

About the Center

The H.C. Drew Center for Business and Economic Analysis (Drew CBEA) collects, tracks, and analyzes data relevant to the economy of Southwest Louisiana.

A joint venture between McNeese State University and the SWLA Alliance, the center strives to serve the community with high quality economic analysis, reports, and data collections.

Visit our website and follow us on social media to see what we have to offer.

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1st Quarter 2026 Issue

This first quarter report is slightly late, but there was a lot of data to catch up on with the benchmark revisions, and the previous government shutdown altered a lot of release schedules. Fortunately, it was worth the wait we saw favorable revisions to the area's employment estimates and our economy is better than previously thought.

There have been positive signs as tax revenues have increased in Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis parishes while SNAP benefits are generally decreasing. Gaming revenues in the area continue to grow, even if they are lower in the state as a whole. Lake Charles also saw an increase in building permits.

The final piece examines the recent BLS benchmark revisions in greater detail. The employment situation of the Lake Charles MSA is higher than what previous preliminary survey estimates were showing.

As always, thank you for reading.

Dan Groft, Ph.D.

Director, H.C. Drew Center for Business and Economic Analysis

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Selected Employment Indicators – Lake Charles MSA

(measures in thousands of workers)	Qtr1 – 2025	Qtr2 – 2025	Qtr3 – 2025	Qtr4 – 2025	Qtr1 – 2026
Total Nonfarm	104.1	105.5	105.0	106.4	105.7
Year-Over-Year Change	0.9	0.6	0.6	1.9	1.6
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.8	0.6	0.6	1.8	1.5
Mining and Logging	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Year-Over-Year Change	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Construction	10.9	11.3	11.3	11.1	11.2
Year-Over-Year Change	0.0	-0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.0	-1.2	3.7	4.7	3.1
Manufacturing	12.3	12.3	12.5	12.7	12.5
Year-Over-Year Change	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.2
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.3	0.5	2.5	3.8	1.6
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	18.4	18.3	18.2	18.7	18.5
Year-Over-Year Change	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-0.1	0.1
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.2	-0.2	-1.4	-0.4	0.5
Information	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Year-Over-Year Change	0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1
Year-Over-Year % Change	11.1	0.0	0.0	-10.0	-10.0
Financial Activities	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7
Year-Over-Year Change	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Year-Over-Year % Change	-1.8	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.7
Professional and Business Services	9.7	9.8	9.8	10.0	9.9
Year-Over-Year Change	0.1	-0.4	-0.7	0.0	0.2
Year-Over-Year % Change	1.0	-3.6	-6.4	0.0	2.1
Education and Health Services	14.6	14.8	14.9	15.1	15.0
Year-Over-Year Change	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Year-Over-Year % Change	1.6	1.8	2.5	2.3	2.7
Leisure and Hospitality	14.0	14.6	14.6	14.5	14.3
Year-Over-Year Change	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3
Year-Over-Year % Change	1.0	3.5	1.9	3.1	2.4
Other Services	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3
Year-Over-Year Change	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0
Year-Over-Year % Change	11.1	9.7	4.2	6.2	-1.0
Government	16.2	16.3	15.7	16.2	16.2
Year-Over-Year Change	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.1	0.0
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.4	0.2	0.6	-0.4	0.0
Average Weekly Wages (All Employees)	1,167.33	1,137.17	1,189.5	1,180.8	1,198.8
Year-Over-Year Change	173.7	70.3	100.6	5.4	31.5
Year-Over-Year % Change	17.5	6.6	9.2	0.5	2.7
Average Hourly Wage (All Employees)	32.98	31.62	32.40	32.2	32.3
Year-Over-Year Change	4.0	1.5	1.4	-0.5	-0.7
Year-Over-Year % Change	13.9	4.8	4.6	-1.4	-2.1
Average Weekly Hours (All Employees)	35.4	36.0	36.7	36.6	37.1
Year-Over-Year Change	1.1	0.6	1.6	0.7	1.7
Year-Over-Year % Change	3.1	1.7	4.5	1.9	4.9

In the 1st quarter of 2026, the Lake Charles MSA (consisting of Calcasieu and Cameron parishes) experienced an increase in outcome compared to the same quarter the previous year. After benchmark revisions, there have been drops almost every quarter, but the jobs have been continuing to tick upwards.

