

Walker County

Labor Market Information

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Walker County's unemployment rate was 4.8 percent in August 2026, down 0.1 percentage point from one year earlier. The county's rate remained above both the Texas rate of 4.6 percent and the U.S. rate of 4.3 percent.

Walker County payroll employment declined by 29 jobs (0.1 percent) during the first quarter of 2026, a smaller decrease than the county's historical average first-quarter decline of 0.7 percent. Seven of the 11 major industry sectors lost jobs during the quarter. The largest declines occurred in:

Leisure and Hospitality: -88 jobs (-3.3 percent)

Information: -42 jobs (-31.6 percent)

Construction: -40 jobs (-4.3 percent)

The Information sector's percentage decline was substantial, although its effect on total employment was limited by the sector's relatively small size.

Public Administration recorded the largest quarterly gain, adding 132 jobs (1.0 percent). This increase was driven by State Government, which added 255 jobs (2.3 percent), while a loss of 127 jobs (5.2 percent) in Local Government limited the sector's overall growth.

On a year-over-year basis, Walker County added 551 jobs (2.1 percent) between the first quarters of 2025 and 2026. Six of the 11 major industry sectors posted annual gains. Public Administration led the expansion, adding 598 jobs (4.5 percent), primarily because of a gain of 512 jobs (4.7 percent) in State Government. Among private-sector industries, Education and Health Services recorded the only substantial increase, adding 117 jobs (5.3 percent).

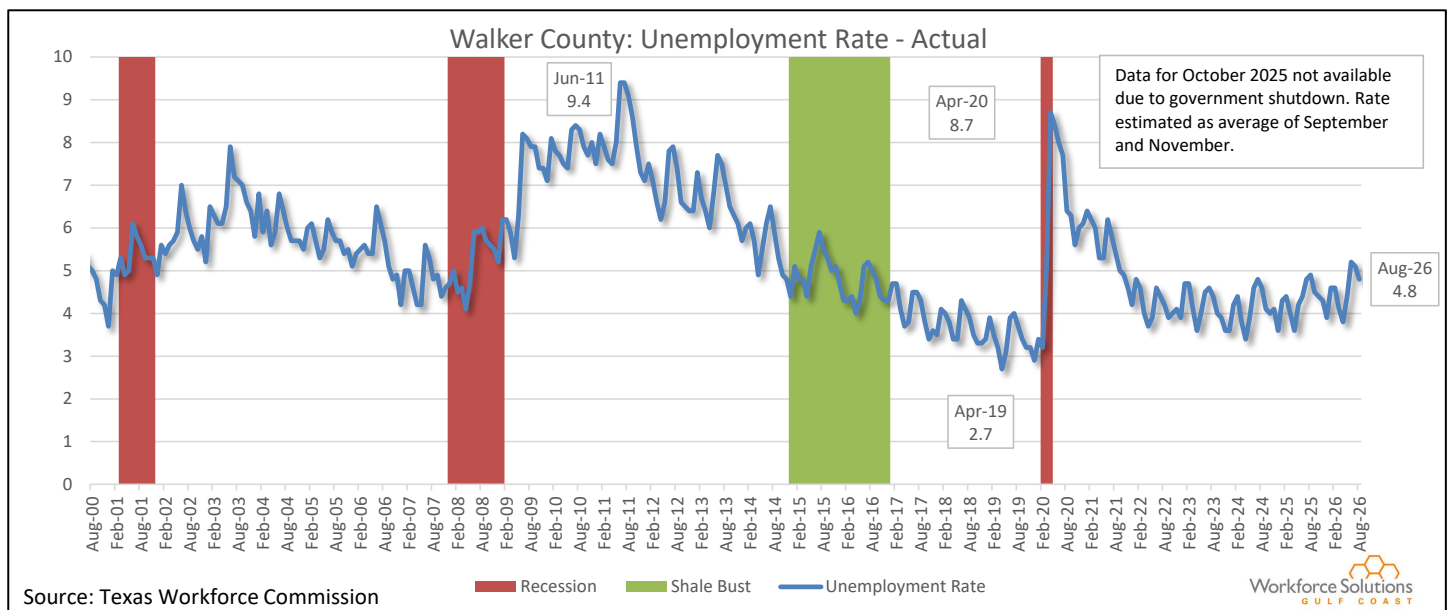
Walker County's employment trends are often closely tied to State Government because the county is home to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice headquarters and Sam Houston State University. Annual gains were partially offset by losses in Leisure and Hospitality, down 140 jobs (5.2 percent), and Manufacturing, down 40 jobs (3.1 percent).

Overall, the county experienced only a modest first-quarter decline, while annual employment growth remained positive. However, the concentration of growth in State Government indicates that private-sector momentum was limited entering 2026.

Additional details are provided on pages 2-7.

