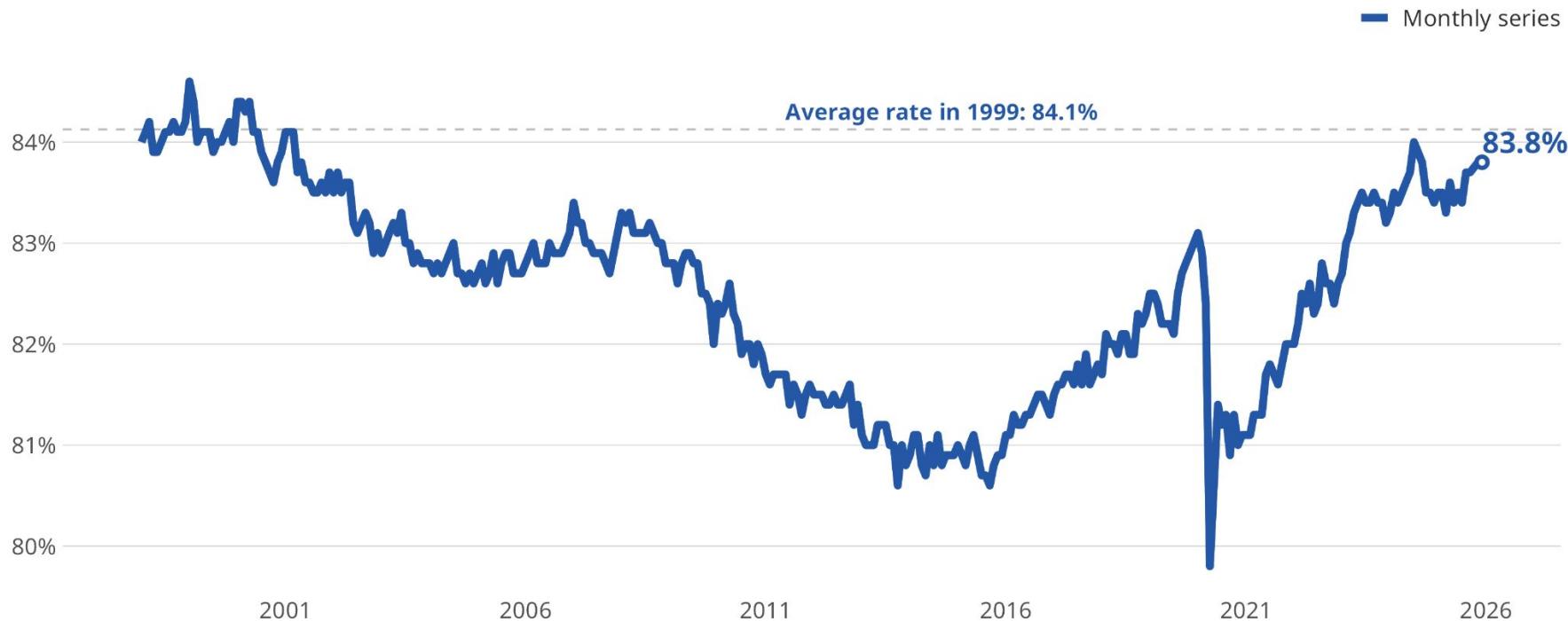


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# 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