Total nonfarm employment (presented in thousands of jobs in the table) saw 1.5% growth over the year. Looking at the industries, most had increases or no change while Information had a slight decline of 100 jobs (-10%). Construction saw an increase of 300 jobs (+3.1%). Education and Health Services saw an increase of 400 jobs (+2.7%). Manufacturing experienced a slight industry gain of 200 workers (+1.6%). Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+0.5%) and Financial Activities (+3.7%) increased 100 jobs. Professional and Business Services saw an increase of 200 jobs (+2.1%). Leisure and Hospitality (+2.4%) saw an increase of 300 workers. Mining and Logging, Government, and Other Services all saw no real change in workers.

While there was a gain in employment, there were also increases in average weekly wages measured. While average hourly wage decreased. The average weekly earnings of all

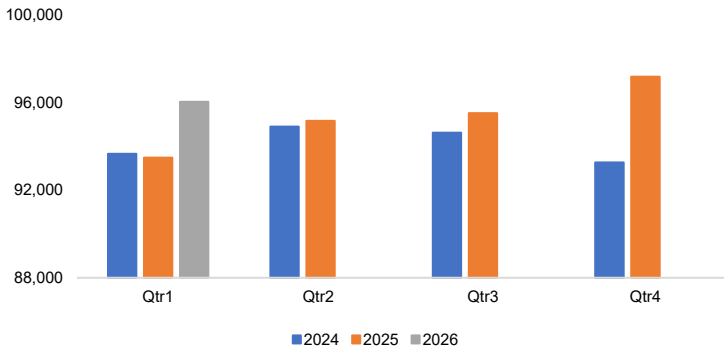
employees rose 2.7% and average hourly earnings fell 2.1%. The average weekly hours of all employees in the 1st quarter rose 4.9% over the year.

Selected Employment Indicators – Lake Charles MSA

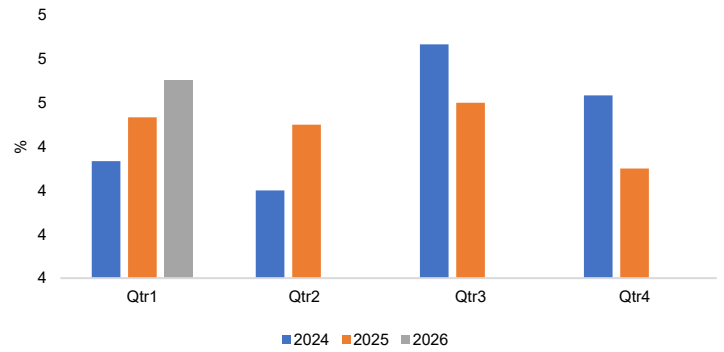
	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Household Employment	93,478	95,156	95,506	97,170	96,028
Year-Over-Year Change	-178	260	888	3,912	2,550
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.2	0.3	0.9	4.2	2.7
Household Unemployment	4,453	4,493	4,612	4,365	4,761
Year-Over-Year Change	212	324	-241	-161	308
Year-Over-Year % Change	5.0	7.8	-5.0	-3.5	6.9
Labor Force	97,932	99,649	100,117	101,535	100,789
Year-Over-Year Change	34	7,117	647	3,752	2,858
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.0	7.7	0.7	3.8	2.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.7
Year-Over-Year Change	0.2	0.3	-0.3	-0.3	0.2

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total Job Openings	3,723	4,027	4,156	3,829	4,121
Year-Over-Year Change	-1,098	-645	24	-39	399
Year-Over-Year % Change	-22.8	-13.8	0.6	-1.0	10.7