	AUG 2026	JULY 2026	AUG 2025
Civilian Labor Force	30,312	30,369	30,367
Total Employment	28,865	28,807	28,887
Unemployed	1,447	1,562	1,480
Unemployment Rate	4.8%	5.1%	4.9%

Comparative Actual Rates			
Texas	4.6%	4.8%	4.6%
U.S.	4.3%	4.4%	4.5%



*Estimates reflect actual (not seasonal adjusted) data. Civilian Labor Force includes wage and salary workers, self-employed, unpaid family, domestics in private households, agricultural workers, workers involved in labor disputes and the unemployed, all by place of residence. Covered employment data compiled from 1st quarter 2026 contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. Source: Texas Workforce Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. All data is subject to revision.

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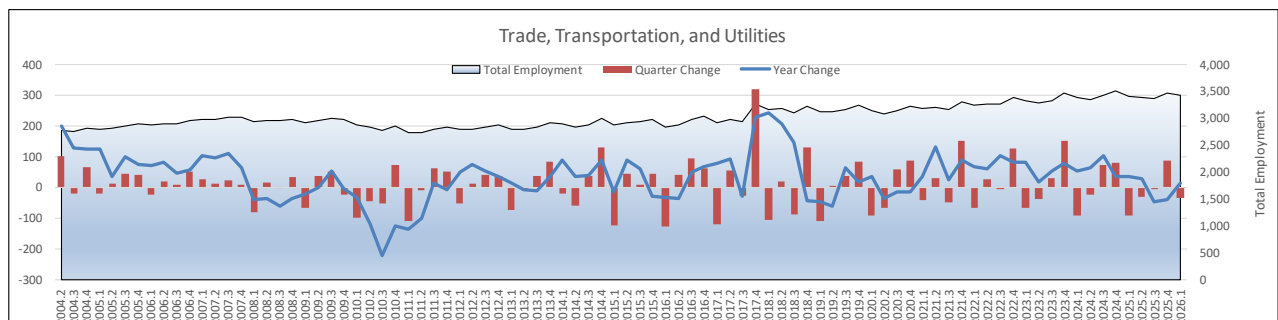
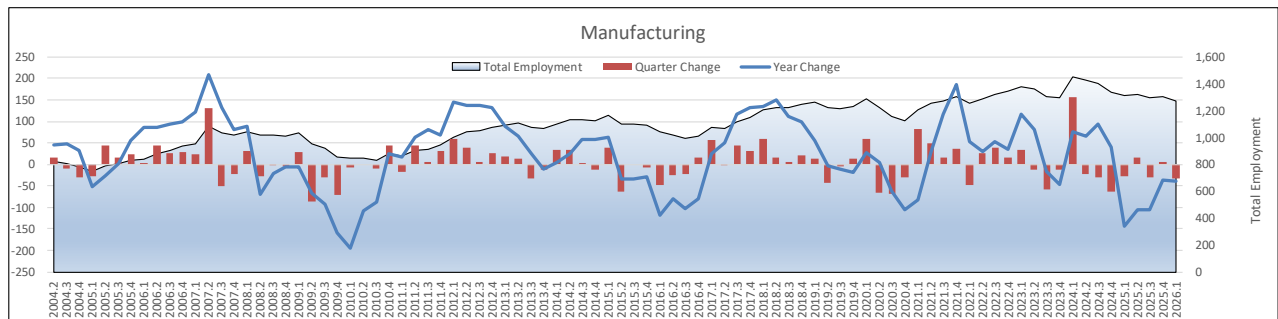
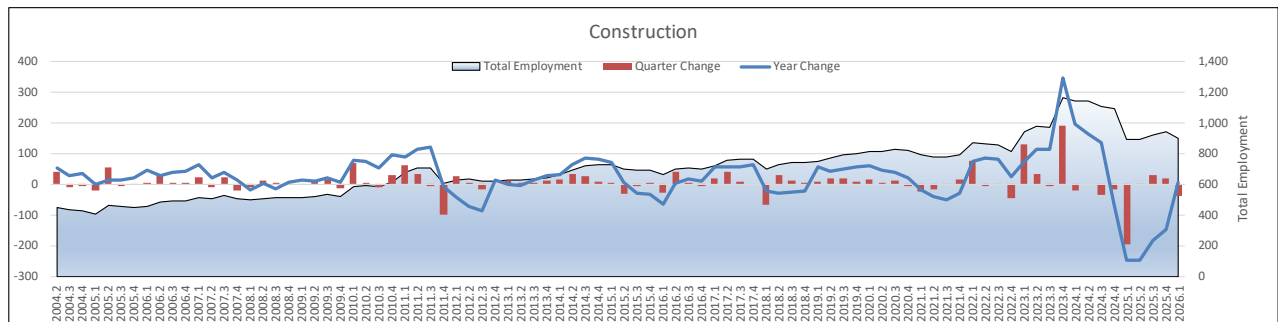
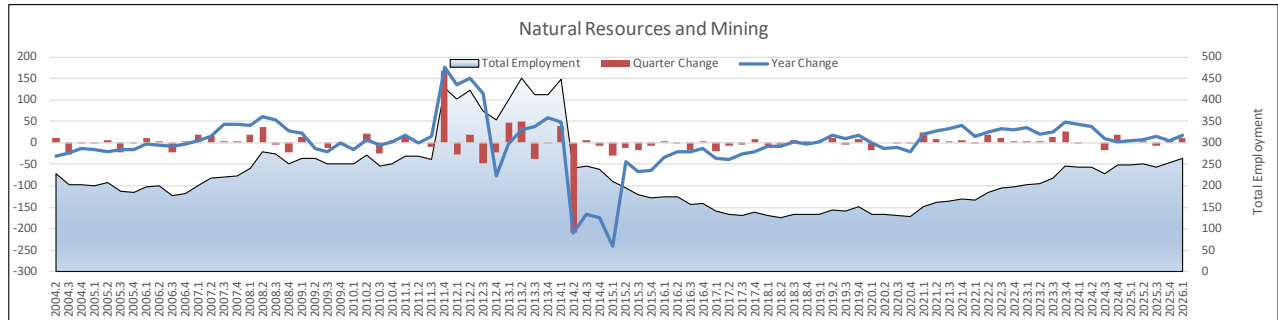
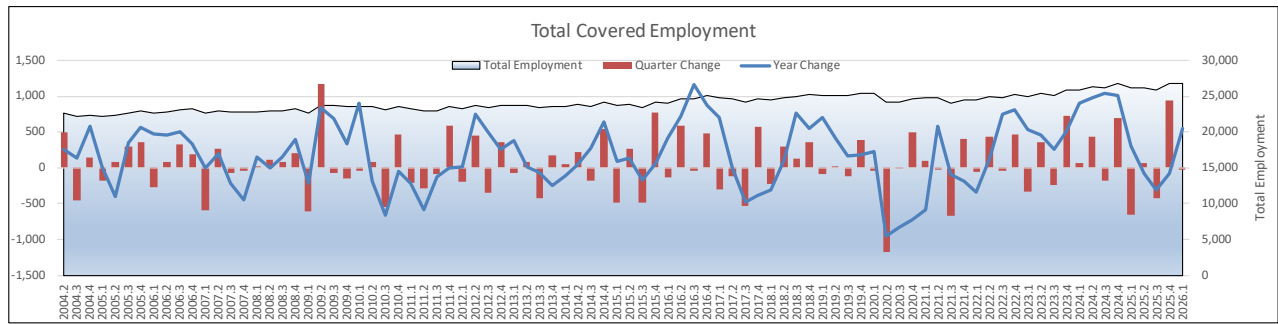
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COVERED EMPLOYMENT Industrial Sector	Number of Jobs			Quarter Chg		Annual Chg		Avg Wkly Wage*
