Louisiana Economic Vitals
Friday, August 14, 2026

Pictured: Coca-Cola's Alexandria facility, which has served Central Louisiana for 120 years. The company is investing $106 million to modernize and expand its warehouse and distribution operations with advanced automation designed to improve efficiency, customer order fulfillment and regional distribution capacity. The project is expected to create 50 direct jobs and 84 indirect jobs, for a total of 134 potential new job opportunities in Central Louisiana.

LOUISIANA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PREFACE

Louisiana Economic Vitals is a weekly report prepared by LED's State Economic Competitiveness (SEC) team. This report provides readers with data from federal and state governmental entities, as well as other credible third-party sources. All data has been independently analyzed and summarized to ensure clarity, brevity, and practical utilization.

Louisiana Economic Development August 2026 Announcements:

Building on 120 Years in Central Louisiana, Coca-Cola UNITED Expands Alexandria Operations
August 11th, 2026

From Farmland to Future Business Hub: McLeod Business Park Receives FastSites Investment
August 5th, 2026

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LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LED PROJECT PIPELINE

Since Governor Landry took office in January 2024, LED has announced 108 projects representing over $150.6 billion USD in new investment and more than 16,230 direct new jobs across Louisiana.

As of August 13, 2026, LED is actively tracking and involved in 220 distinct projects with a combined value exceeding $323.5 billion and the potential to create more than 47,045 direct new jobs.

CERTIFIED SITE PROGRAM

Since the launch of its Certified Sites Program, LED has certified 171 industrial sites, with all or portions of 43 sites advancing into active commerce. At full build-out, these projects represent more than $40.2 billion in capital investment, over 7,140 direct new jobs, and more than $468 million in total annual wages statewide. Currently, there are 132 actively marketed certified sites across every region of Louisiana.

Active Certified Sites by Region

Acadiana	30
Bayou	6
Capital	23
Central	9
Northeast	14
Northwest	18
Southeast	18
Southwest	14
TOTAL	132

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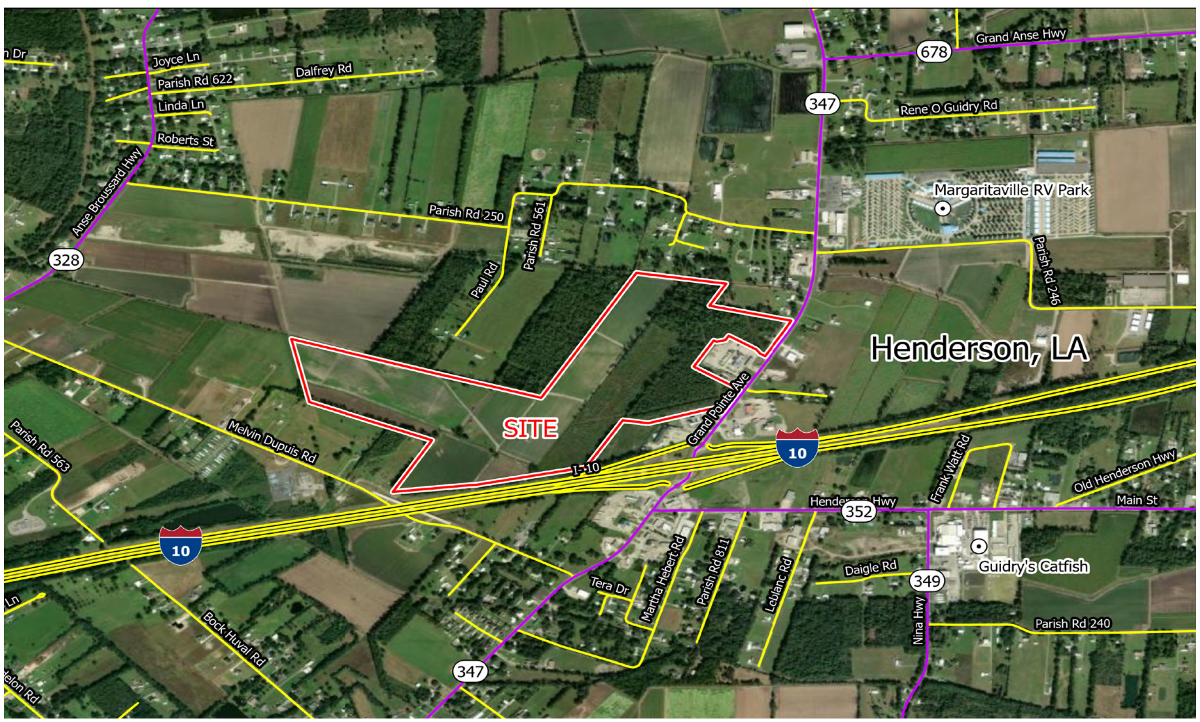
CERTIFIED SITE SPOTLIGHT

Henderson I-10 Site

One Acadiana, Regional Partners Announce Nearly 143 Acre Site Certified for Development in St. Martin Parish

Key Takeaways

- The Henderson I-10 Site adds nearly 143 acres of development-ready land to Louisiana's portfolio, strengthening St. Martin Parish and Acadiana's ability to compete for major industrial investment.
- Located directly along I-10 between Lafayette and Baton Rouge, offering strong connectivity to regional markets and infrastructure.
- The site is within 40 miles of major port facilities, strengthening its appeal for manufacturing, logistics and industrial projects.
- Becomes St. Martin Parish's 7th LED Certified Site, expanding the parish's portfolio of ready-to-develop properties.
- Brings Acadiana's total to 36 certified sites and more than 3,000 acres available for economic development.
- The certification reflects collaboration among LED, One Acadiana, St. Martin Economic Development Authority, Entergy and the Town of Henderson.



Sources: Louisiana Site Selection Center & One Acadiana

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1. LABOR MARKET ACTIVITY

The following charts show two complementary views of nonfarm employment across Louisiana's metro areas: the upper charts index employment to January 2024 levels to show how employment levels have evolved over time, while the lower charts show BLS's three-month average employment change to illustrate the direction and pace of recent employment changes. Note: June 2026 data are preliminary; data are seasonally adjusted. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, State and Area Employment, Hours, and Earnings.

Source: bls.gov

Key Takeaways

- Employment is above its January 2024 level in most Louisiana metros.
- Lafayette, Slidell–Mandeville–Covington, and Lake Charles show some of the strongest sustained employment growth.
- The latest three-month average changes in employment are positive in several areas—including Lafayette, Monroe, New Orleans–Metairie, Shreveport–Bossier City, and Slidell–Mandeville–Covington.
- Unemployment claims remain below their August 2025 levels despite a recent increase.

