US Labor Market Trends

September 2026

Indeed Hiring Lab

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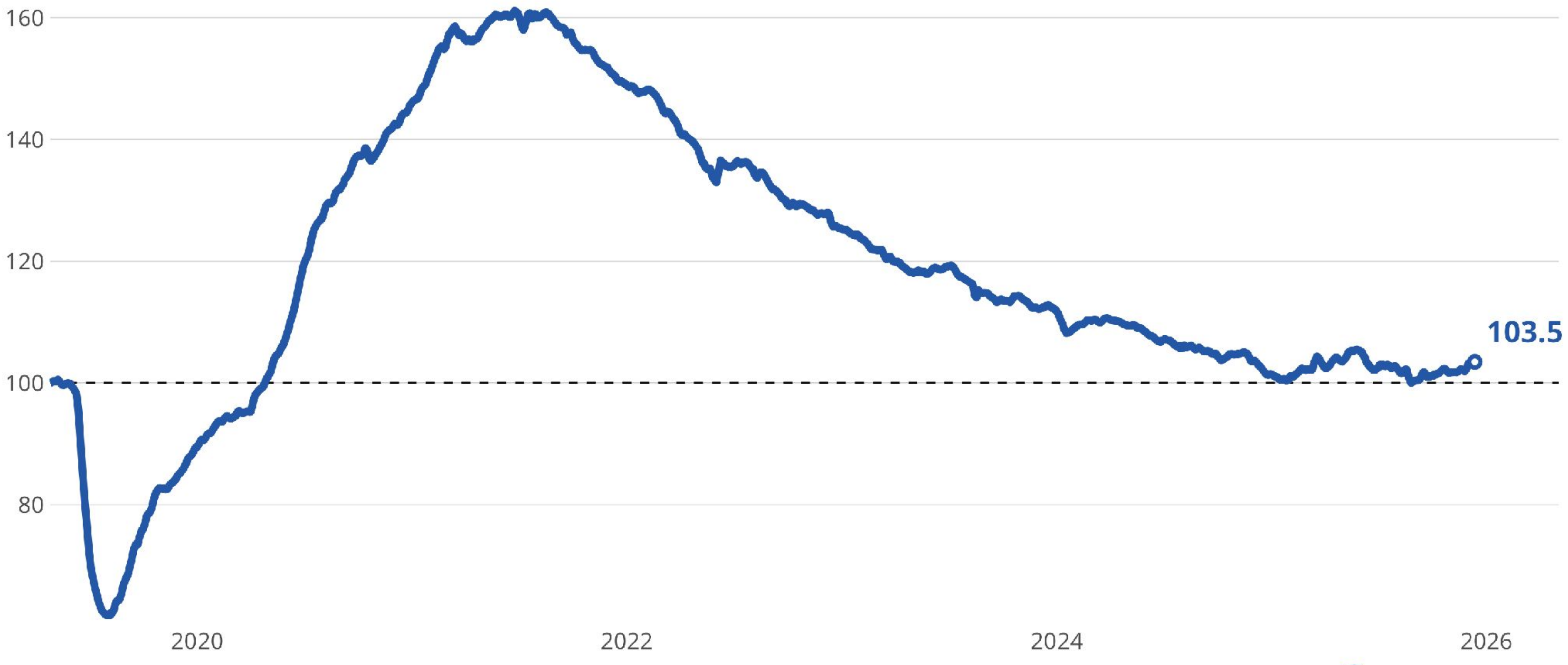
US Labor Market Overview - September 2026

- As of September 18, 2026, US job postings stood 3.5% above their pre-pandemic level and were up 1.5% month-over-month.
- Postings were higher than pre-pandemic levels in more than half (60%) of sectors analyzed as of mid-September.
- The overall unemployment rate was 4.1% in August 2026.
- 8.4% of job postings advertised remote positions by the end of August 2026.
- Annual posted wage growth registered 2.5% in August.
- The share of job postings with AI-related terms rose to 6.7% by the end of August.

Job postings linger just above pre-pandemic levels

Indexed level of job postings (100 = February 1, 2020), through September 18, 2026



Source: Indeed

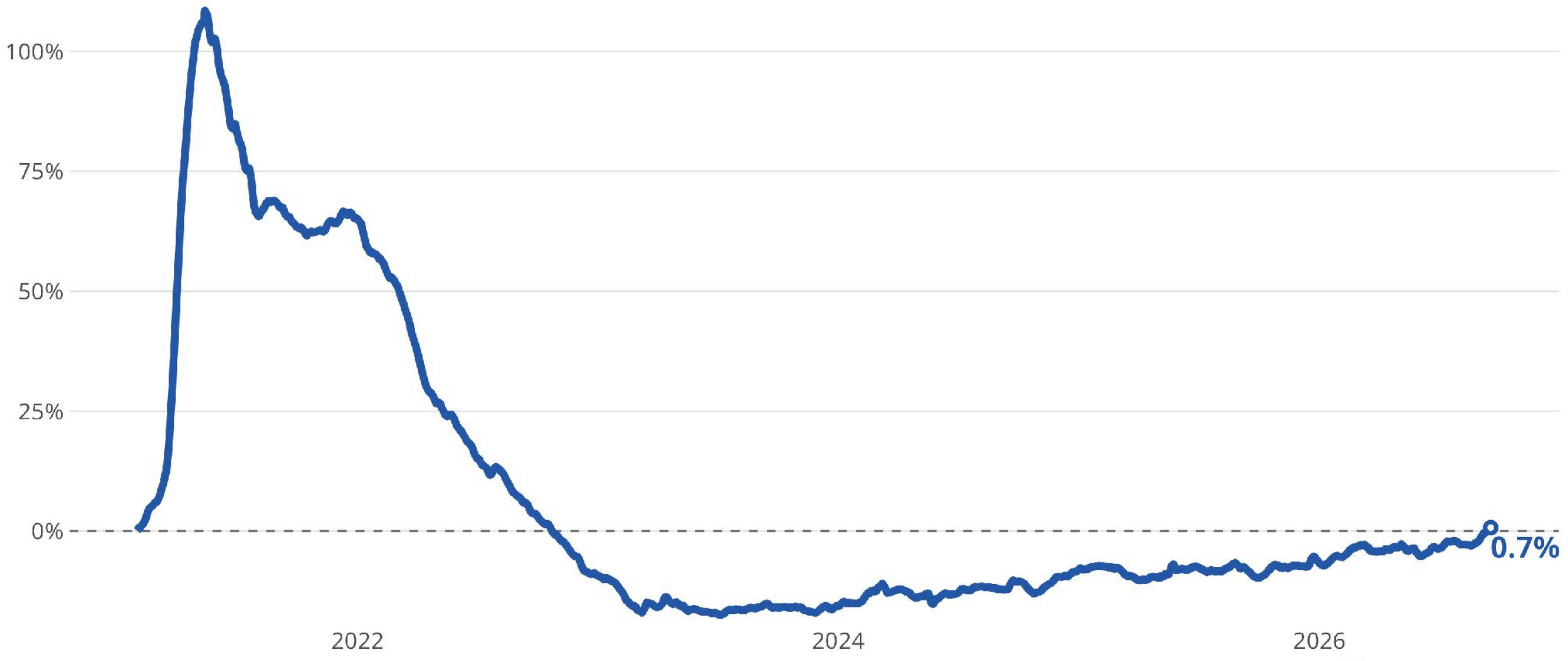
Job postings on Indeed are up 1.5% from a month ago

Month-over-month growth in Indeed Job Postings Index (US), through September 18, 202