	1ST QTR 2026	4TH QTR 2025	1ST QTR 2025	Actual	%	Actual	%	
Total Employment	26,705	26,734	26,154	-29	-0.1%	551	2.1%	\$1,090
Natural Resources & Mining	265	253	248	12	4.7%	17	6.9%	\$1,341
Construction	900	940	893	-40	-4.3%	7	0.8%	\$1,338
Manufacturing	1,269	1,301	1,309	-32	-2.5%	-40	-3.1%	\$1,718
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	3,421	3,457	3,407	-36	-1.0%	14	0.4%	\$811
Information	91	133	89	-42	-31.6%	2	2.2%	\$1,101
Financial Activities	666	690	675	-24	-3.5%	-9	-1.3%	\$1,392
Professional & Business Services	872	840	880	32	3.8%	-8	-0.9%	\$865
Education & Health Services	2,334	2,266	2,217	68	3.0%	117	5.3%	\$871
Leisure & Hospitality	2,541	2,629	2,681	-88	-3.3%	-140	-5.2%	\$390
Other Services	349	354	357	-5	-1.4%	-8	-2.2%	\$737
Nonclassifiable	33	37	31	-4	-10.8%	2	6.5%	\$715
Public Administration	13,966	13,834	13,368	132	1.0%	598	4.5%	\$1,247
Federal Government	156	152	145	4	2.6%	11	7.6%	\$1,540
State Government	11,515	11,260	11,003	255	2.3%	512	4.7%	\$1,283
Local Government	2,295	2,422	2,220	-127	-5.2%	75	3.4%	\$1,047