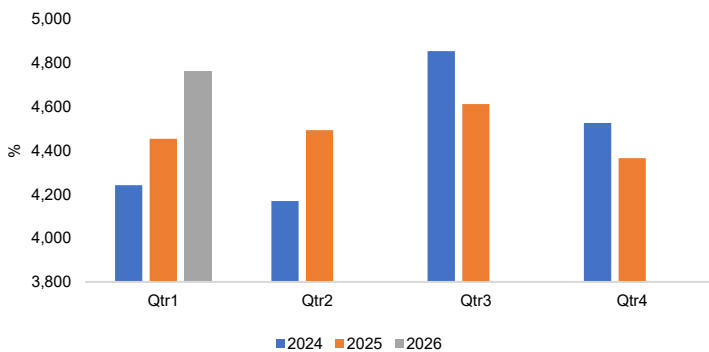
Lake Charles MSA Employment



Lake Charles MSA Unemployment Rate



Lake Charles MSA Unemployment Rate



The quarterly average unemployment rate in the MSA currently sits at 4.7%, which represents a 0.2 percentage point increase from a year ago. The household employment measure increased by 2,550 over the year for a 2.7% increase. The number of unemployed increased by 308. This represented a 6.9% increase. As the labor force is the total of unemployed and employed, the total change in the labor force was an increase of 2,858 (+2.9%). More labor will be needed for long-term growth so future developments in this measure should be watched closely.

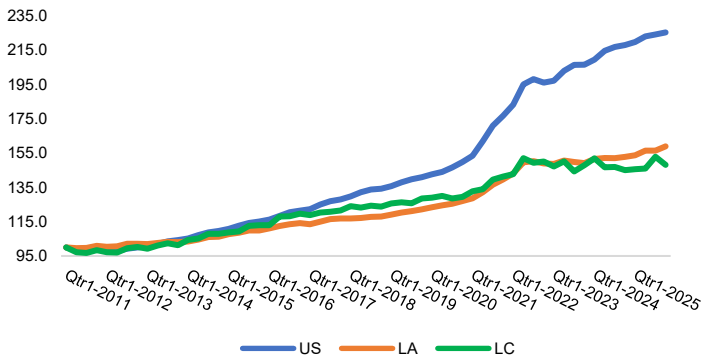
Job openings in the 1st quarter of 2026 averaged 4,121.

Openings increased by 399 (+10.7%) over the year.

Jobs have been increasing but are still below pre-pandemic levels. Fortunately, the area is above pre-Laura levels.

Housing Statistics

FHFA Quarterly Housing Price Indexes
(Qtr1-2011 = 100)

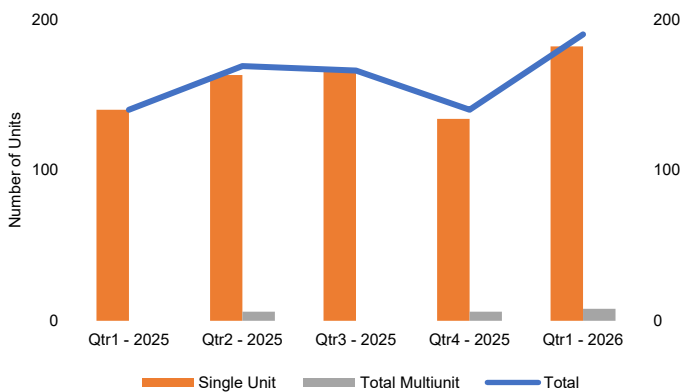


Home Price Index Comparisons	Qtr4- 2024	Qtr4 - 2025	Year-over-Year % Change
Lake Charles HPI	145.1	148.1	2.1
Louisiana HPI	152.8	158.9	4.0
US HPI	218.0	225.4	3.4

As housing prices have been rising dramatically in recent years, they have flattened and the prices in the area were falling while there were slower increases in the state and the nation. Looking at price changes over-the-year, from the fourth quarter of 2025 to the same quarter in 2024, housing prices have risen 2.1% in the Lake Charles MSA compared to increases of 4.0% in LA and 3.4% in the US.