Source: Indeed

Job postings are up 0.7% from a year ago

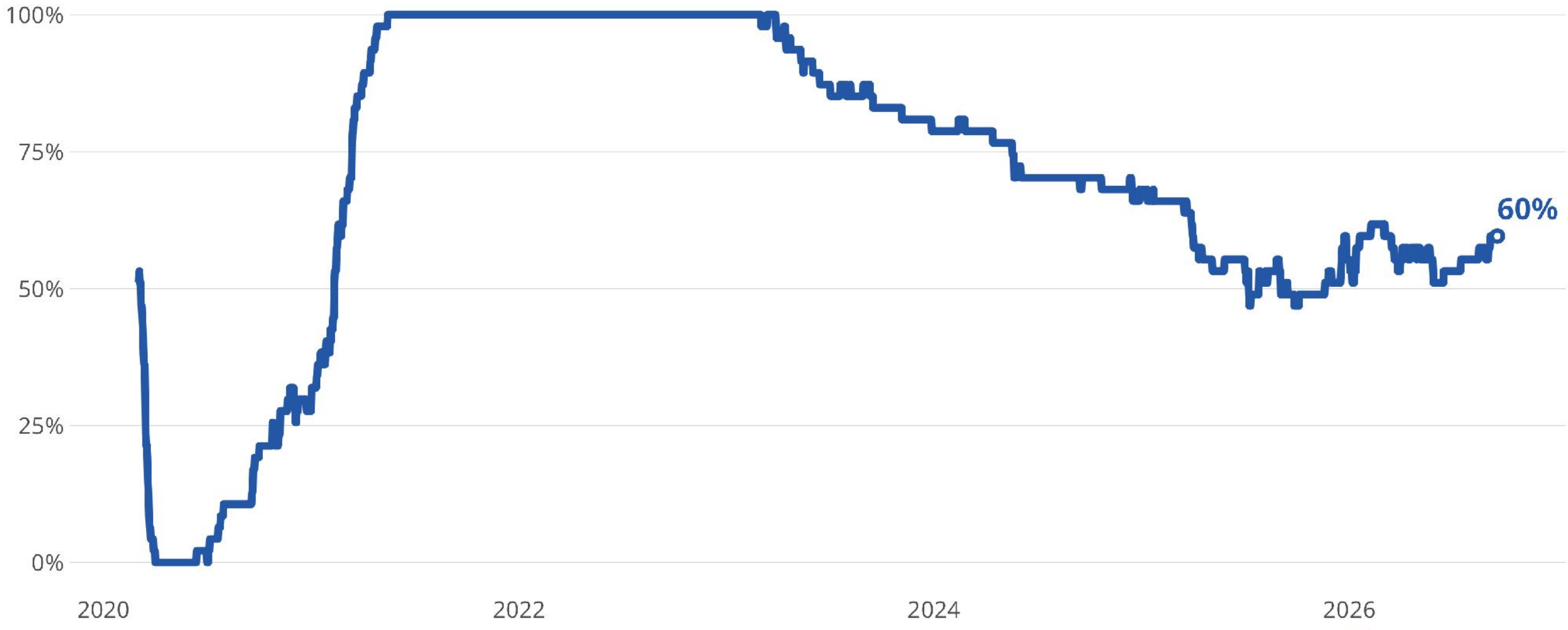
Year-over-year growth in Indeed Job Postings Index, through September 18, 2026



Source: Indeed

Hiring is broadening across more occupations

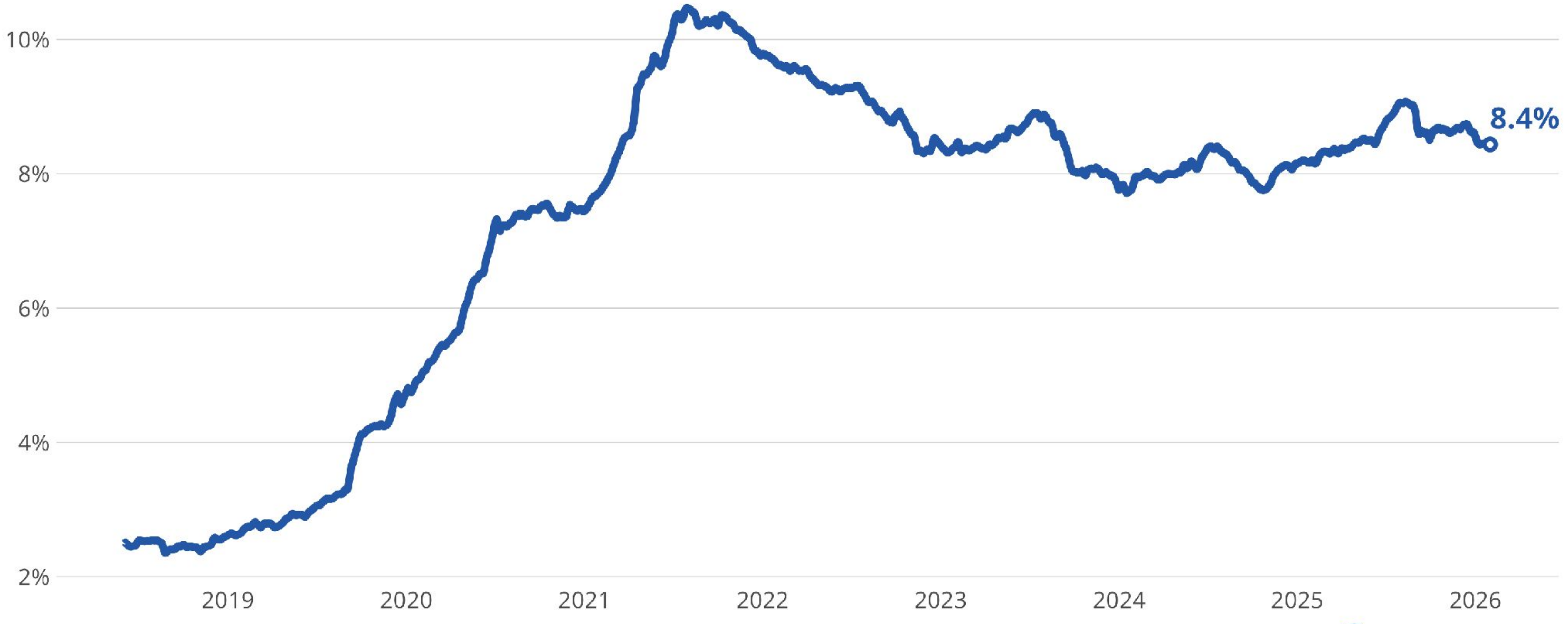
Share of sectors in the US with number of job postings above pre-pandemic baseline, through September 18, 2026