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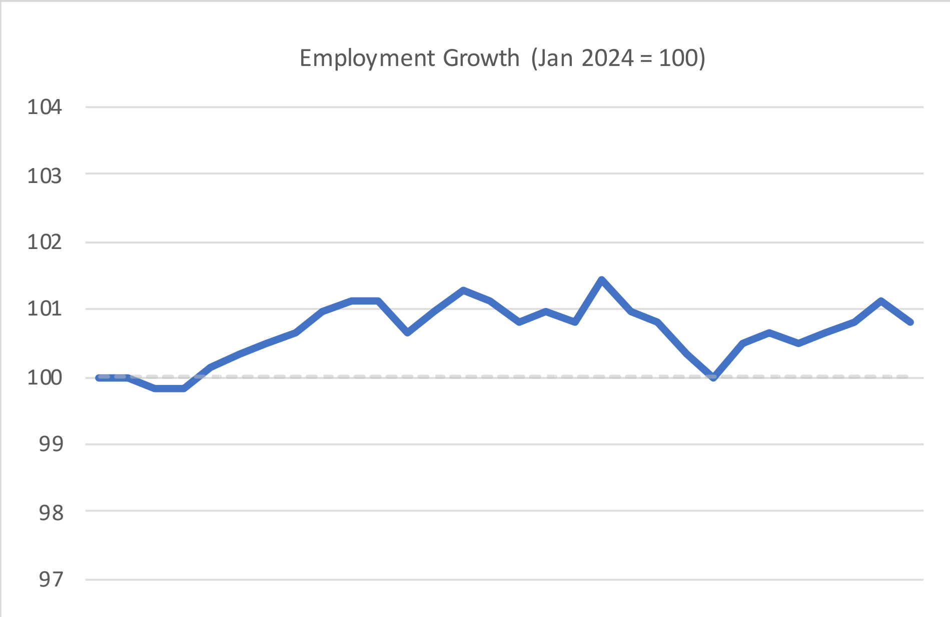
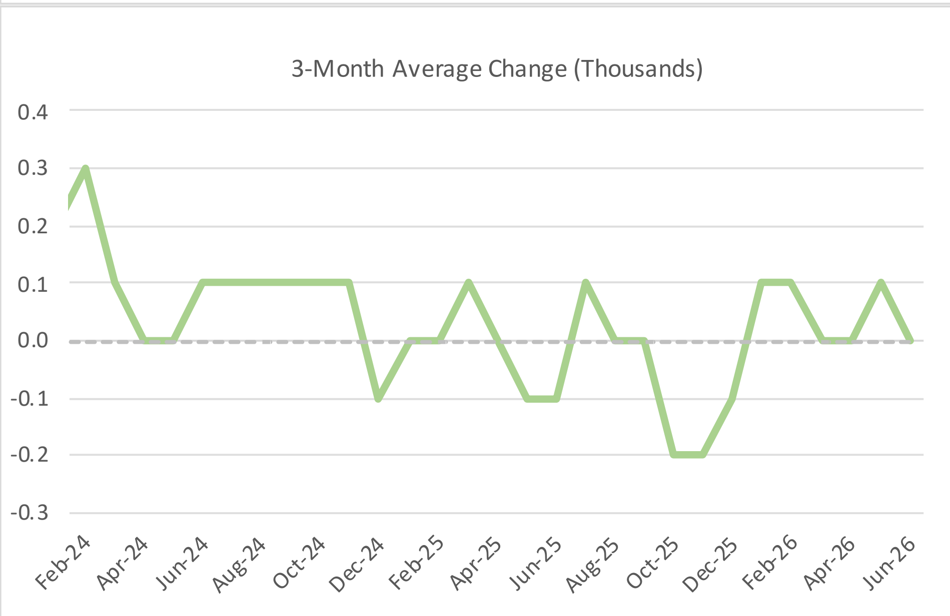
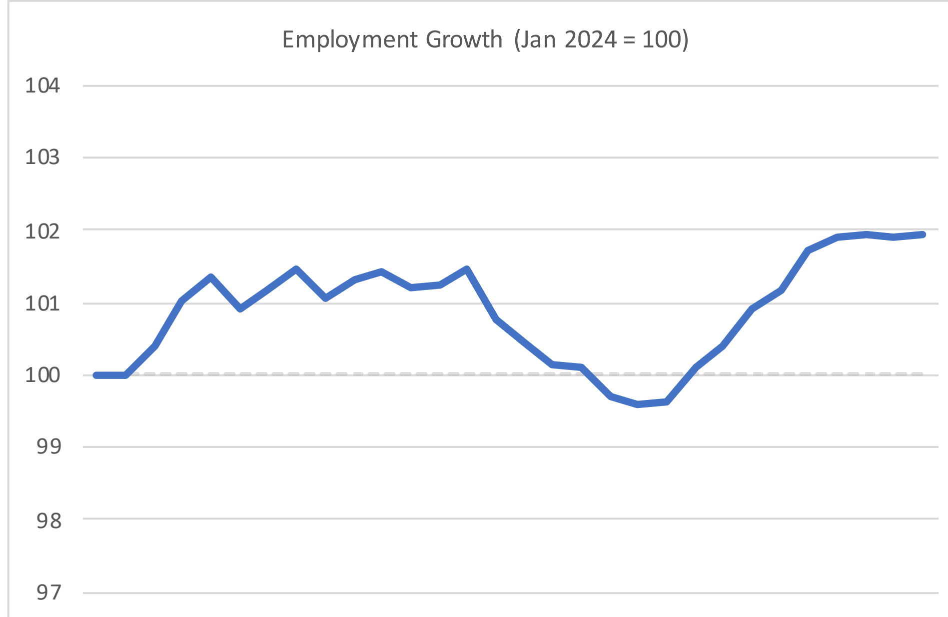
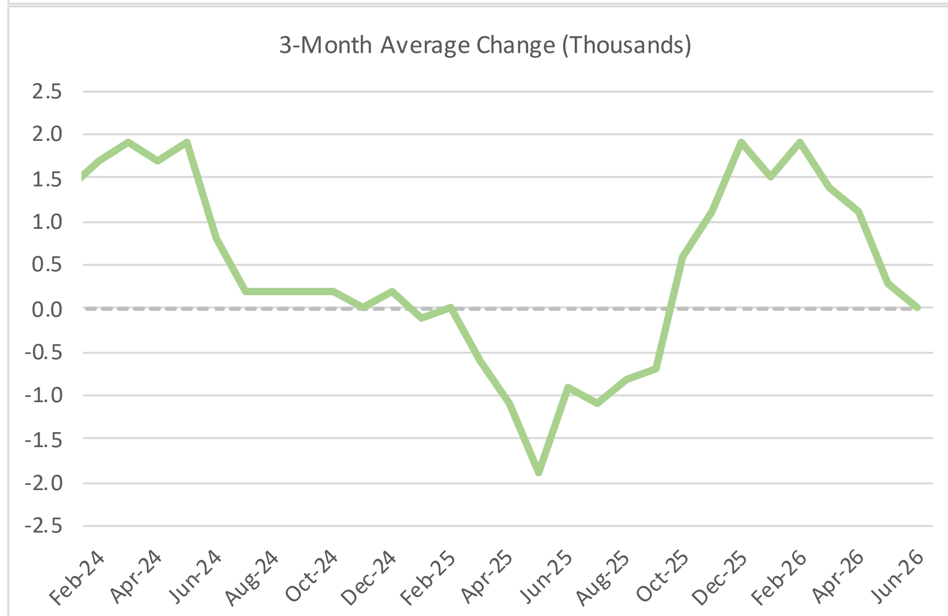
Alexandria Metro Nonfarm Employment