Housing Permits – Lake Charles MSA

Lake Charles MSA Building Permits



In the 1st quarter of 2026, single unit permits rose by 42 over-the-year while multi-unit permits had an increase of 8, therefore the total increase was 50. This represented a 35.7% increase. The YTD figures show similar results with an increase in single units of 42 and multi-unit permits increasing by 8 for a total increase of 50 over the year in the first quarter. The total percentage increase in YTD was 35.7%. In terms of valuation, single unit permits rose by \$8.7 million while multi-unit permit valuations rose by \$520 thousand for a total increase of \$9.26 million. This represented a 29.4% increase year-over-year in the 1st quarter of 2026 for the valuation of all permits. In terms of YTD numbers, single unit valuations increased \$8.7 million

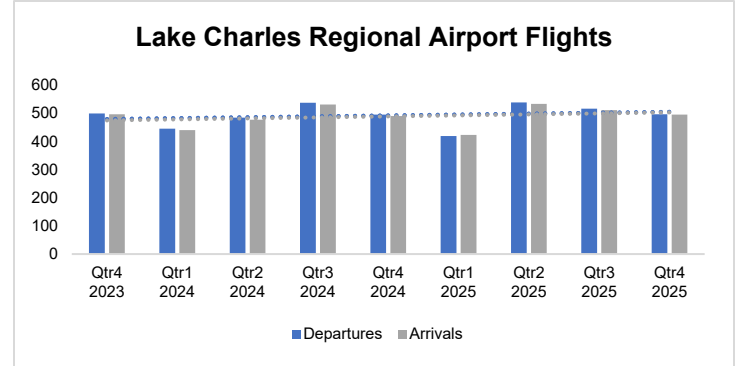
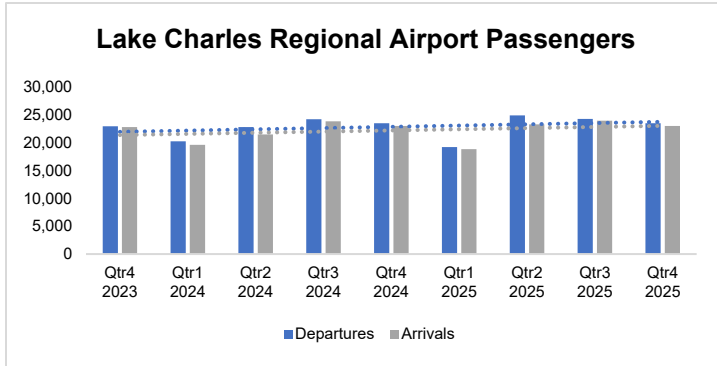
and multi-unit valuations increased \$520 thousand for a total percentage change of 29.4%.

The graph of building permits shows that single-unit permits have been decreasing since the 3rd quarter of 2024 after spiking. Multi-unit permits were 0 in the 1st quarter of 2025 and again in the third quarter. The blue line shows the total permits, and it has displayed a downward flat trend since 3rd quarter of 2024.

	Qtr-1 2025	Qtr-1 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change	Qtr-1 2025 YTD	Qtr-1 2026 YTD	YTD Change	YTD % Change
Number								
Total	140	190	50	35.7	140	190	50	35.7
Single	140	182	42	30.0	140	182	42	30.0
Multi-unit	0	8	8	NA	0	8	8	NA
Valuation (thousands \$)								
Total	31,467	40,725	9,258	29.4	31,467	40,725	9,258	29.4
Single	31,467	40,205	8,738	27.8	31,467	40,205	8,738	27.8
Multi-unit	0	520	520	NA	0	520	520	NA