*Wages compiled from 1st quarter 2026 contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. Data source: the Texas Workforce Commission, Labor and Career Market Information Department in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

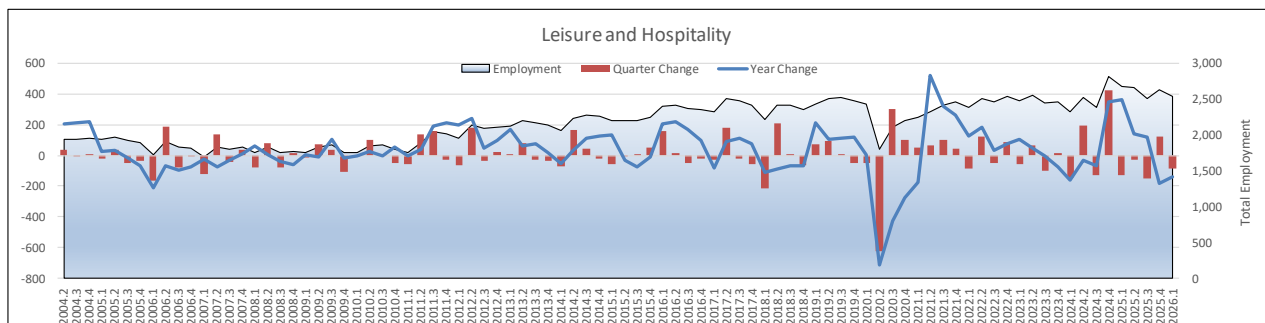
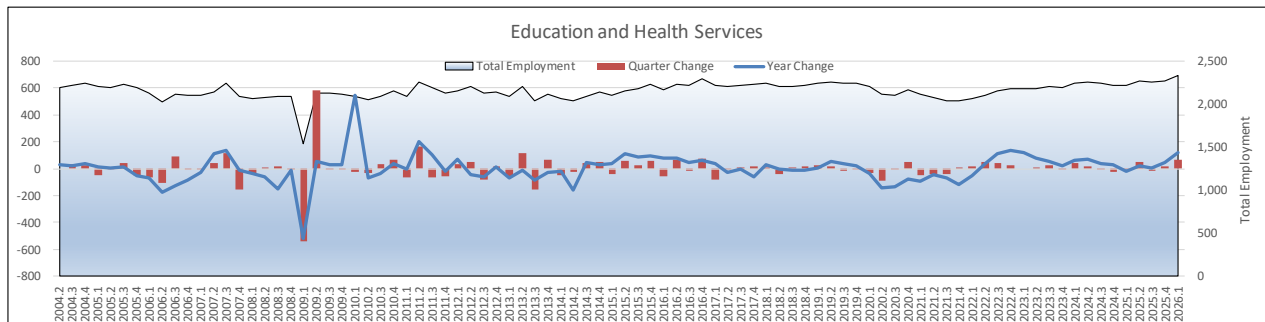
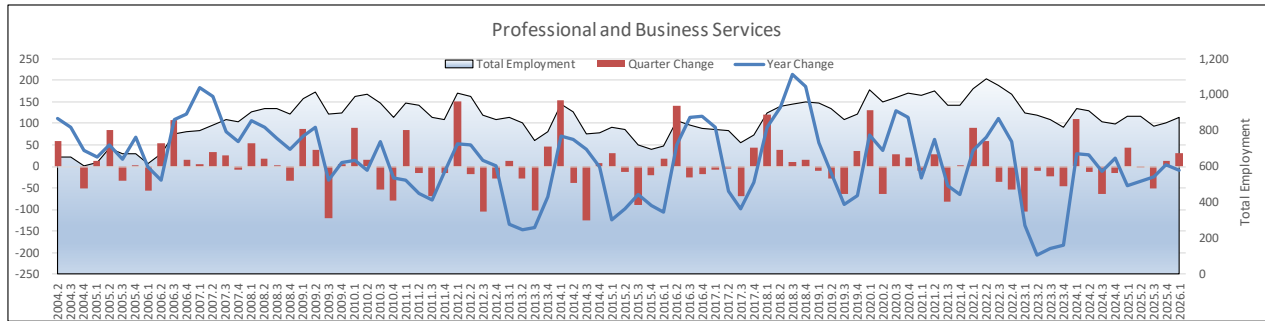