Source: Indeed

Remote postings have largely stabilized

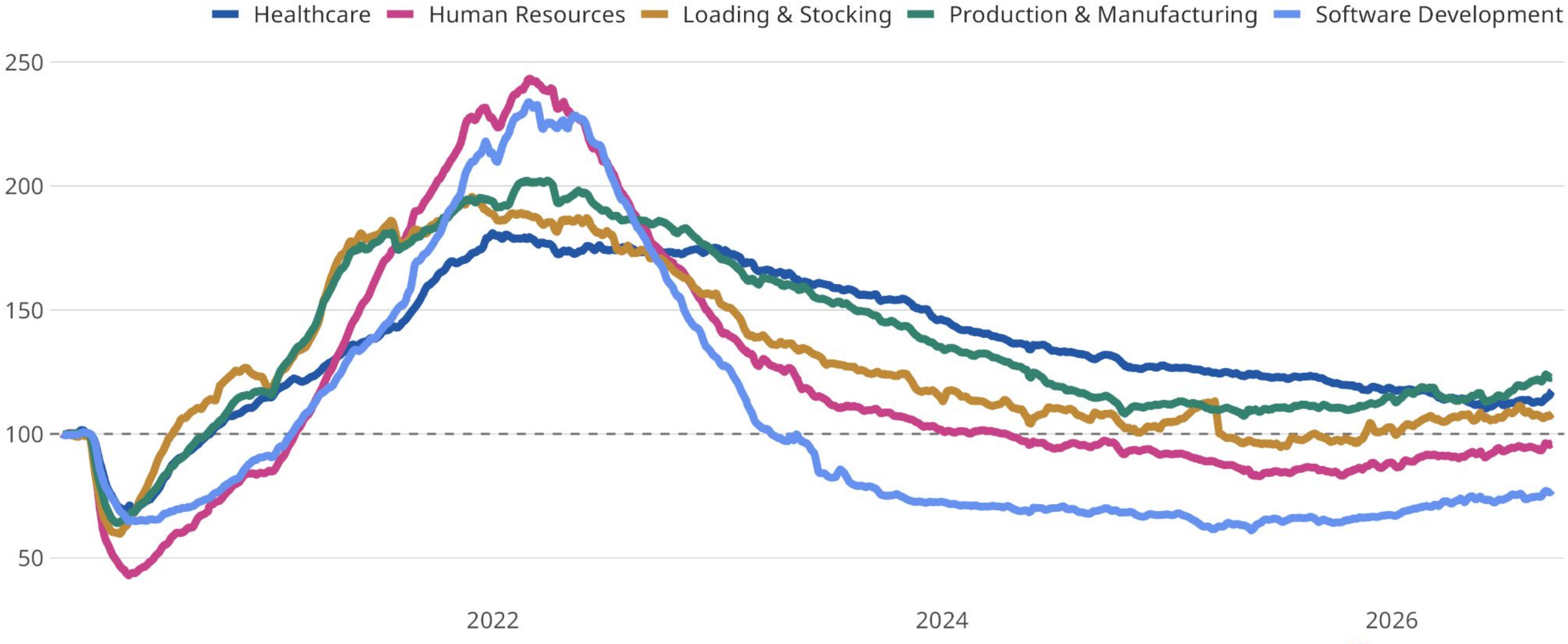
Share of U.S. job postings that contained keywords associated with remote, hybrid and flexible work arrangements, January 2019 to August 2026



Source: Indeed

Job postings in Healthcare moderate

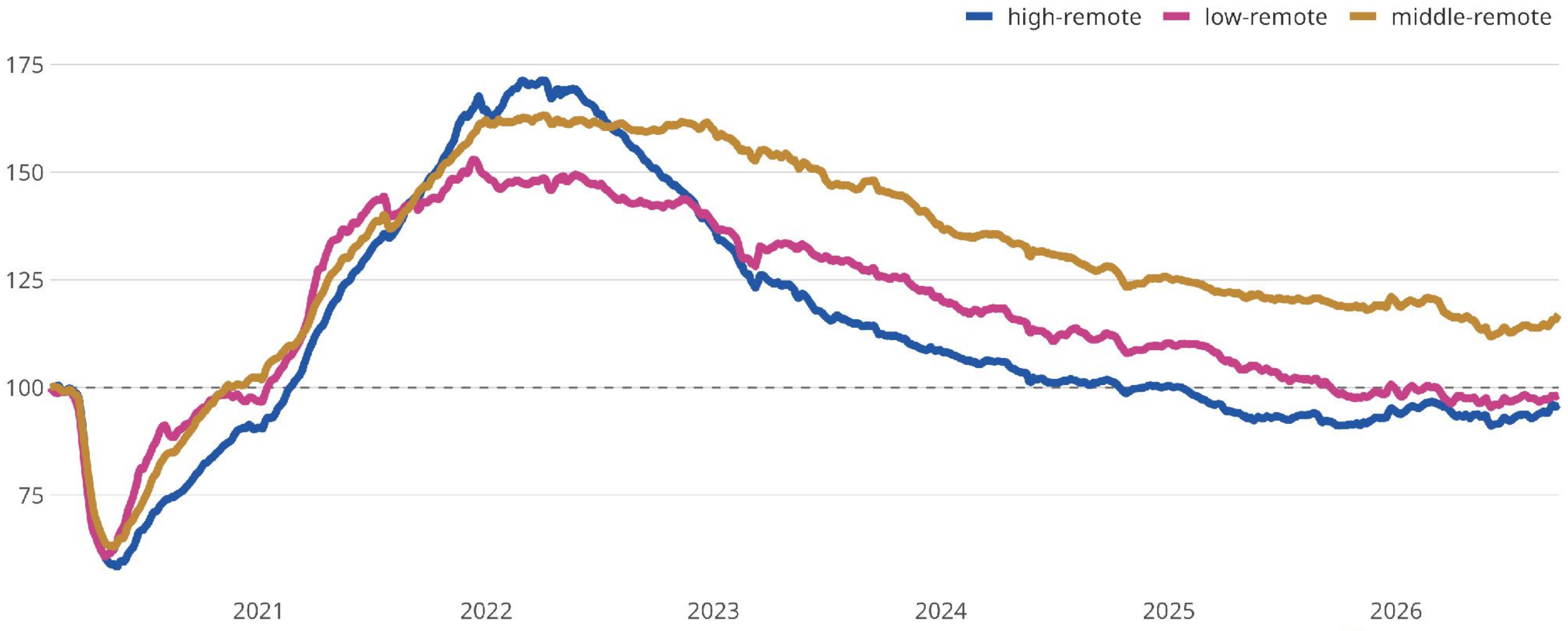
Indexed level of job postings by selected sector (100 = February 1, 2020), through September 18, 2026



Source: Indeed

Postings in low- and high-remote sectors are now below pre-pandemic levels

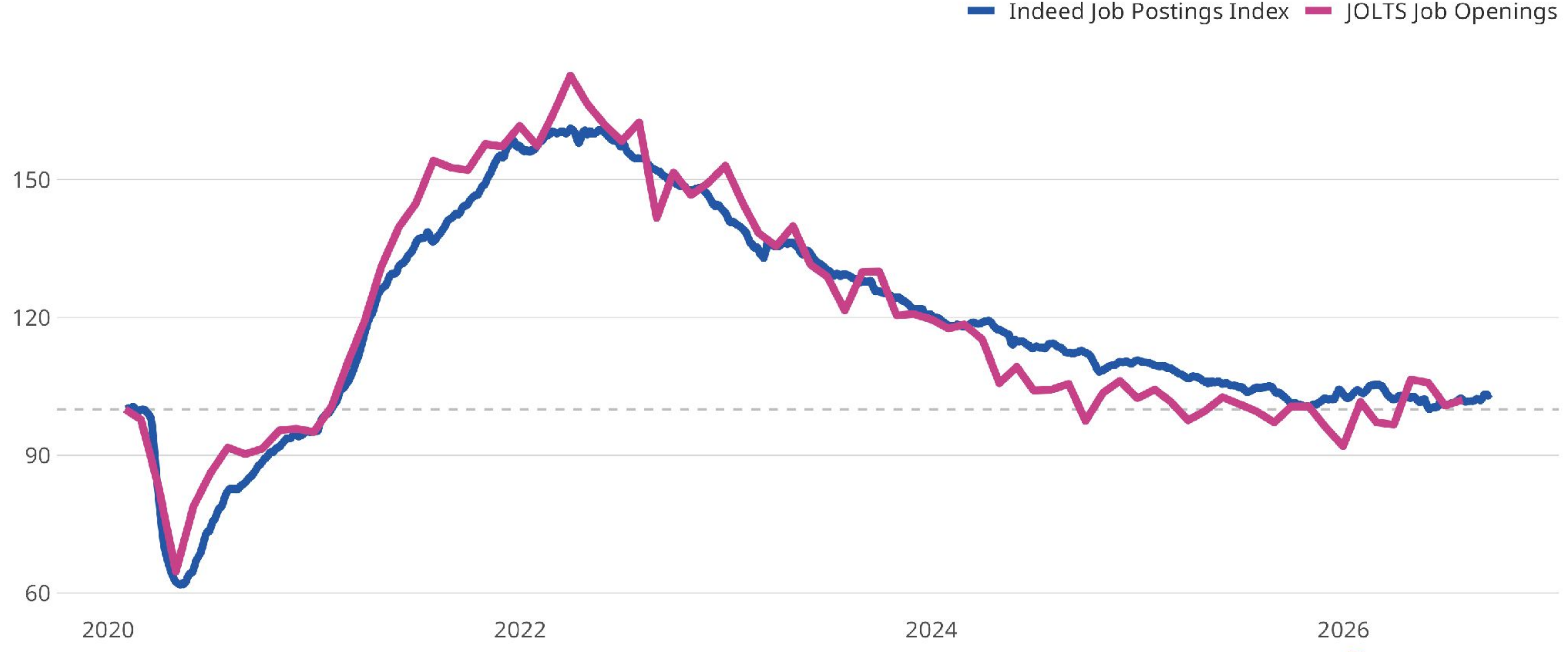
US Job Postings Index by remote-work tier, through September 18, 2026