Transportation Statistics

Lake Charles Regional Airport



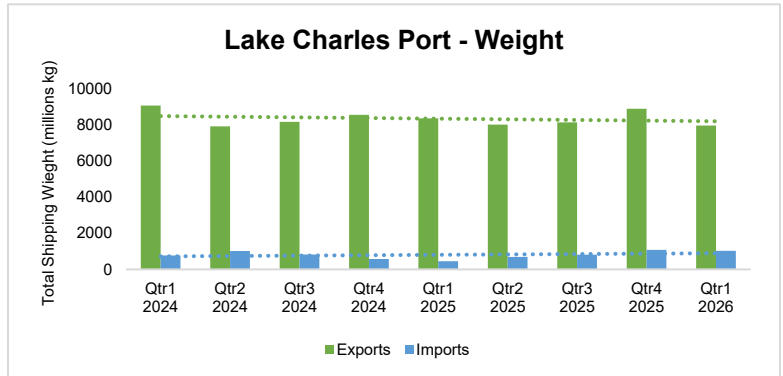
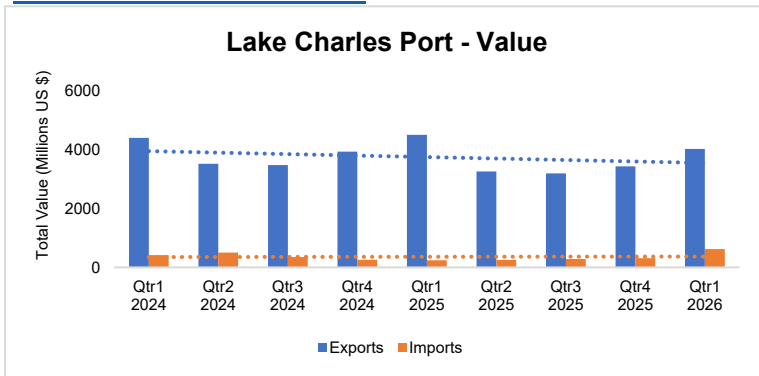
The Lake Charles regional airport experienced an uptick in activity during the 4th quarter of 2025 compared to the same quarter of the previous year in terms of flights. However, there was a slight downturn in the number of passengers arriving. The graphs above illustrate a slight upward trend in passengers over the past two years while flights have remained somewhat flat.

	Qtr-4 2024	Qtr-4 2025	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Passengers				
Departures	23,485	23,507	22	0.1
Arrivals	23,004	22,995	-9	0.0
Flights				
Departures	495	496	1	0.2
Arrivals	490	495	5	1.0

Passengers departing in the 4th quarter of 2025 rose 22 (0.1%) since the 4th quarter of 2024 and those arriving have decreased 9 (-0.0%). In terms of flights, there has been an increase of 1 flight (0.2%) departing from Lake Charles over that same period while the number of flights

arriving has risen by 5 (1.0%) as well. The number of passengers has been steadily increasing since 2020.

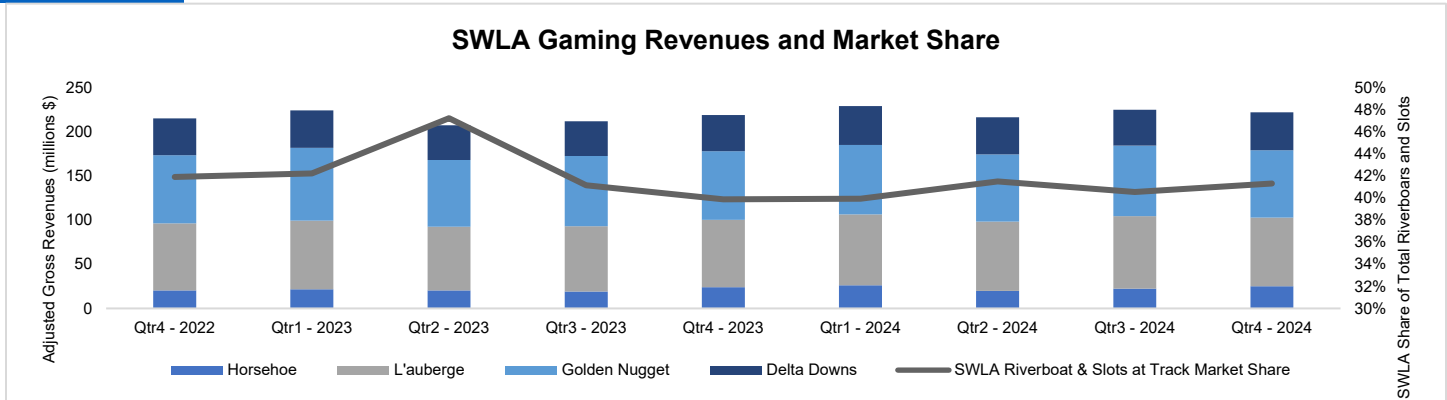
Lake Charles Port Statistics



The Lake Charles port has seen decreases in export values and an increase in import values in the 1st quarter of 2026. The figures in the table below show the value of exports fell \$475 million (-10.6%) over the year while the total value of imports rose by \$384 million (+160.9%) The total weight of all exports fell 404 million kg (-4.8%) while the total weight of all imports rose 578 million kg (+128.4%). Export values have recently been falling, as have total weights in the past three quarters.