Baton Rouge Metro Nonfarm Employment





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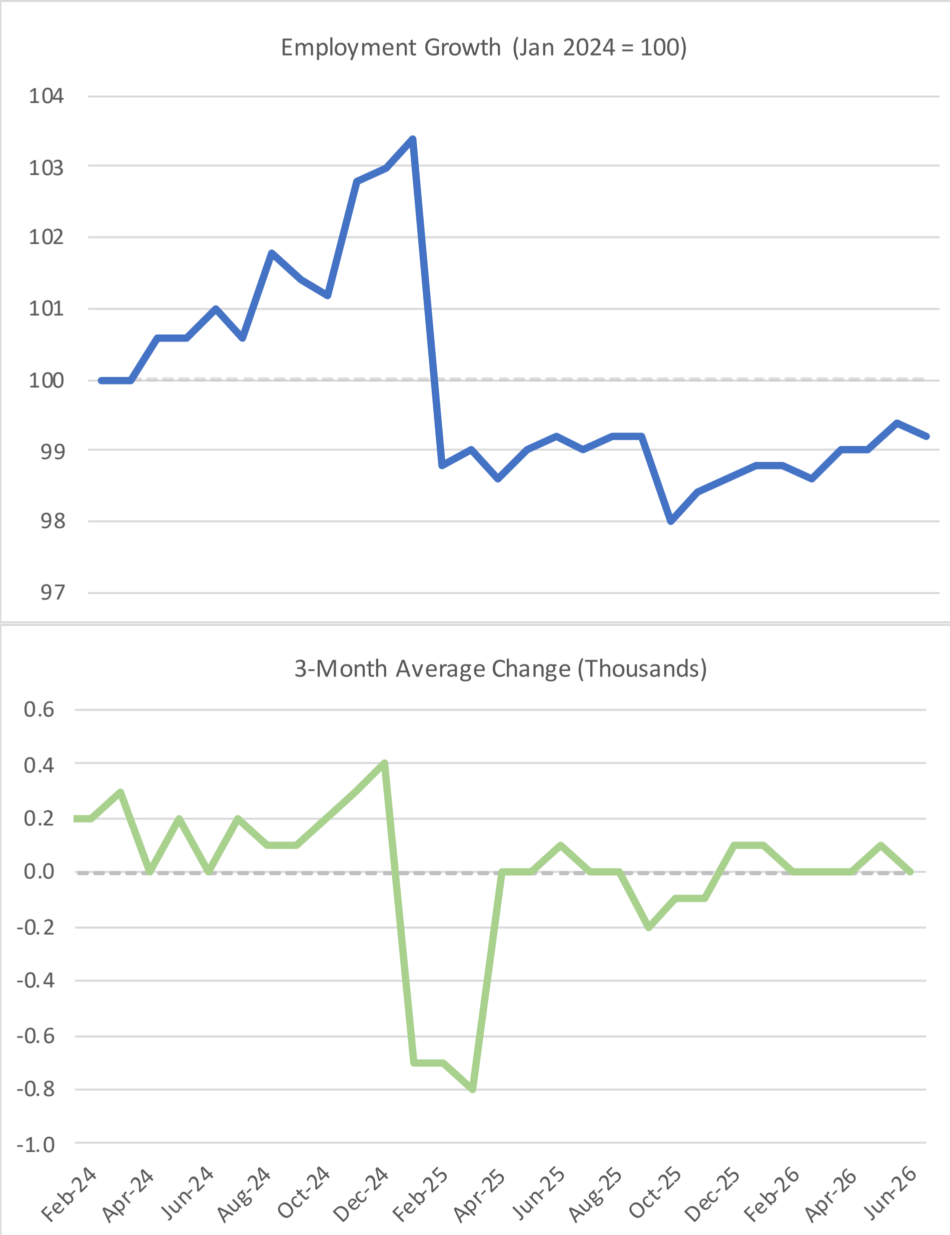
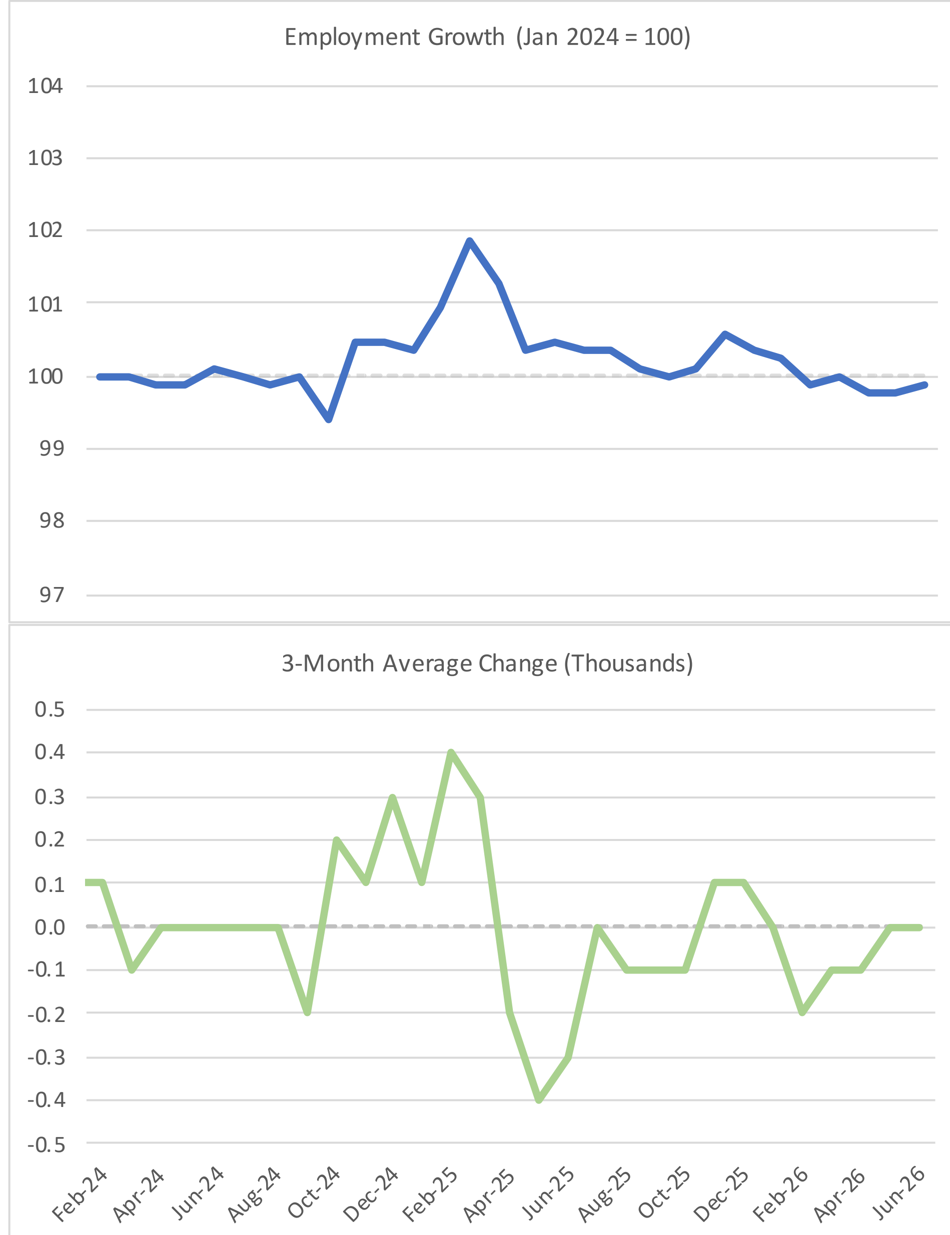
Hammond Metro Nonfarm Employment