Source: Indeed

Job openings and postings track each other

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



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics-January 31, 2020 to July 2026
Indeed-January 31, 2020 to September 18, 2026

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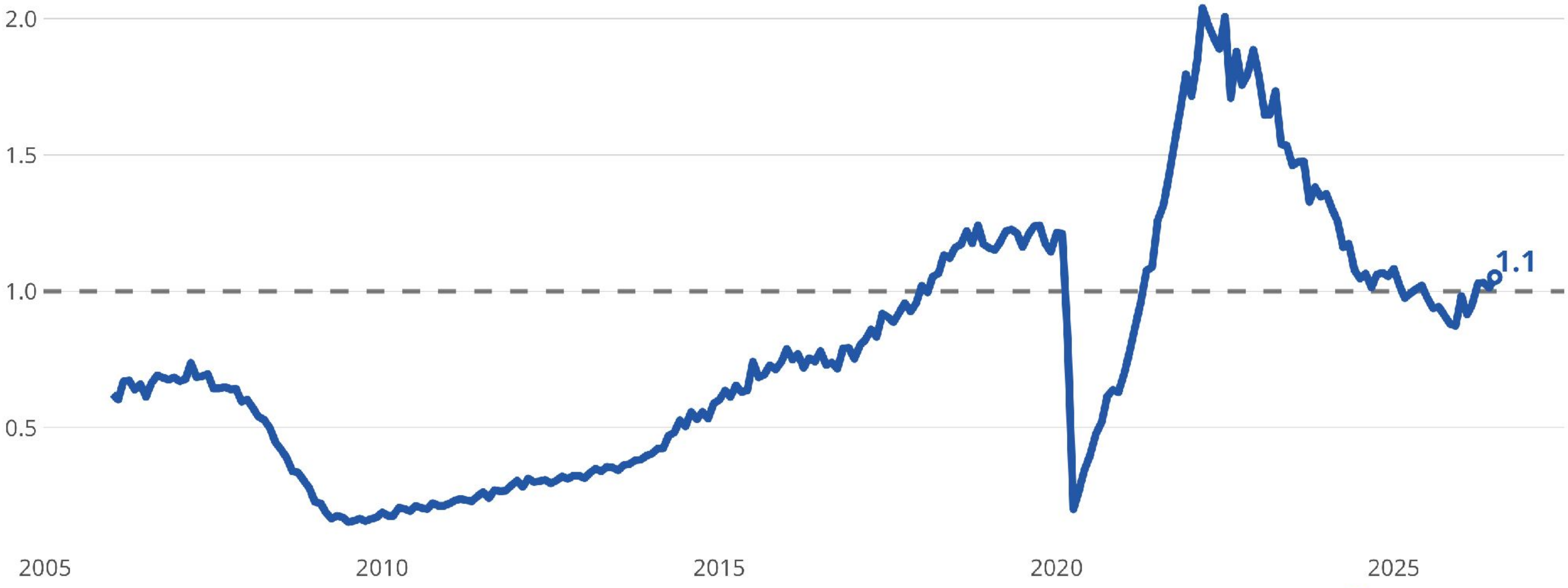
The ratio of openings to unemployment is at parity

Job openings per unemployed worker, U.S. data, January 2019 - July 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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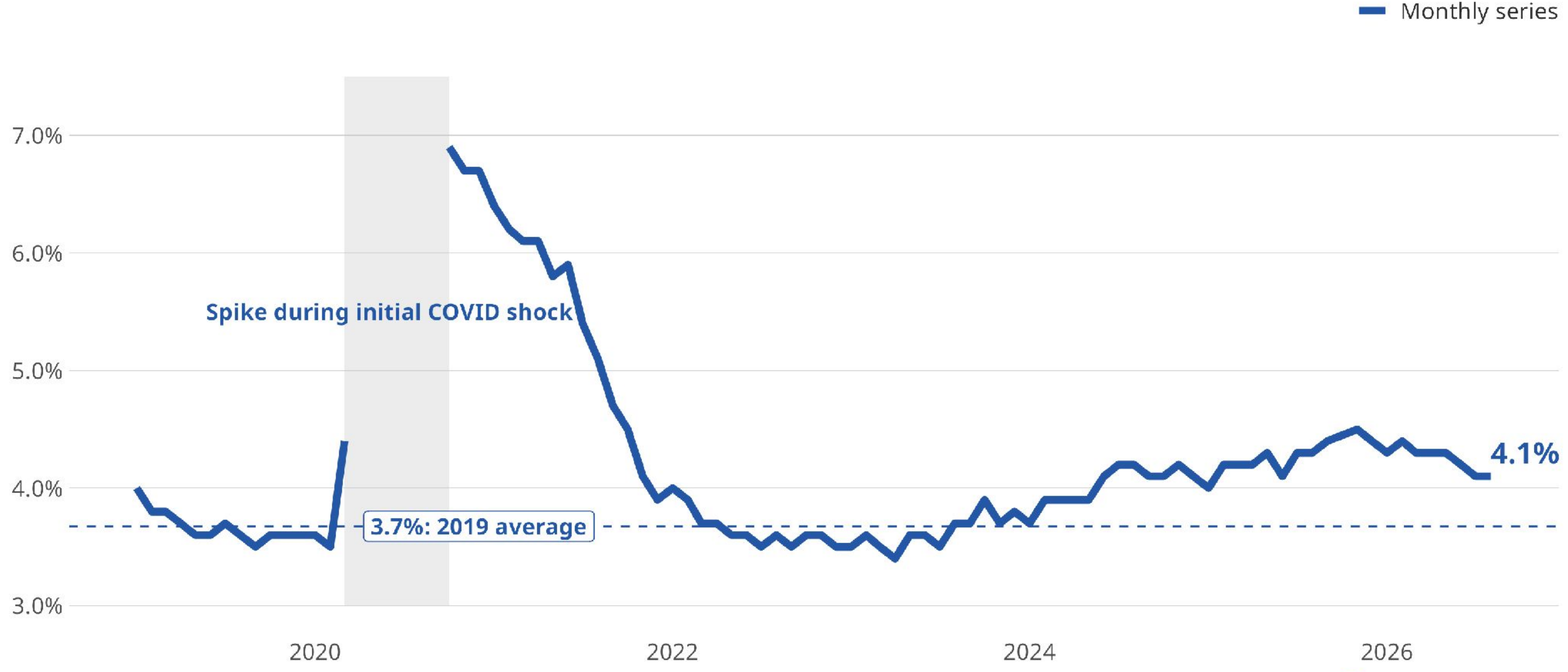
Unemployment moving in the right direction