	Qtr-1 2025	Qtr-1 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Value (millions \$)				
Exports	4,489	4,014	-475	-10.6
Imports	238	622	384	160.9
Shipping Weight (millions kg)				
Exports	8,344	7,940	-404	-4.8
Imports	450	1,027	578	128.4

Gaming Statistics



	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total State AGR (millions)	549.3	573.7	521.6	554.6	537.4
Year-Over-Year Change (millions)	35.6	42.8	82.5	39.9	-11.8
Year-Over-Year % Change	6.9	8.1	18.8	7.7	-2.2
Total SWLA AGR (millions)	219.1	229.1	216.5	224.9	222.1
Year-Over-Year Change (millions)	3.8	4.9	9.1	13.0	3.0
Year-Over-Year % Change	1.8	2.2	4.4	6.1	1.4
Total AGR (millions)					
Horseshoe	24.0	26.2	19.8	22.5	25.1
Year-Over-Year Change (millions)	3.6	4.5	-0.6	3.3	1.1
Year-Over-Year % Change	17.6	20.7	-3.0	17.1	4.4
L'Auberge	76.3	80.3	78.6	81.9	77.8
Year-Over-Year Change (millions)	0.4	2.5	6.4	8.1	1.5
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.5	3.2	8.9	10.9	1.9
Golden Nugget	77.7	78.7	76.1	80.0	76.2
Year-Over-Year Change (millions)	0.5	-3.7	0.6	0.4	-1.5
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.7	-4.5	0.8	0.6	-2.0
Delta Downs	41.0	44.0	42.1	40.5	43.0
Year-Over-Year Change (millions)	-0.7	1.6	2.7	1.2	2.0
Year-Over-Year % Change	-1.7	3.9	6.9	3.1	4.9
Share of Total SWLA AGR					
Isle of Capri	11.0%	11.5%	9.1%	10.0%	11.3%
L'Auberge	34.8%	35.0%	36.3%	36.4%	35.0%
Golden Nugget	35.5%	34.3%	35.1%	35.6%	34.3%
Delta Downs	18.7%	19.2%	19.4%	18.0%	19.4%
Share of Total State AGR					
Isle of Capri	4.4%	4.6%	3.8%	4.1%	4.7%
L'Auberge	13.9%	14.0%	15.1%	14.8%	14.5%
Golden Nugget	14.2%	13.7%	14.6%	14.4%	14.2%
Delta Downs	7.5%	7.7%	8.1%	7.3%	8.0%
SWLA Total AGR	39.9%	39.9%	41.5%	40.5%	41.3%

In terms of revenues, gaming establishments have rebounded from the pandemic and hurricanes, and the Horseshoe has now been open for year-over-year comparisons. Revenues in SWLA were about 1.4% higher than in the 1st quarter of 2025 and statewide AGR in Q1 2026 was 2.2% lower than Q1 2025. Total revenues in SWLA for the 1st quarter of 2026 were \$222.1 million, or a 1.4% percent increase from the previous year.