Houma Metro Nonfarm Employment



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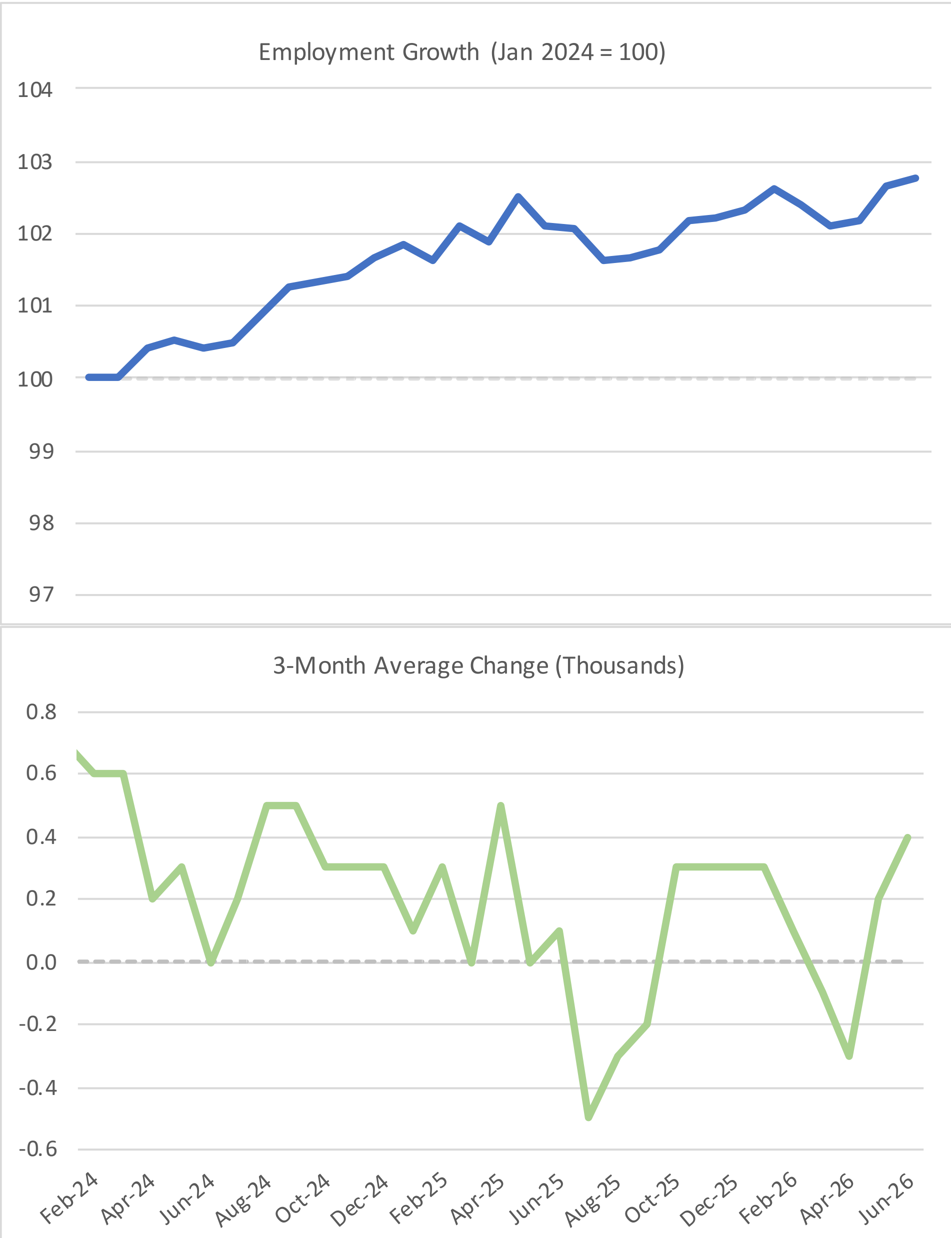
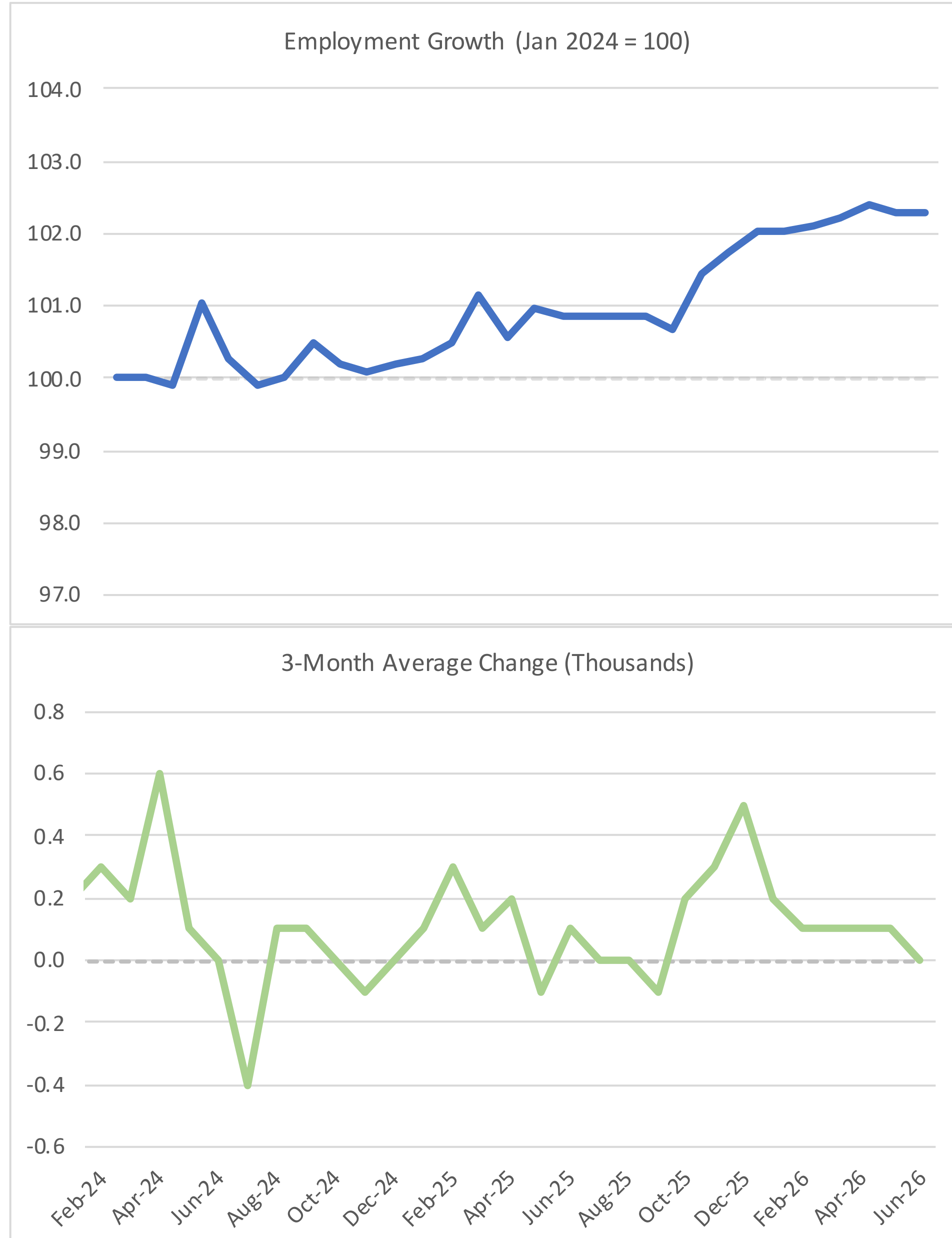
Lafayette Metro Nonfarm Employment