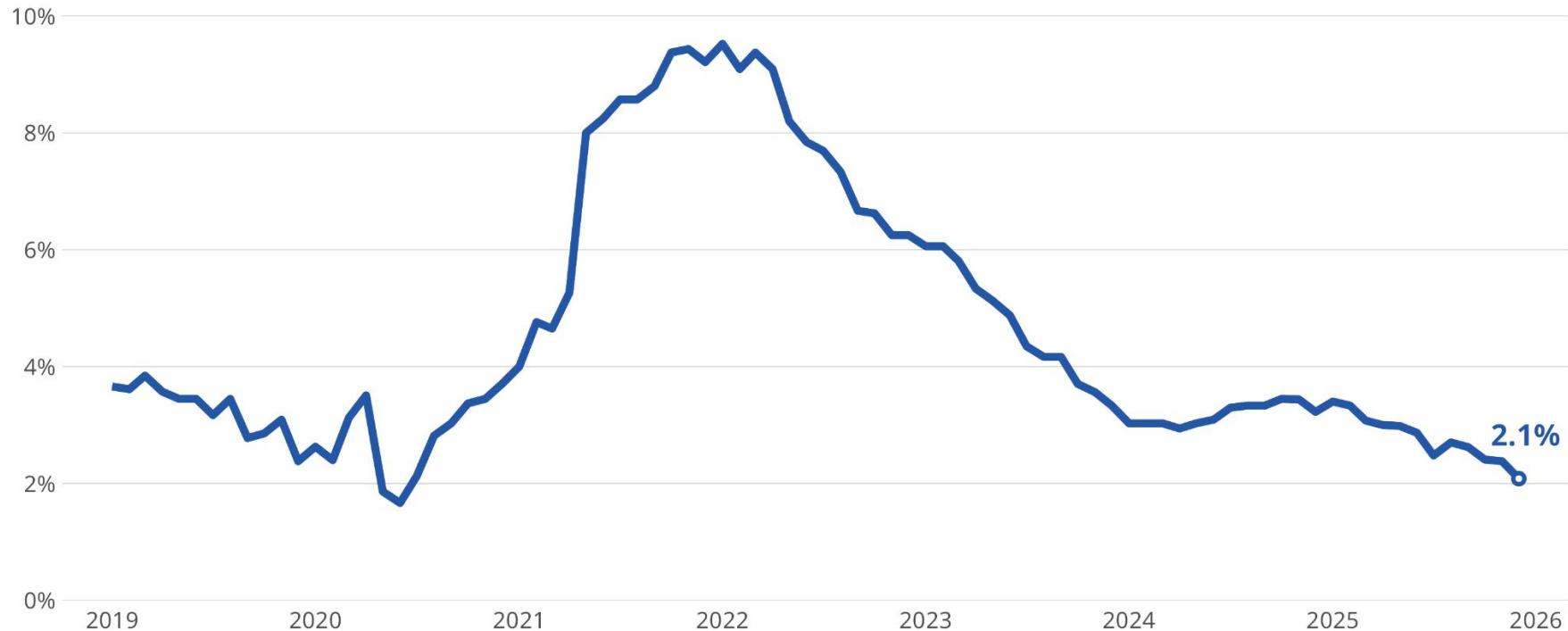


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# Posted wage growth is slowing

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

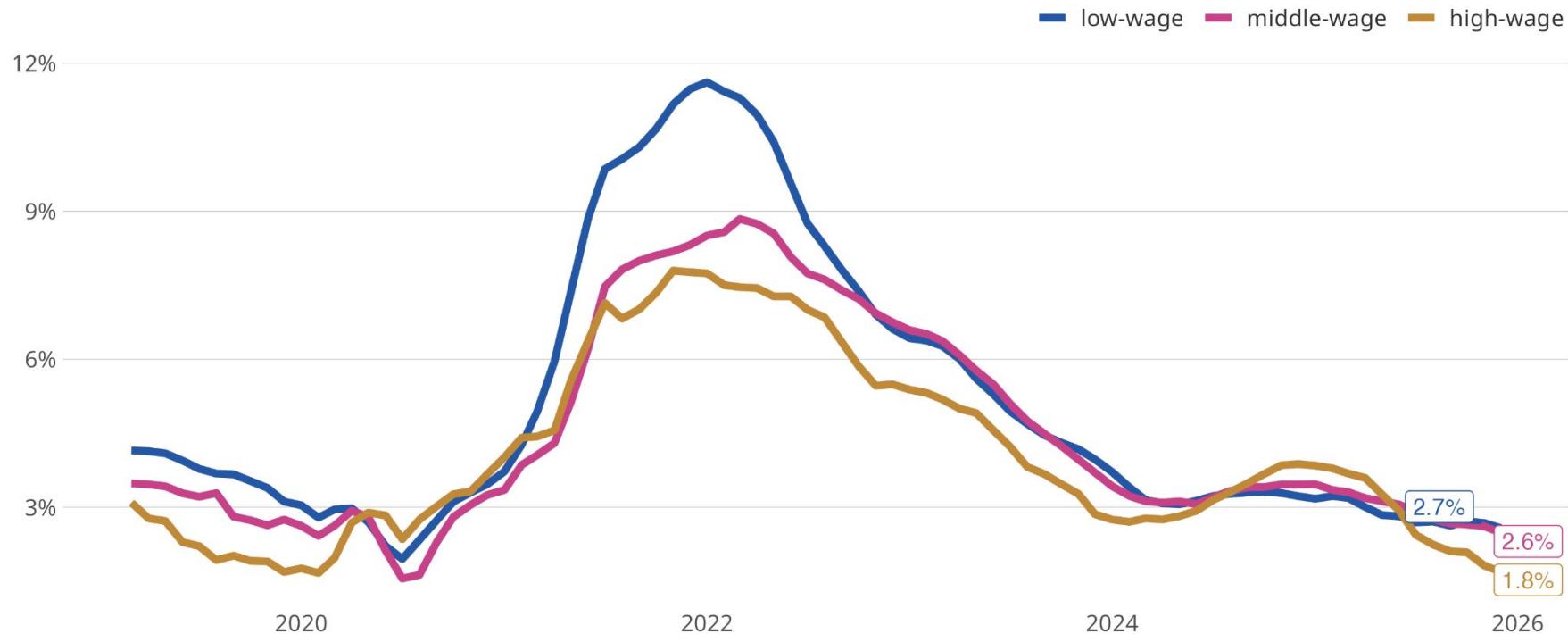


Source: Indeed Wage Tracker

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# 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

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# 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)

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# 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

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