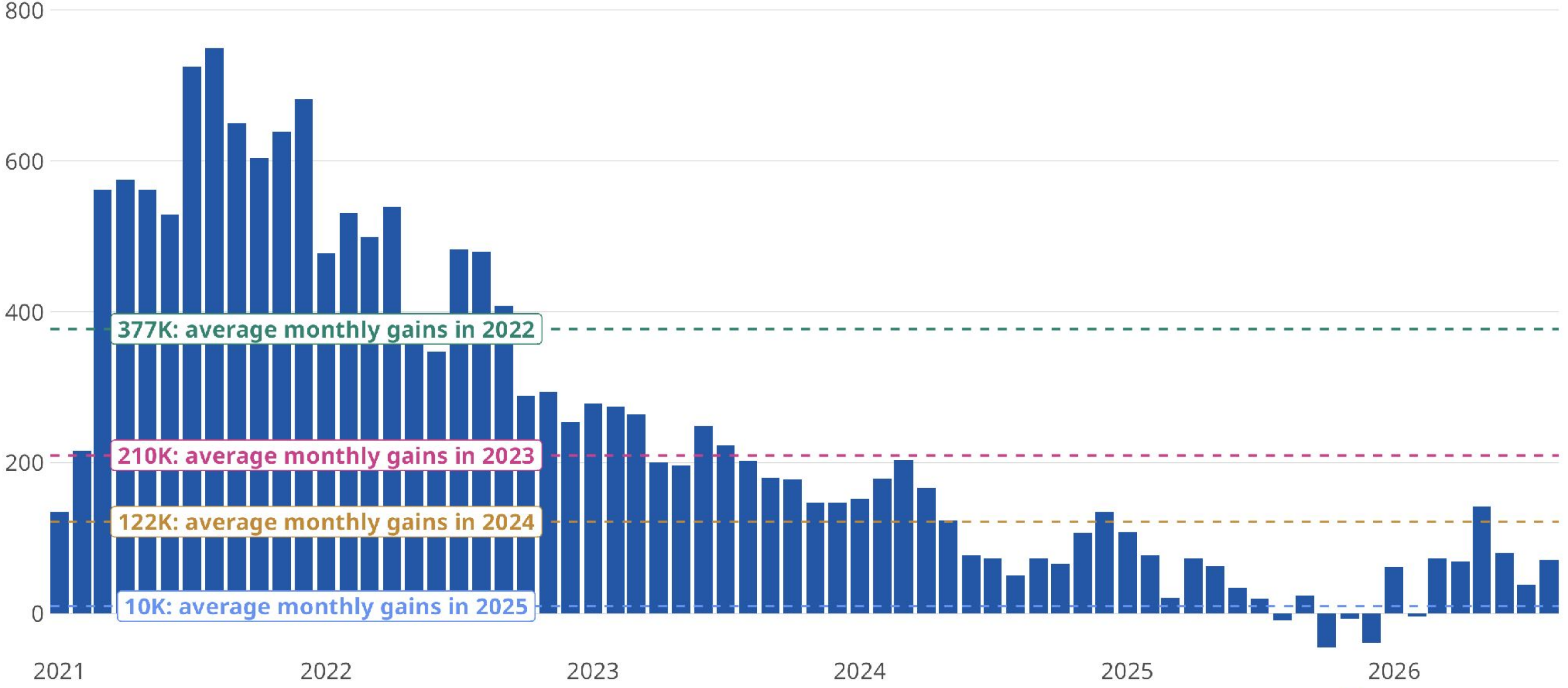
Unemployment in the US as a percentage of labor force, January 2019 - August 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Monthly job gains have picked up recently

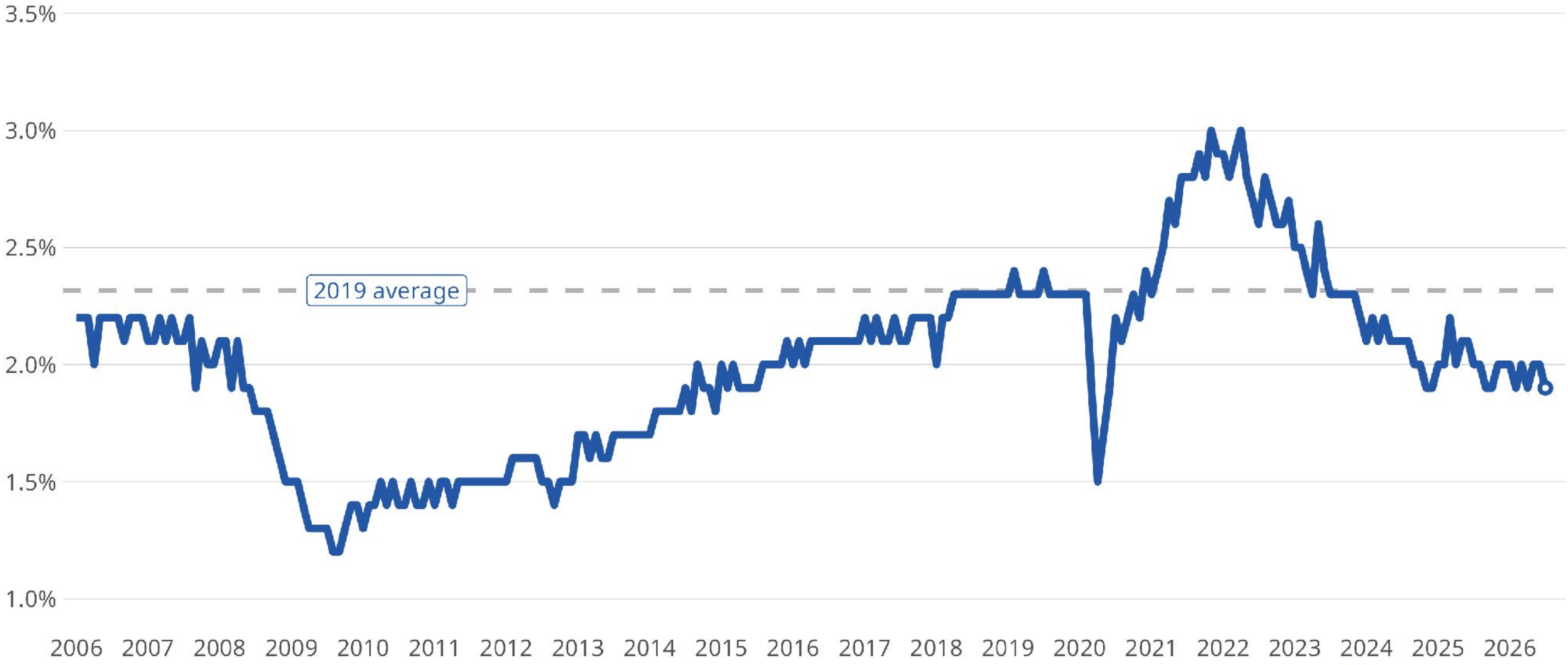
Thousands of jobs (3 month moving average), through August 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