Lake Charles Metro Nonfarm Employment



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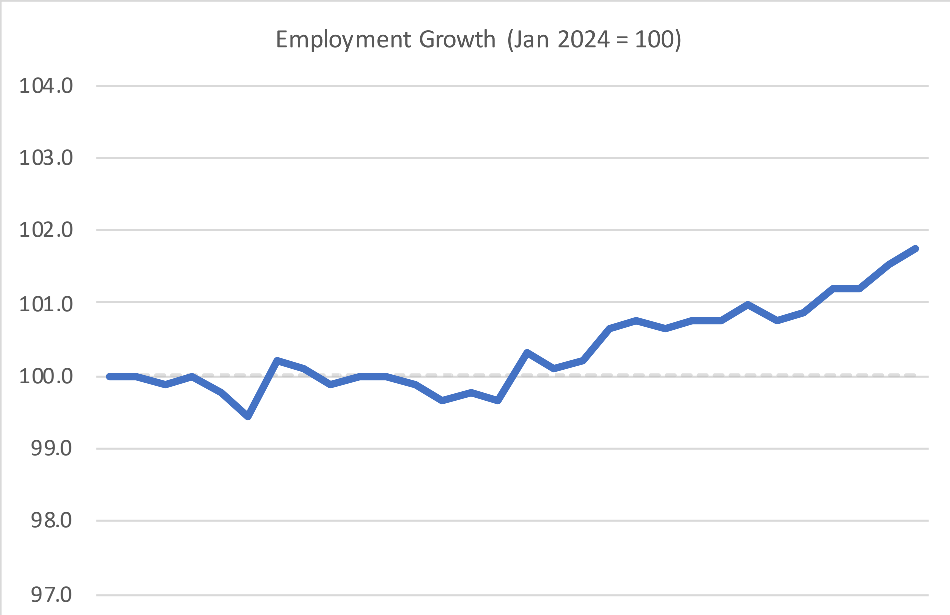
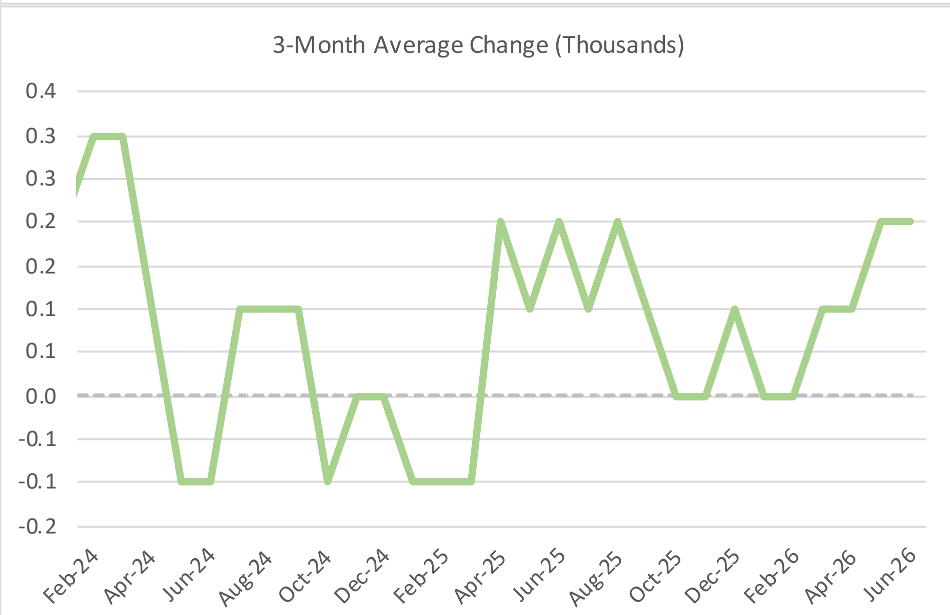
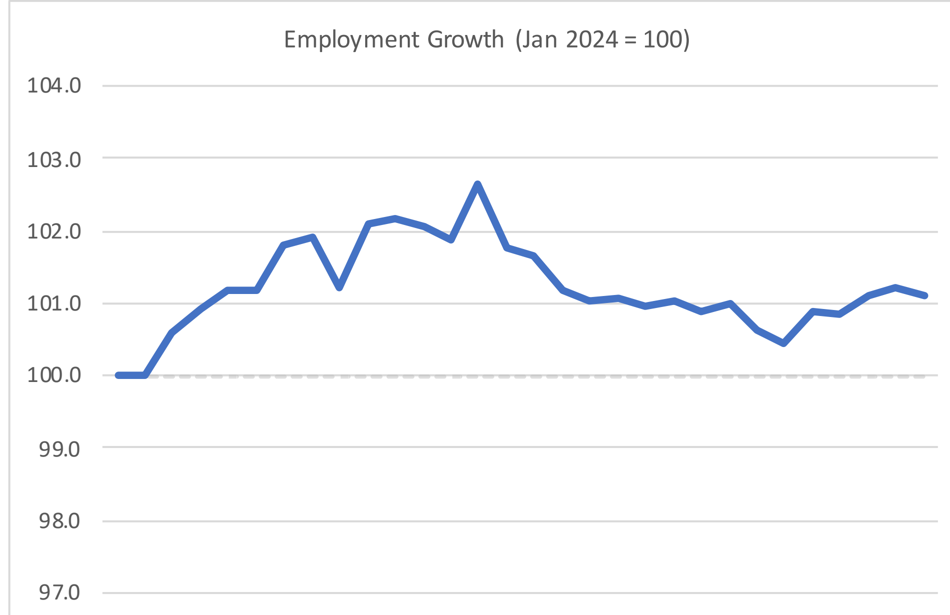
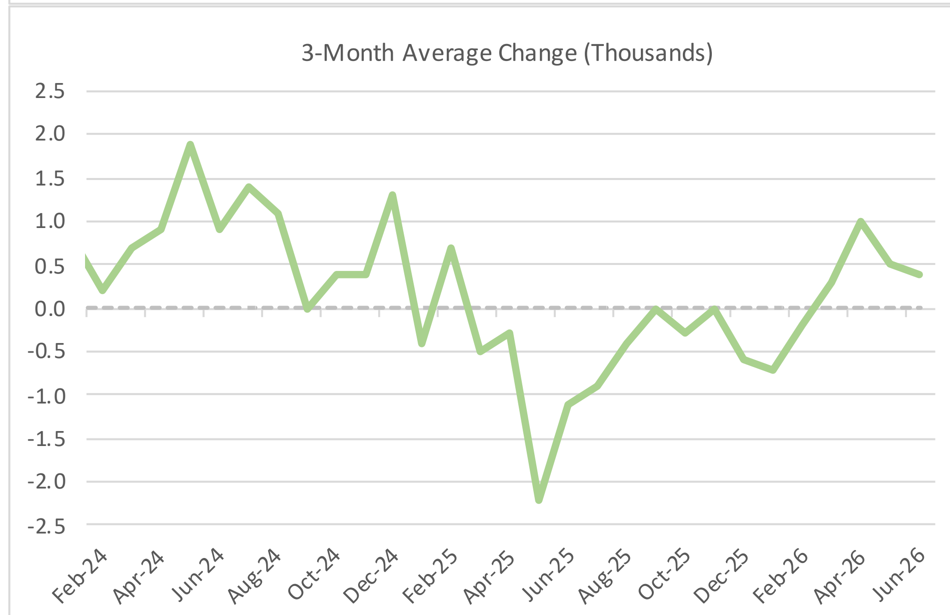
Monroe Metro Nonfarm Employment