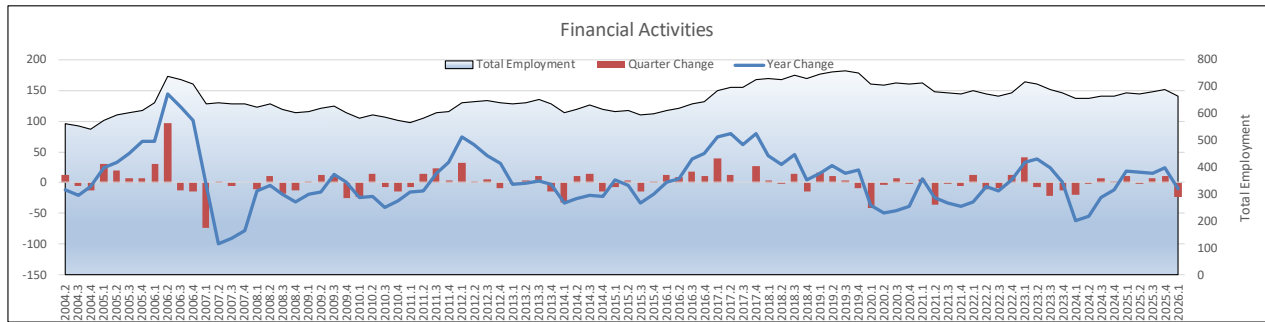
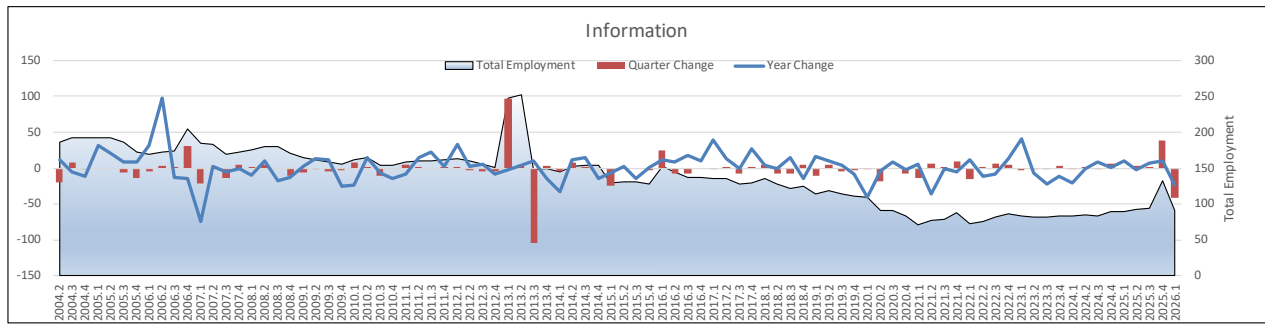
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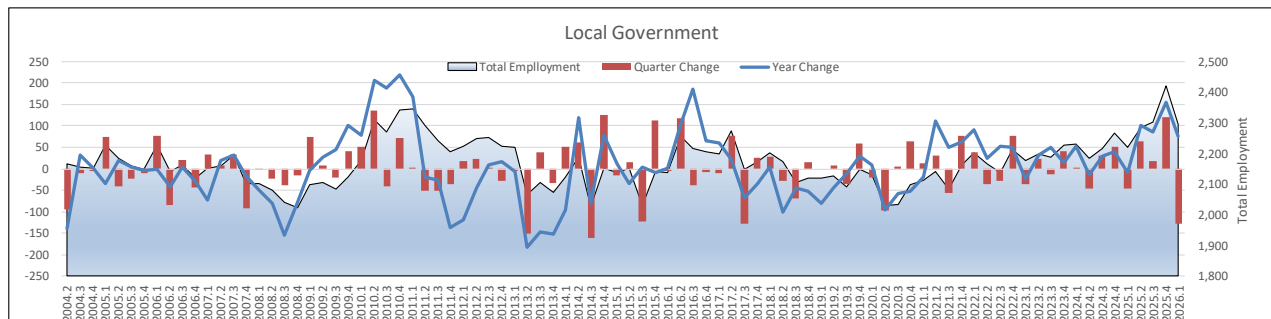
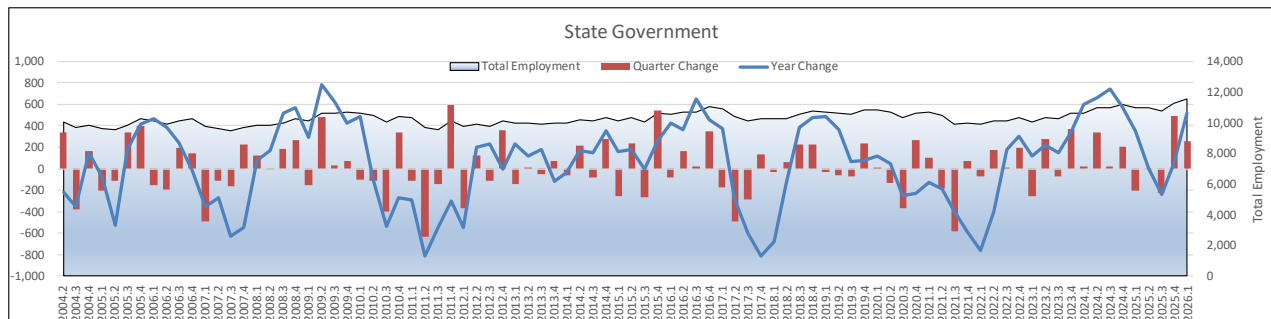
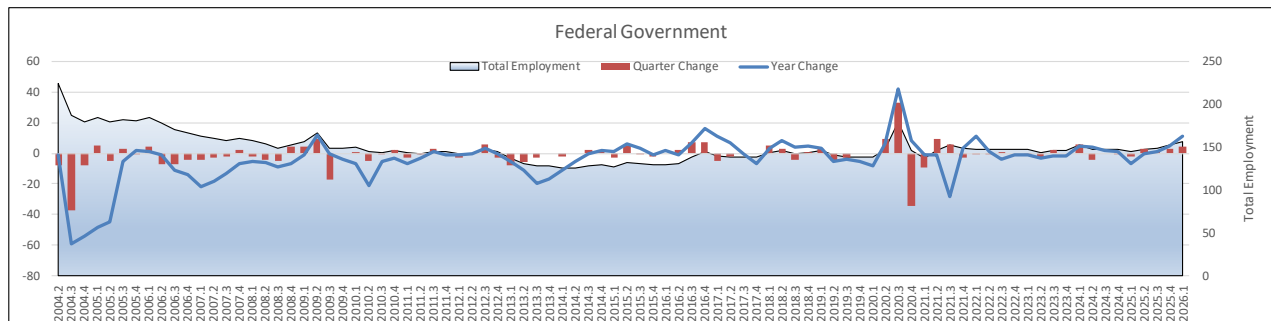
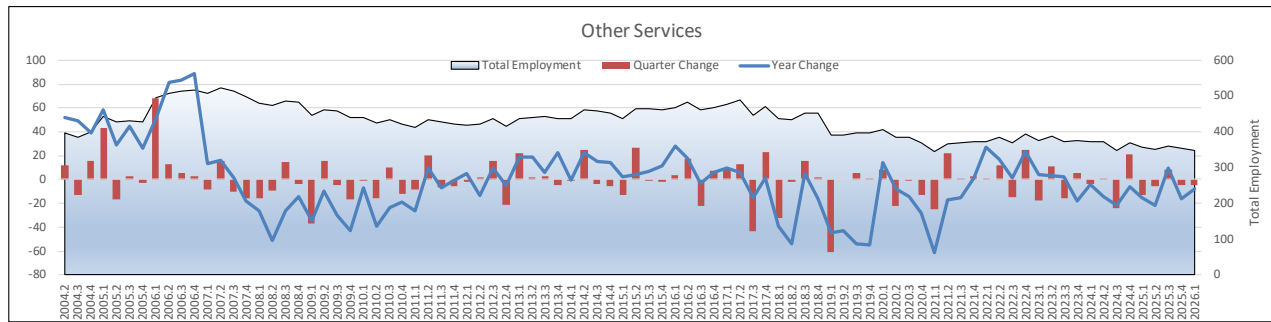
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Historical Employment Highlights