The quits rate is low as workers hold onto their jobs

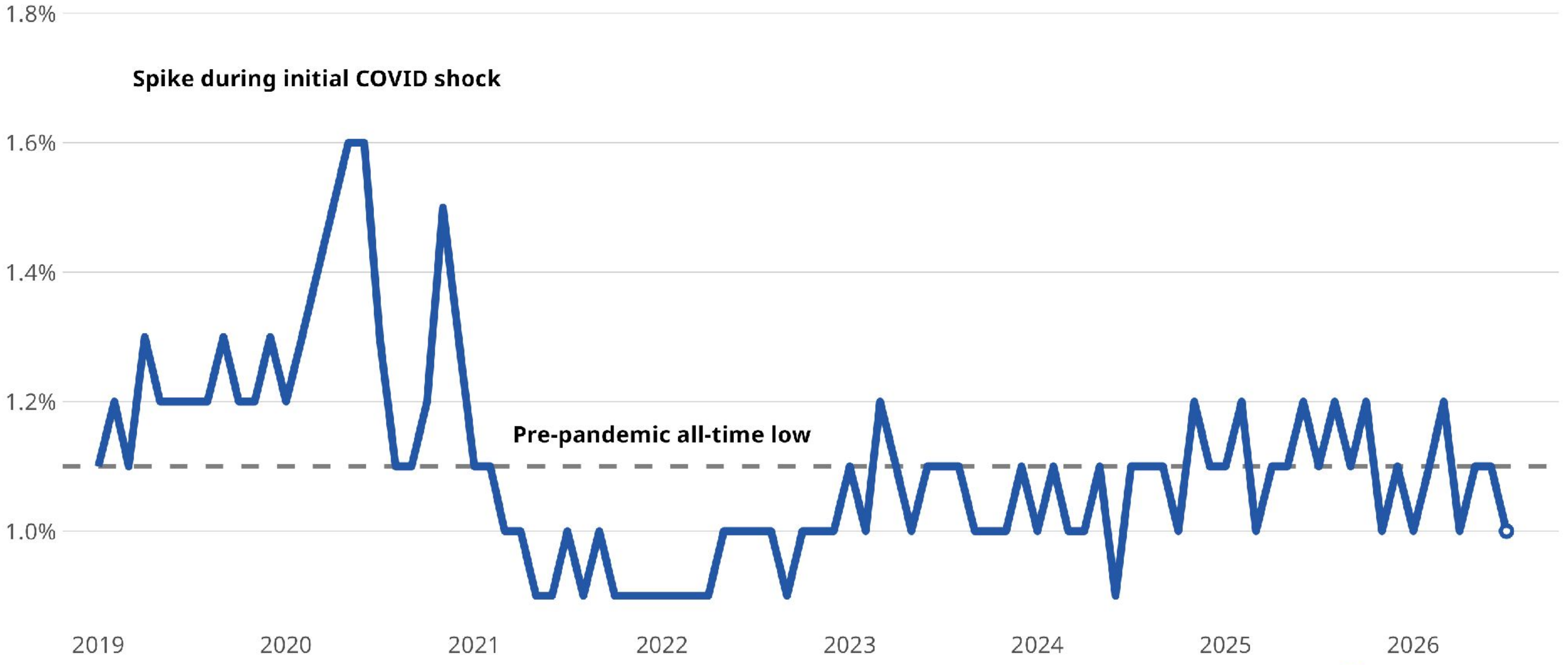
Quits as percentage of employment in US, January 2019 - August 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Layoffs remain low as employers face an uncertain future

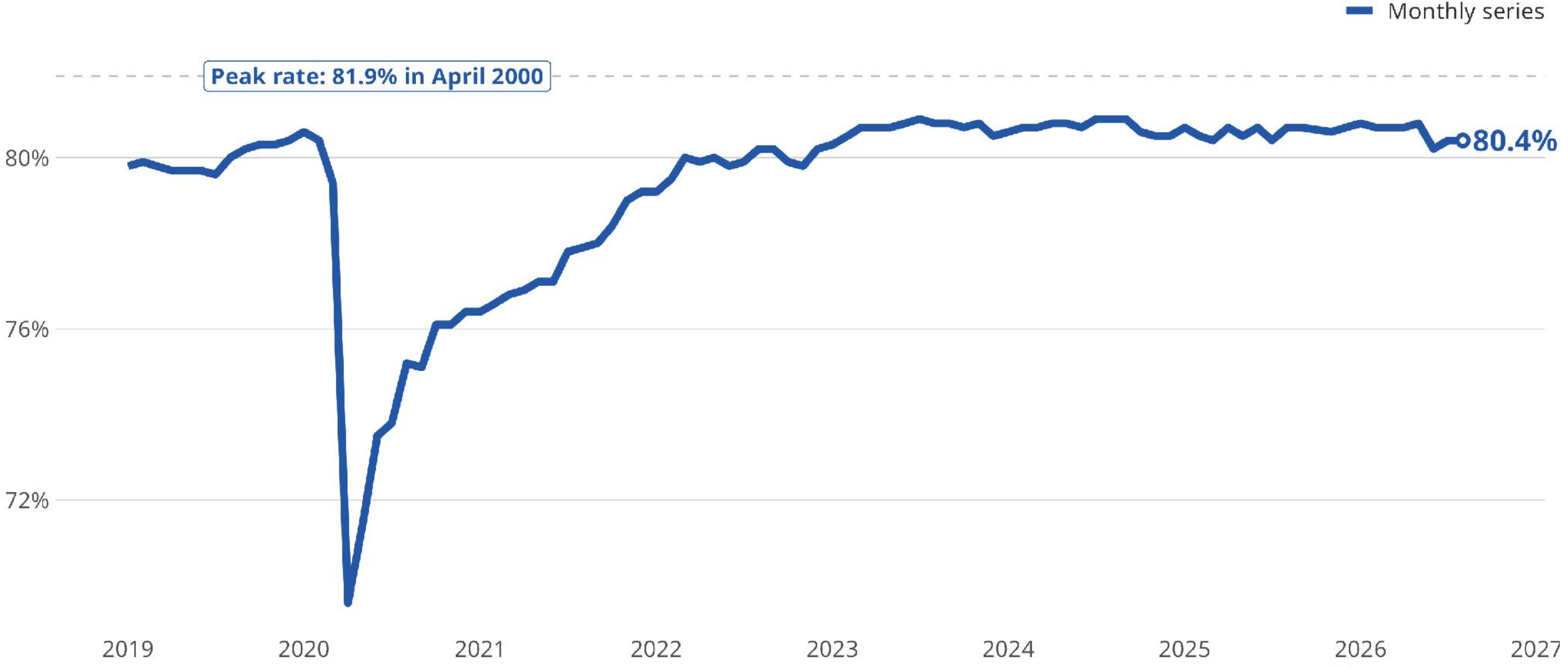
Layoffs and discharges rate in the US, January 2019 - August 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