New Orleans-Metairie Metro Nonfarm Employment





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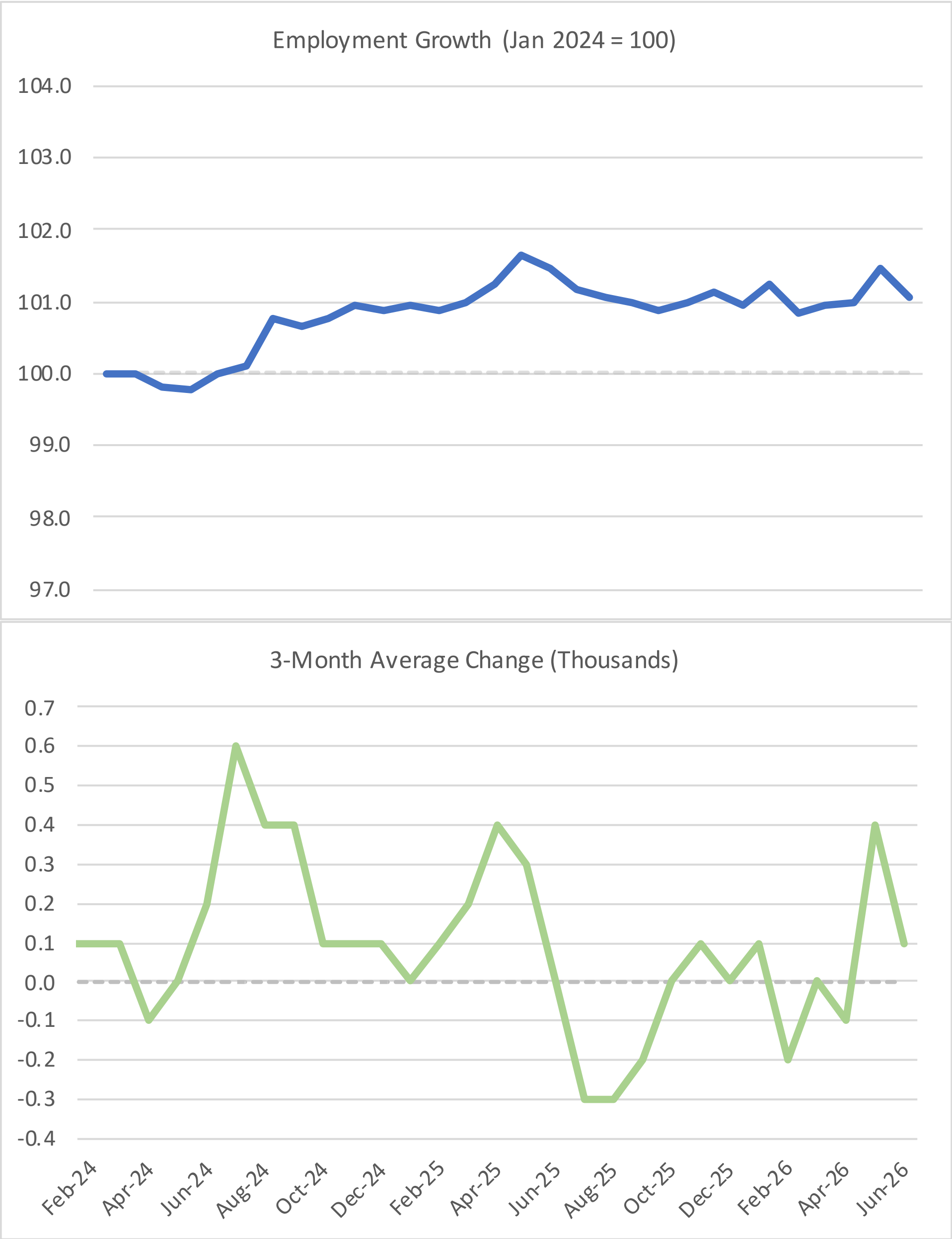
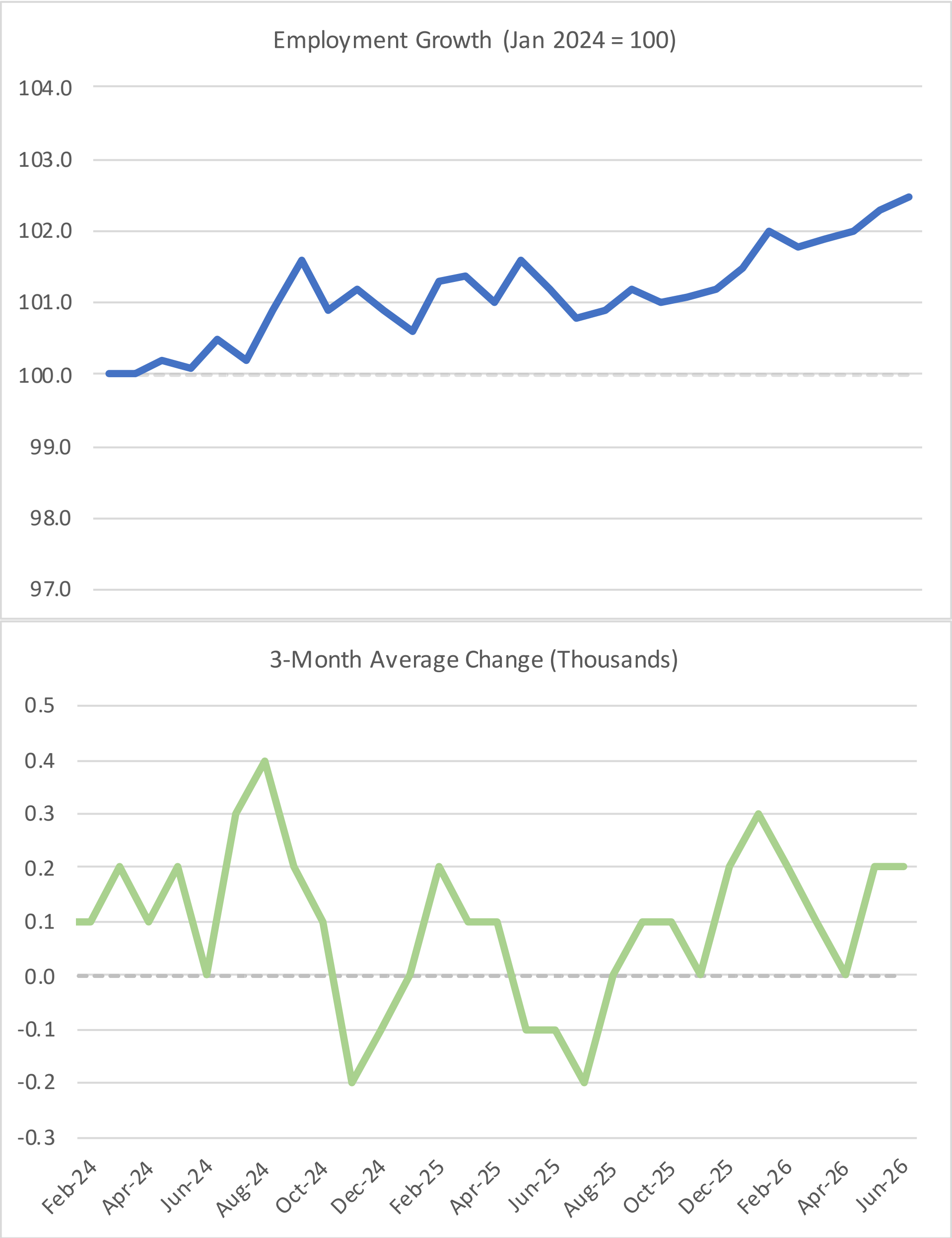
Shreveport-Bossier City Metro Nonfarm Employment



Slidell-Mandeville-Covington Metro Nonfarm Employment



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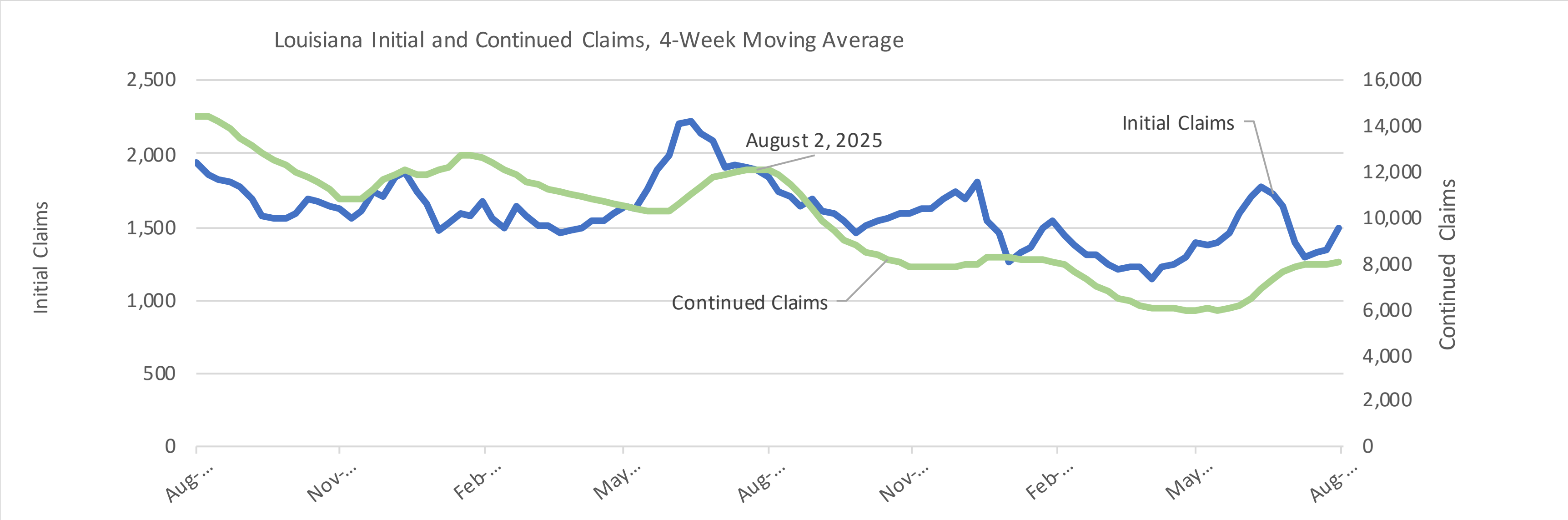
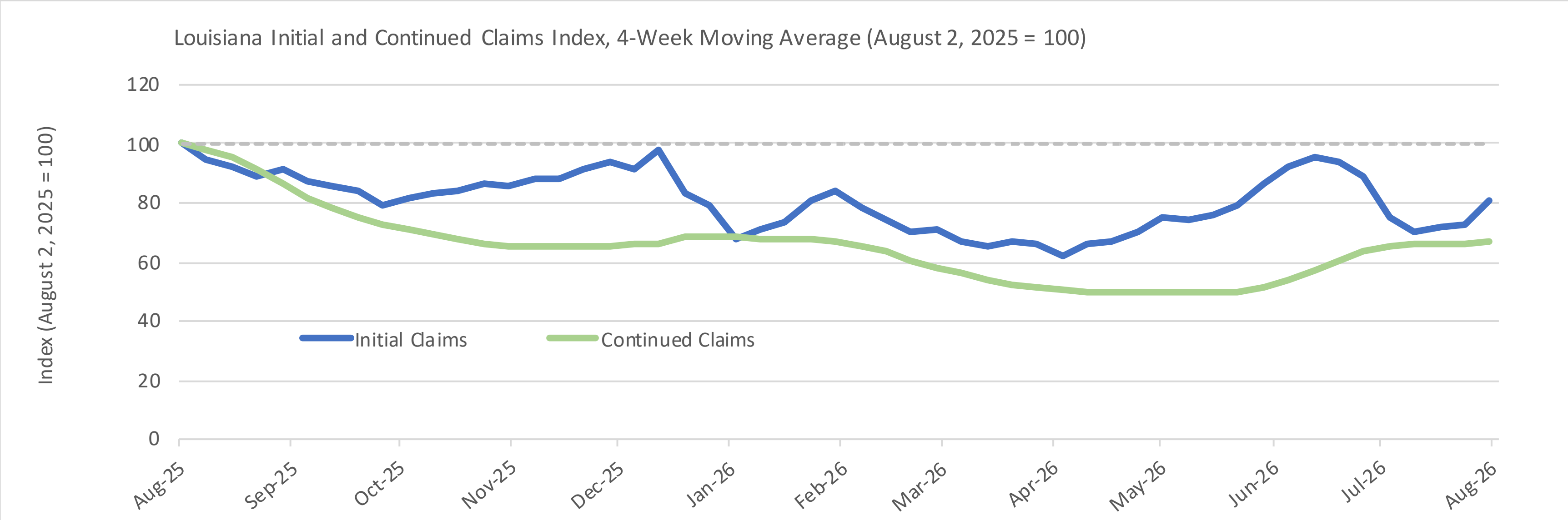
LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The charts below provide two views of unemployment insurance claims in Louisiana. The first shows four-week moving averages for initial and continued claims, smoothing weekly fluctuations to illustrate changes over time. The second indexes both measures to August 2, 2025, allowing their relative changes over the past year to be compared on a common scale.