	All-Time High	All-Time High Quarter	All-Time Low	All-Time Low Qtr
Total	26,809	2024.4	21,775	2003.4
Natural Resources and Mining	450	2013.2	127	2018.2
Construction	1,160	2023.4	395	2003.2
Manufacturing	1,452	2024.1	745	2003.4
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	3,499	2024.4	2,578	2003.2
Information	252	2013.2	71	2021.1
Financial Activities	758	2019.3	543	2004.4
Professional and Business Services	1,090	2022.2	543	2003.2
Education and Health Services	2,334	2026.1	1,538	2009.1
Leisure and Hospitality	2,808	2024.4	1,695	2007.1
Other Services	523	2007.2	335	2003.3
Federal Government	246	2003.3	126	2014.1
State Government	11,515	2026.1	9,475	2007.3
Local Government	2,422	2025.4	2,024	2008.4

Average Change from Previous Quarter

	1st Qtr Avg Chg #	1st Qtr Avg Chg %	2nd Qtr Avg Chg #	2nd Qtr Avg Chg %
Total	-171	-0.7%	180	0.8%
Natural Resources and Mining	5	1.7%	-1	1.2%
Construction	3	1.1%	15	2.8%
Manufacturing	24	2.2%	5	0.9%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	-71	-2.3%	8	0.3%
Information	-1	-0.9%	-1	-0.4%
Financial Activities	0	0.1%	8	1.4%
Professional and Business Services	47	5.6%	16	2.5%
Education and Health Services	-43	-2.0%	40	2.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	-42	-1.8%	73	3.8%
Other Services	-3	-0.5%	7	1.6%
Federal Government	-1	-0.4%	-1	-0.3%
State Government	-102	-1.0%	18	0.2%
Local Government	13	0.7%	-7	-0.3%

Average Change from Previous Quarter

	3rd Qtr Avg Chg #	3rd Qtr Avg Chg %	4th Qtr Avg Chg #	4th Qtr Avg Chg %
Total	-193	-0.8%	358	1.5%
Natural Resources and Mining	-11	-4.2%	8	3.7%
Construction	3	0.6%	1	-0.2%
Manufacturing	-8	-0.7%	0	0.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	17	0.6%	84	2.8%
Information	-7	-3.1%	1	1.3%
Financial Activities	2	0.3%	-6	-0.9%
Professional and Business Services	-40	-4.1%	-8	-0.8%
Education and Health Services	5	0.3%	7	0.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	-7	-0.1%	14	0.5%
Other Services	-4	-0.9%	1	0.5%
Federal Government	0	0.4%	-2	-1.1%
State Government	-104	-1.0%	234	2.3%
Local Government	-38	-1.7%	23	1.1%