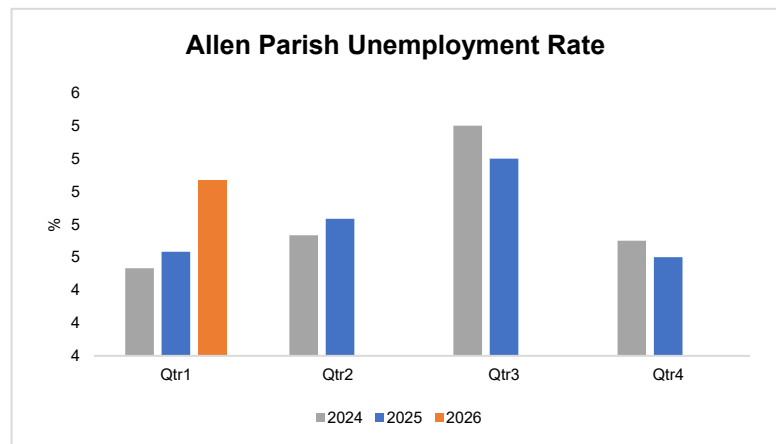
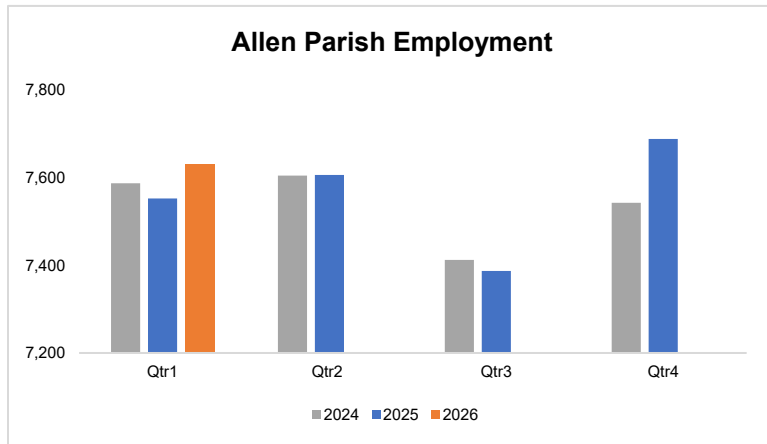
Horseshoe collected \$25.1 million in revenue in the 1st quarter of 2026 (+4.4%). L'Auberge saw a \$1.5 million increase (+1.9%). The Golden Nugget had an annual percentage decrease in AGR of 2.0% with an absolute decrease of \$1.5 million. Delta Downs experienced a \$2.0 million increase in AGR over the year for a 4.9% increase. These figures still indicate a solid recovery in the gaming market from 2020;

however, things had been slowing in terms of year-over-year changes until this recent quarter. The four SWLA establishments made up 41.3% of the total AGR from riverboats and slots and tracks in the state, which is a 1.4 percentage point increase from the 1st quarter of 2025.

Selected Employment Indicators – Allen Parish

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Household Employment	7,552	7,606	7,387	7,688	7,629
Year-Over-Year Change	-35	1	-25	145	77
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.5	0.0	-0.3	1.9	1.0
Household Unemployment	366	386	405	373	405
Year-Over-Year Change	6	8	-16	-2	39
Year-Over-Year % Change	1.8	2.1	-3.8	-0.6	10.7
Labor Force	7,918	7,992	7,792	8,061	8,034
Year-Over-Year Change	-28	9	-41	143	116
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.4	0.1	-0.5	1.8	1.5
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.6	4.8	5.2	4.6	5.1
Year-Over-Year Change	0.1	0.1	-0.2	-0.1	0.4

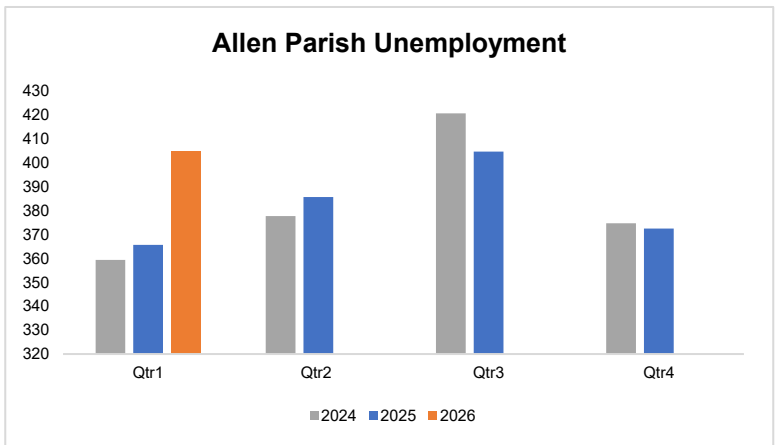
	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total Job Openings	200	158	144	125	158
Year-Over-Year Change	-61	-63	-73	-96	-42
Year-Over-Year % Change	-23.4	-28.4	-33.6	-43.4	-21.2