Source: laworks.net





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2. COMMODITIES

The following tables (1 & 2) provide data on the weekly prices of energy and agricultural commodities, reflecting the broader economic performance of these sectors.

The spot price is the price for immediate delivery, as agreed right now in the market. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude spot price is for delivery at Cushing, Oklahoma, a pipeline hub. WTI is a light, sweet (low sulfur) crude and is the primary U.S. benchmark. It is landlocked at Cushing. The Brent Crude spot price refers to crude loaded onto tankers at offshore terminals in the North Sea (originally from the Brent oilfield, a blend of several North Sea crudes). Because it is seaborne, it more directly reflects the global market price. The Henry Hub Natural Gas spot price is for natural gas delivered at the Henry Hub pipeline interchange in Louisiana, the largest natural gas trading hub in North America. The U.S. regular conventional gasoline price is the retail price paid at the pump, including taxes, based on a weekly survey of retail stations across the country. It covers regular grade - lowest octane - and does not include reformulated gasoline areas.

Sources: eia.gov & tradingeconomics.com

Key Takeaways

- Energy prices remain elevated relative to pre-conflict levels, despite substantial volatility.
- Oil prices have pulled back recently but remain well above year-ago levels.
- Agricultural commodity prices are mixed, with several major crops showing strong year-over-year gains.
- Shorter-term movements for Ag commodity prices are also uneven, indicating that recent commodity-price pressures are not broad-based.

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LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Table 1. Energy Commodities, Weekly							
					Change		
Commodity	8/7/26	7/31/26	7/10/26	8/8/25	WoW	MoM	YoY
Brent Crude Oil Price	$87.86	$91.63	$73.33	$68.17	-4.1%	19.8%	28.9%
WTI Crude Oil Price	$78.94	$84.51	$72.26	$65.75	-6.6%	9.2%	20.1%
Henry Hub Natural Gas Spot Price	$2.66	$2.62	$3.09	$2.99	1.5%	-13.9%	-11.0%
U.S. Regular Conventional Gas Price	$3.86	$3.94	$3.73	$3.02	-2.0%	3.5%	28.0%

Table 2. Agricultural Commodities, Daily Period of August 13, 2026							
				Change			
Commodity	Listed Price	Dollar ($)	Unit of Measurement	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	YoY
Soybeans	$1,167.48	$11.67	$/Bu	0.2%	0.9%	-2.1%	15.9%
Wheat	$652.03	$6.52	$/Bu	-0.03%	3.3%	1.1%	29.5%
Lumber	$563.69	$5.64	$/MBF	-2.1%	-2.5%	-11.0%	-8.0%
Palm Oil	$4,724.00	$47.24	$/MT	0.6%	0.8%	3.3%	7.2%
Sugar (No. 11)	$16.75	$0.17	$/Lb	2.0%	7.6%	12.6%	1.0%
Coffee	$312.49	$3.12	$/Lb	-2.3%	2.0%	-4.3%	-4.4%
Corn	$448.23	$4.48	$/Bu	-2.0%	2.1%	2.2%	19.5%
Rice	$14.13	$0.14	$/CWT	1.7%	-0.4%	2.6%	10.5%
Orange Juice	$139.31	$1.39	$/Lb	1.0%	-8.0%	-0.7%	-44.1%

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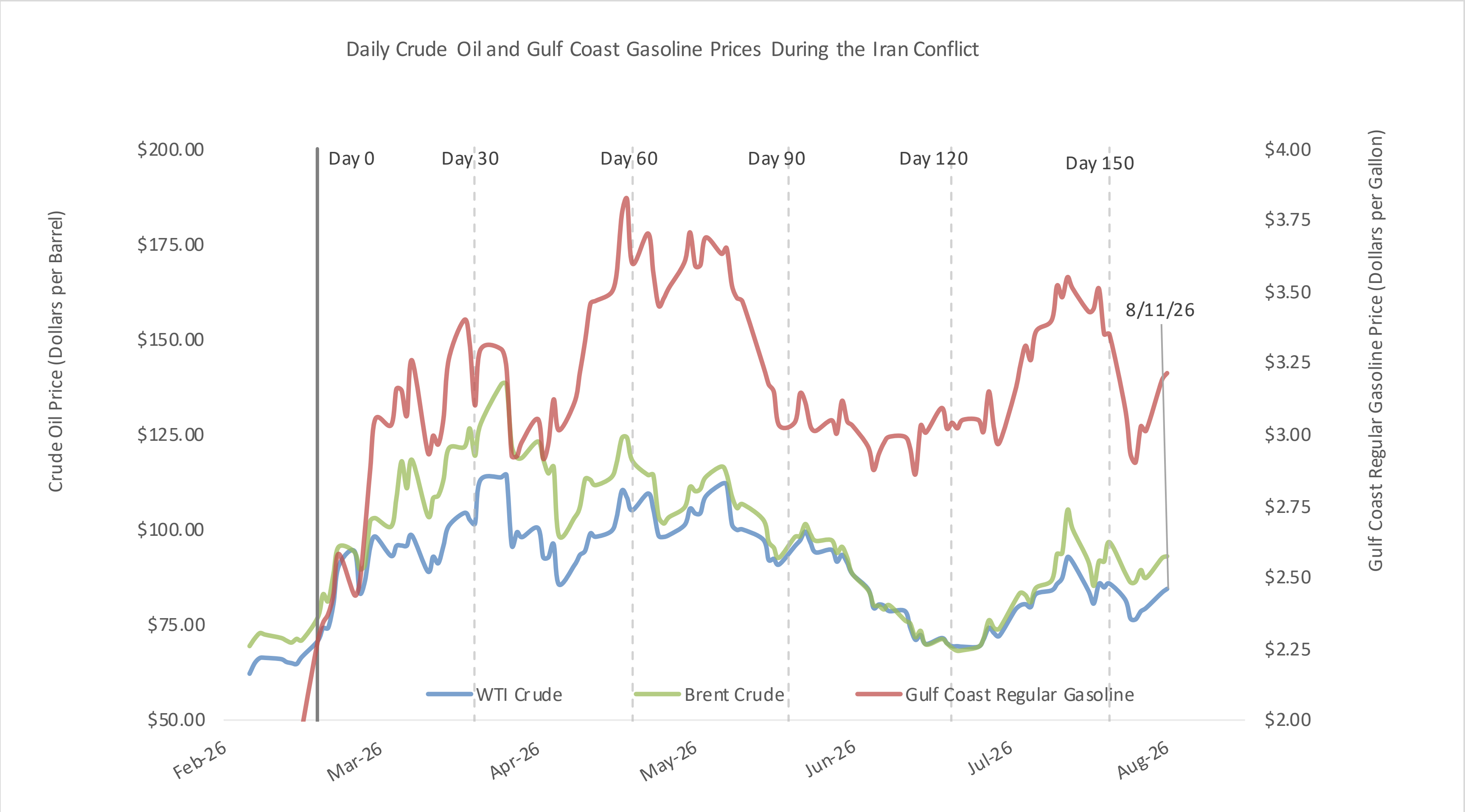
The following figure displays the daily prices of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil, Brent crude oil, and U.S. Gulf Coast regular gasoline from February 17 through August 10, 2026. Vertical reference lines denote the onset of the conflict (Day 0) and the 30-day incremental milestones used to illustrate the evolution of energy prices over the fivemonths following the event.