The prime-age employment rate is plateauing

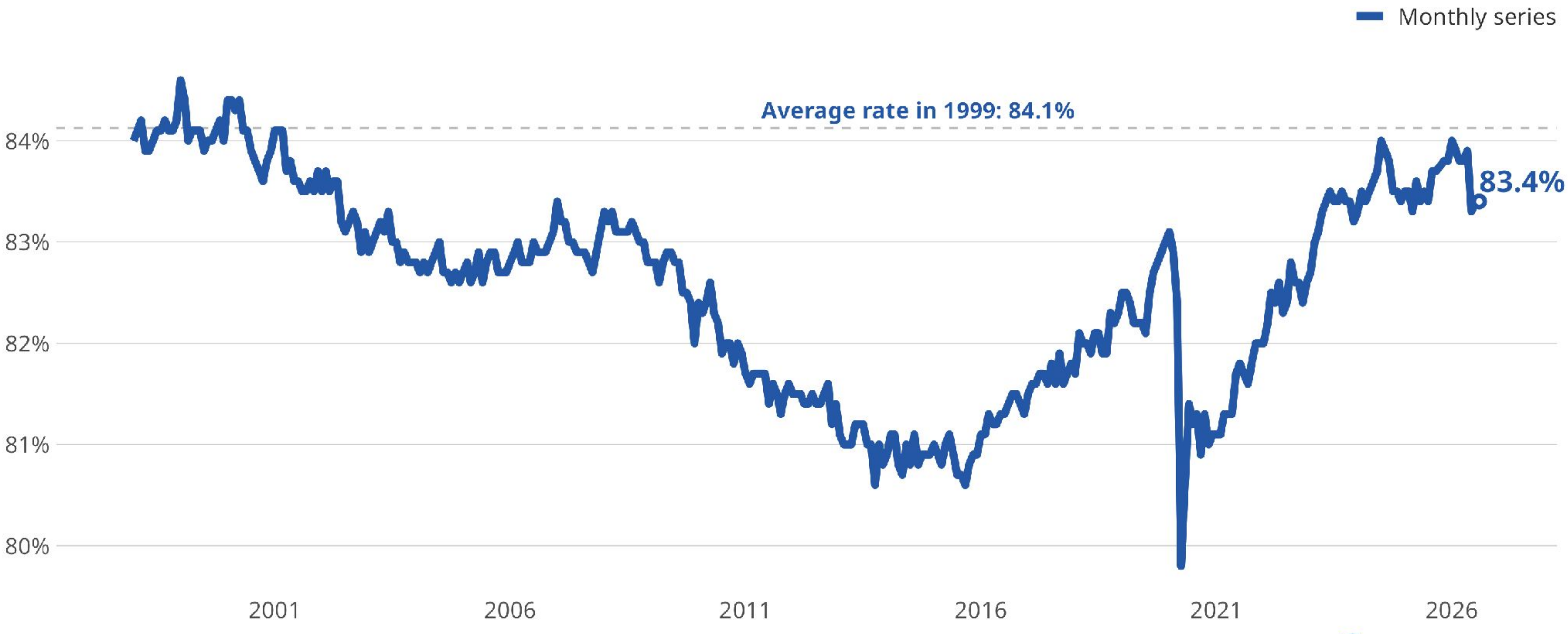
Share of people ages 25 - 54 with a job in the US, January 2019 - August 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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 - August 2026



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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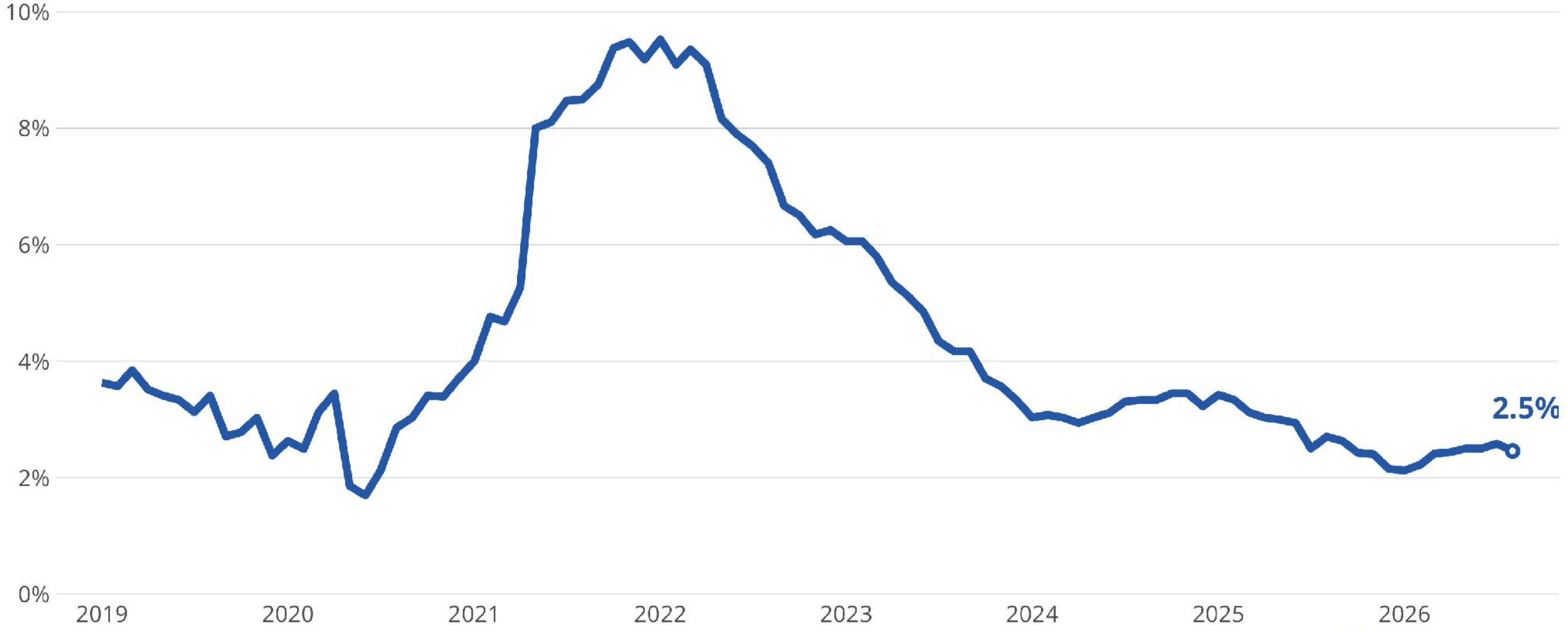
Posted wage growth is slowing

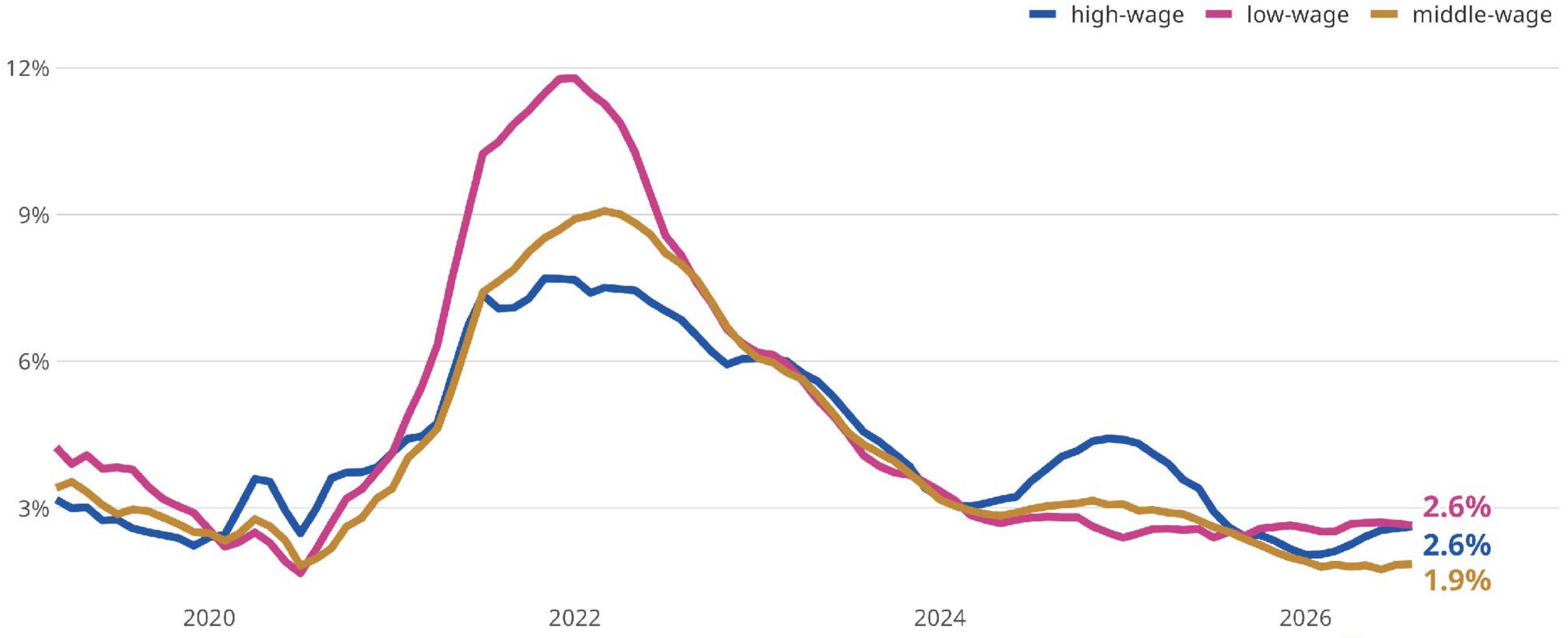
Year-over-year growth in posted wages in the US, through August 2026