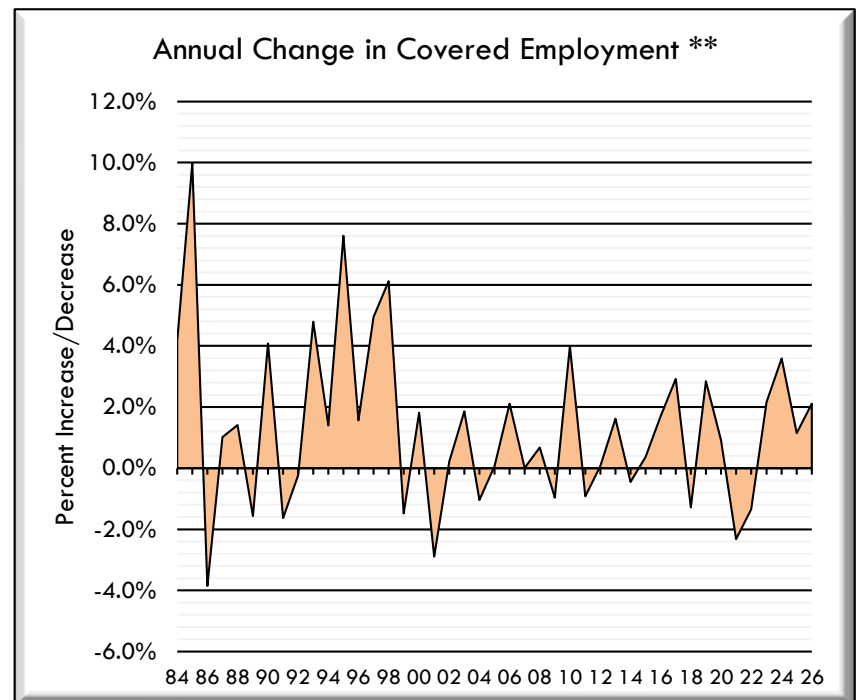
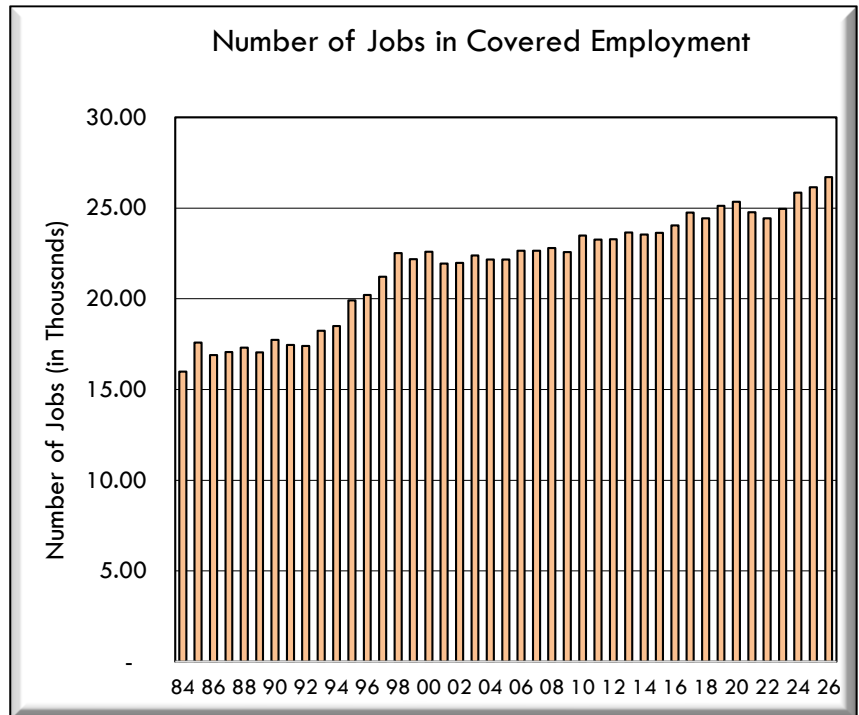
Covered employment data compiled from contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. Source: Texas Workforce Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Historical data was only available for second quarter 2003 and forward. All data is subject to revision.

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Walker County 1983-2026 Covered Employment**

YEAR	JOBS	+ / (-)	% +/-
83	15,346		
84	15,986	640	4.2%
85	17,580	1,594	10.0%
86	16,902	(678)	-3.9%
87	17,073	171	1.0%
88	17,314	241	1.4%
89	17,042	(272)	-1.6%
90	17,737	695	4.1%
91	17,448	(289)	-1.6%
92	17,408	(40)	-0.2%
93	18,243	835	4.8%
94	18,499	256	1.4%
95	19,906	1,407	7.6%
96	20,218	312	1.6%
97	21,218	1,000	4.9%
98	22,517	1,299	6.1%
99	22,185	(332)	-1.5%
00	22,588	403	1.8%
01	21,936	(652)	-2.9%
02	21,983	47	0.2%
03	22,392	409	1.9%
04	22,159	(233)	-1.0%
05	21,926	(233)	0.1%
06	22,642	716	2.1%
07	22,643	1	0.0%
08	22,797	154	0.7%
09	22,578	(219)	-1.0%
10	23,480	902	4.0%
11	23,263	(217)	-0.9%
12	23,280	17	0.1%
13	23,658	378	1.6%
14	23,552	(106)	-0.4%
15	23,640	88	0.4%
16	24,043	403	1.7%
17	24,746	703	2.9%
18	24,430	(316)	-1.3%
19	25,126	696	2.8%
20	25,356	230	0.9%
21	24,766	(590)	-2.3%
22	24,431	(335)	-1.4%
23	24,959	528	2.2%
24	25,856	897	3.6%
25	26,154	298	1.2%
26	26,705	551	2.1%