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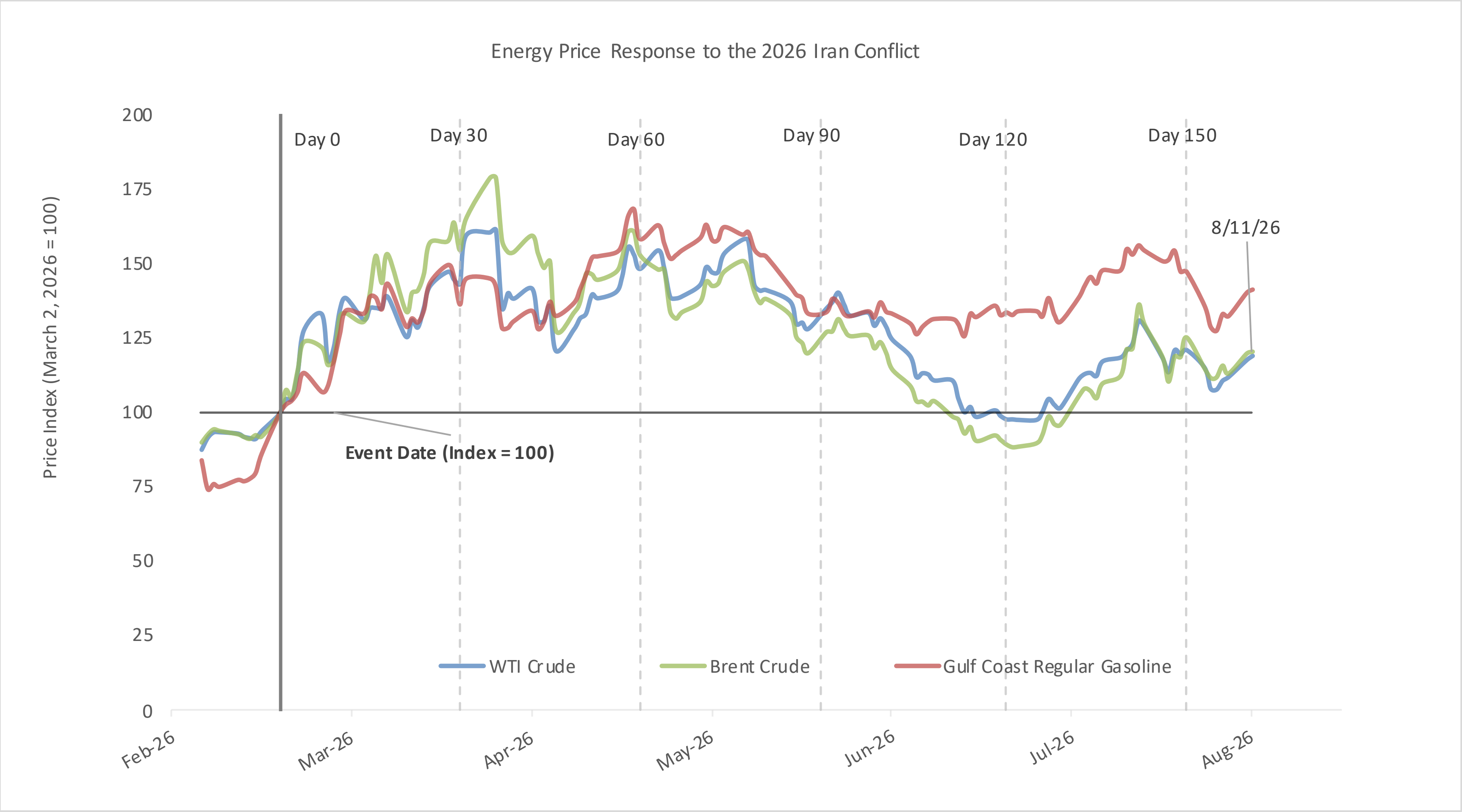
The following figure presents the same daily energy price series indexed to their March 2, 2026 values (March 2, 2026 = 100). Indexing each series to a common baseline facilitates comparison of the relative changes in WTI crude oil, Brent crude oil, and U.S. Gulf Coast regular gasoline prices during the period following the onset of the conflict.



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3. CPI AND INFLATION

The Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) tracks the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a basket of goods and services. It's one of the most widely used indicators of inflation in the United States. The following table presents the seasonally adjusted (SA) monthly rate of change for 2026 in the cost of the basket in addition to subsets of the basket through July, as well as the annual percentage-change in the basket price (not seasonally adjusted - NSA).

Source: bls.gov

Key Takeaways

- Headline inflation remained subdued in July, while underlying inflation firmed modestly.
- The gap between headline and core inflation remains notable.
- Transportation and energy-related costs feature prominently among the largest year-over-year increases.
- Some categories experienced sizable increases over both time horizons.

Table 3. Percent Changes in CPI-U for All Urban Consumers, U.S. City Average

Category	Changes From Preceding Month (%, SA)			Jun 2025- Jul 2026 (%, NSA)
	Jan-26	Feb-26	May-26	
All Items (Headline)	0.2	0.3	0.5	3.4
All Items Less Food and Energy (Core CPI)	0.3	0.2	0.2	2.5
Medical Care Services	0.3	0.6	0.5	2.7

Note: Not Seasonally Adjusted. Base Period: 1982-84=100.

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The tables below highlight the detailed CPI categories with the largest price increases in July 2026. The first ranks categories by their one-month change from June to July, while the second ranks categories by their year-over-year change from July 2025 to July 2026. Changes are not seasonally adjusted.

Table 4. Largest Monthly Price Increases — July 2026 (NSA)	
Category	**June 2026 to July 2026**
Video discs and other media	7.2%
Motor oil, coolant, and fluids	5.5%
Recreational books	4.9%
Jewelry	3.7%
Watches	3.6%
Computers, peripherals, and smart home assistants	3.5%
Fresh cakes and cupcakes	2.8%
Car and truck rental	2.8%
Oranges, including tangerines	2.7%
Vehicle accessories other than tires	2.5%

Table 5. Largest Year-over-Year Price Increases — July 2026 (NSA)	
Category	**June 2026 to July 2026**
Airline fares	25.5%
Motor fuel	24.8%
Fuel oil and other fuels	22.4%
Computer software and accessories	21.2%
Public transportation	16.1%
Instant coffee	15.8%
Jewelry	15.2%
Uncooked beef roasts	13.5%
Subscription and rental of video and video games	13.4%
Postage	13.3%

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August

2026

Economic Calendar

The *Louisiana Economic Vitals* economic calendar provides insights into upcoming events and data releases. It includes information on national economic indicators, such as GDP, employment figures, inflation rates, and central bank meetings in addition to state and local data.
Links to sources are included.

The August calendar will be revised when dates for additional data are announced.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 *ISM PMI Manufacturing* *[July]* *Construction Spending* *[June]*	4 *Manufacturing - New Orders* *[June]*	5 *ISM PMI Services* *[July]*	6 *Wholesale Inventory* *[June]*	7 *Employment Situation* *[July]*	8
9	10	11 *NFIB Small Business Report* *[July]*	12 *CPI* *[July]* *Real Earnings* *[July]* *Business Applications* *[July]* *Federal Budget* *[July]*	13 *PPI* *[July]*	14 *Retail & Food Sales* *[July Advance]*	15
16	17 *NAHB HMI* *[August]*	18 *Housing Starts* *[July]* *Pending Home Sales* *[July]* *U.S. Import & Export PI* *[July]* *Industrial Production* *[July]* *New Residential Sales* *[July]*	19	20	21 *State Employment* *[July]*	22
23	24	25 *The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index* *[August]*	26 *Manufacturing - New Orders* *[July Advance]* *GDP* *[2026:Q2, 2nd Estimate]*	27	28	29
30	31					