Source: Indeed Wage Tracker

Posted wage growth in high-wage occupations is accelerating

Year-over-year growth in posted wages in the US (3-month avg.), through August 2026



Source: Indeed Wage Tracker. Wage tiers based on a category's median posted wage in 2025

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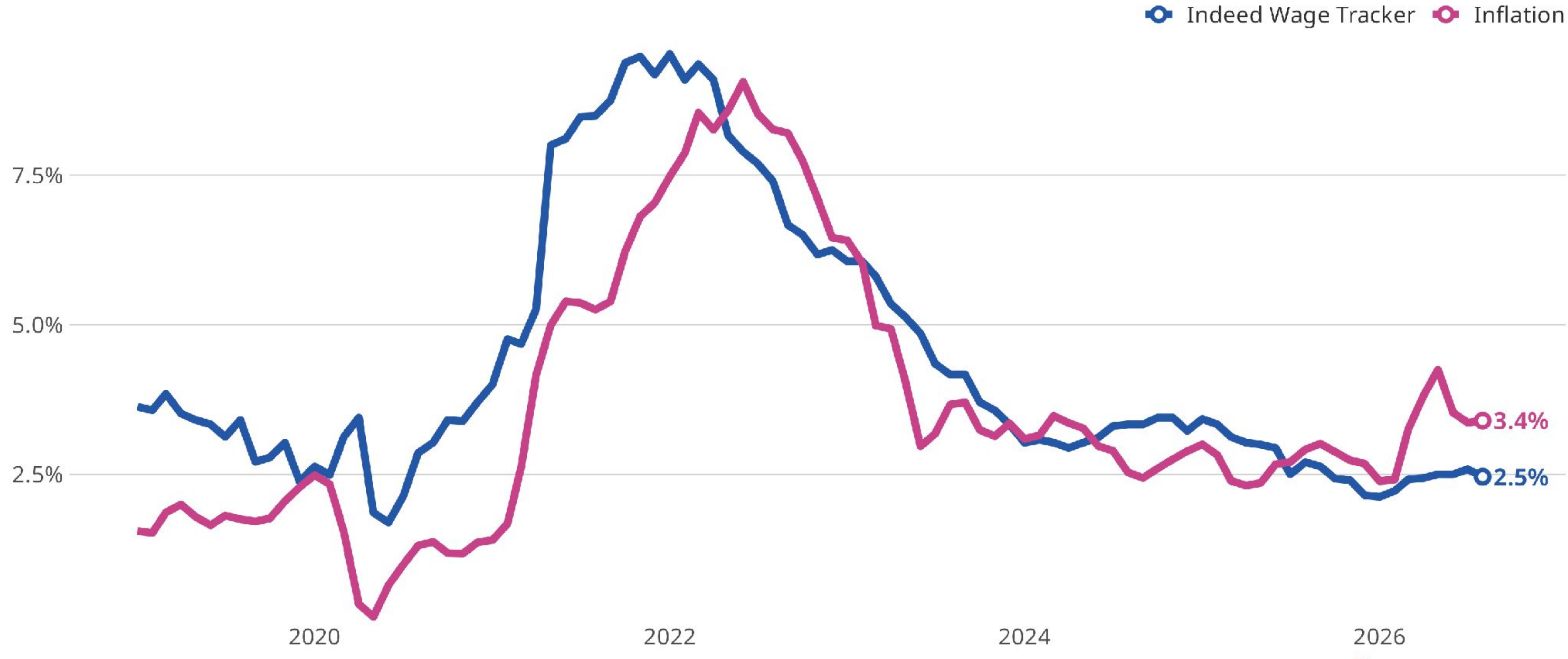
Labor market is not currently a source of inflationary pressure

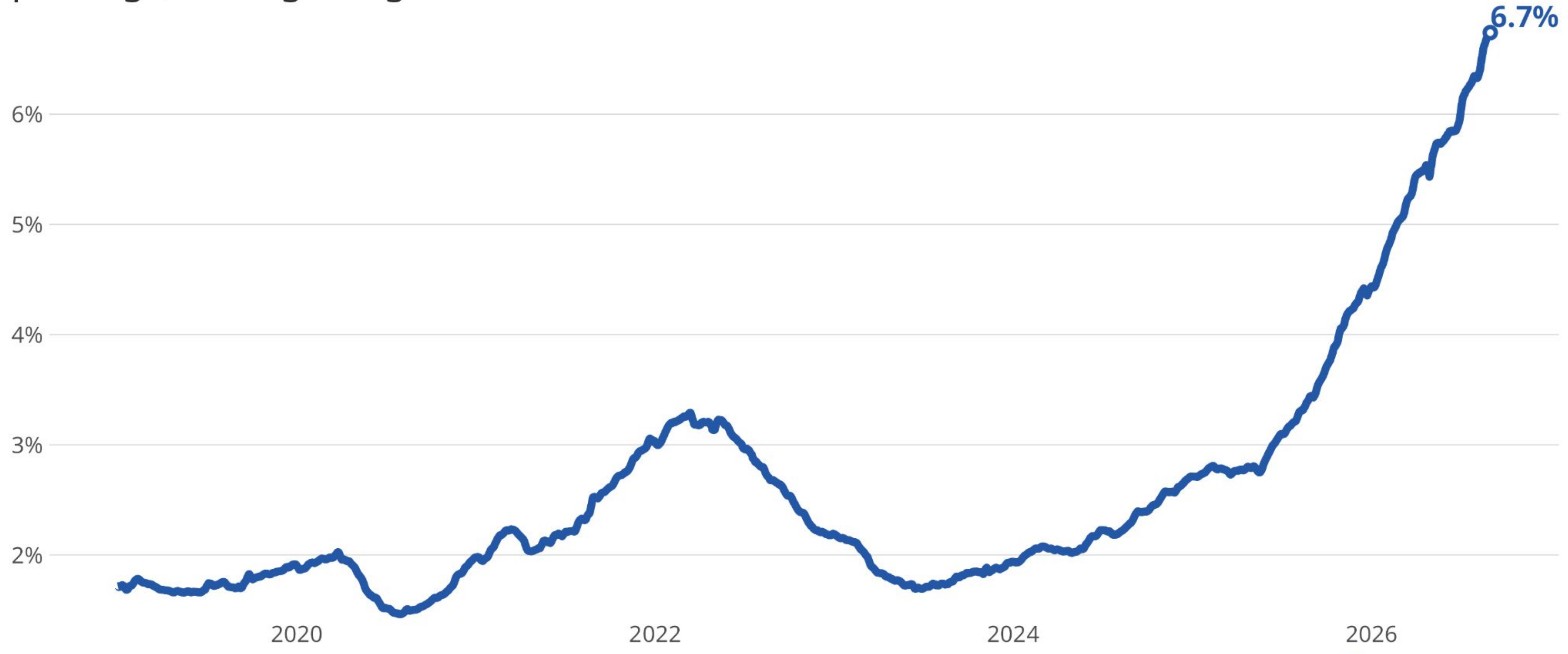
Year-over-year growth, CPI vs Indeed Wage Tracker



Source: Indeed Wage Tracker (January 2019-August 2026),
Consumer Price Index (January 2019-August 2026)

US jobs mentioning AI continue to rise

Job postings on Indeed containing Artificial Intelligence (AI) terms as a share of all US job postings, through August 2026



Source: Indeed