**Data Compiled from 1st quarter contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. For more information on a specific industry, please call 832/681-2535. Data source: the Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market and Career Information Department in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

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Gulf Coast** 2025 Wages*

(High-Skill High-Growth Occupations Targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board)

Std. Occ. Code	Occupation	Average Hourly Wage	Average Annual Wage	Employment
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	\$45.86	\$95,386	28,750
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$26.34	\$54,782	15,230
19-4021	Biological Technicians	\$25.84	\$53,744	1,660
43-3031	Bookkeepers, Acctg and Auditing Clerks	\$25.08	\$52,163	26,620
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$30.77	\$64,003	7,530
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$23.81	\$49,528	3,420
13-1020	Buyers and Purchasing Agents	\$39.17	\$81,470	10,990
47-2031	Carpenters	\$25.47	\$52,975	9,700
41-2011	Cashiers	\$14.46	\$30,074	56,290
39-9011	Childcare Workers	\$14.44	\$30,033	8,820
17-2051	Civil Engineer	\$53.47	\$111,213	12,200
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	\$30.15	\$62,706	12,980
47-2061	Construction Laborers	\$21.06	\$43,800	34,510
35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	\$17.03	\$35,414	5,000
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	\$15.84	\$32,938	33,180
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	\$20.83	\$43,328	66,170
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	\$40.16	\$83,541	4,490
47-3013	Electrician Helpers	\$21.33	\$44,357	1,830
47-2111	Electricians	\$29.60	\$61,574	19,980
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	\$36.71	\$76,367	7,680
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	\$13.27	\$27,601	108,070
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	\$35.04	\$72,889	37,870
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	\$24.31	\$50,556	23,290
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	\$15.94	\$33,156	16,660
11-9051	Food Service Managers	\$33.35	\$69,374	5,130
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	\$70.07	\$145,740	98,820
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	\$19.53	\$41,255	5,540
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics	\$28.98	\$60,282	7,780
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$32.99	\$68,617	18,630
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operator	\$21.95	\$45,652	21,160
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$15.70	\$32,658	49,540
53-7062	Laborers and Freight Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$19.14	\$39,820	53,160
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$31.31	\$65,117	11,150
11-9081	Lodging Managers	\$35.49	\$73,827	780
51-4041	Machinists	\$29.98	\$62,351	8,250
11-2021	Marketing Managers	\$77.60	\$161,401	8,980
31-9092	Medical Assistants	\$19.97	\$41,532	18,580
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	\$32.46	\$67,511	5,400
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	\$19.38	\$40,316	19,690
19-5011	Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	\$43.34	\$90,153	5,730
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	\$20.78	\$43,216	50,990
29-1051	Pharmacists	\$65.90	\$137,073	6,500
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$30.66	\$63,782	11,090
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	\$35.62	\$74,090	16,560
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	\$29.43	\$61,210	8,940
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	\$17.19	\$35,760	17,430
29-1141	Registered Nurses	\$48.13	\$100,112	66,750
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	\$16.64	\$34,610	80,470
47-5071	Roustabouts, Oil and Gas	\$24.01	\$49,931	6,040
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, except Technical and Scientific Products	\$39.67	\$82,520	25,940
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	\$22.72	\$47,248	34,870
33-9032	Security Guards	\$18.46	\$38,802	29,550
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	\$18.57	\$38,630	74,310
53-1047	Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Exc. Aircraft Cargo Handling	\$31.40	\$65,307	15,500
53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	\$27.93	\$58,091	50,590
53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	\$23.42	\$48,712	19,220
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	\$28.60	\$59,491	16,090

*Data compiled by the Texas Workforce Commission, LMCI Dept. in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics as part of the Occupational Employment Survey. Employment is the estimate of employment based upon the sample, not the sample employment. Wages for the OES survey are straight-time, gross pay, exclusive of premium pay. Base rate, cost-of-living allowances, guaranteed pay, hazardous-duty pay, incentive pay including commissions and production bonuses, tips, and on-call pay are included. Excluded are back pay, jury duty pay, overtime pay, severance pay, shift differentials, nonproduction bonuses, employer cost of supplementary benefits, and tuition reimbursements. **Data by individual county is not available for many occupations. The Gulf Coast Region is defined as Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton Counties.