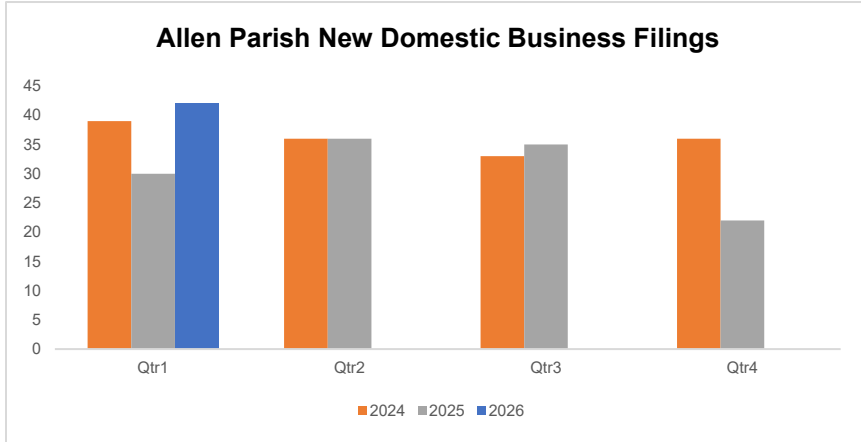
In the 1st quarter of 2026, Allen parish saw a rise in the labor force of 116 (+1.5%). This was broken down by an increase in household unemployment of 39 over the year (10.7%) while the number of people employed rose by 77 (1.0%) over the year. The unemployment rate rose over the year by 0.4 percentage points to 5.1%.

Job openings in the 1st quarter of 2026 averaged 158. Openings fell by 42 (-21.2%) over the year.

The graphs show the levels of household employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate for each quarter compared to the same quarter the previous two years. In the 1st quarter of 2026, Allen has had slightly higher employment compared to previous year's levels and higher unemployment levels compared to previous years.



New Business Filings



The graph to the left shows the number of new business filings each quarter compared to the same quarter in the previous two years.

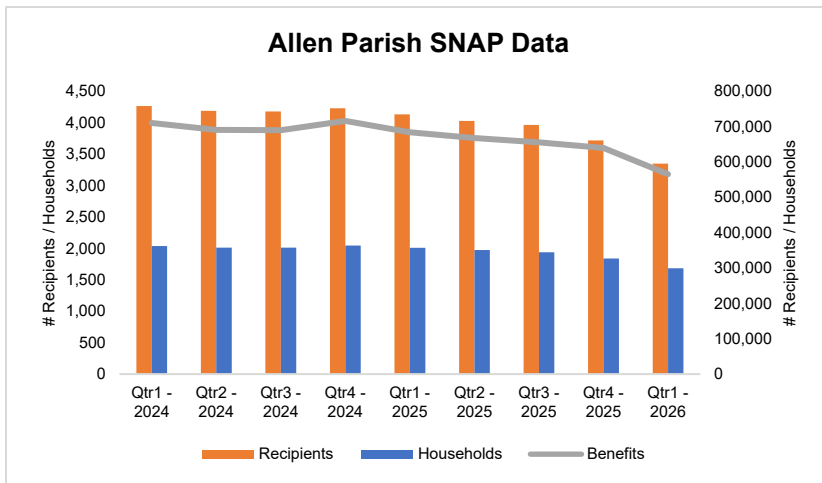
The number of new business filings in Allen parish was 42 in the 1st quarter of 2026 which was 12 more than the first quarter in 2025 and 3 more than the same quarter 2 years ago. The YTD total for the 1st quarter of 2026 was 42. This was 12 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2025 YTD and 3 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2024 YTD.

Qtrly New Business Filings	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	39	36	33	36
2025	30	36	35	22
2026	42			

Qtrly New Business Filings YTD	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	39	75	108	144
2025	30	66	101	123
2026	42			

SNAP Benefits

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Recipients	4,128	4,024	3,961	3,716	3,346	-782	-19.0
Households	2,008	1,973	1,936	1,838	1,683	-325	-16.2
Benefits	683,462	667,183	655,051	639,100	564,875	-118,587	-17.4



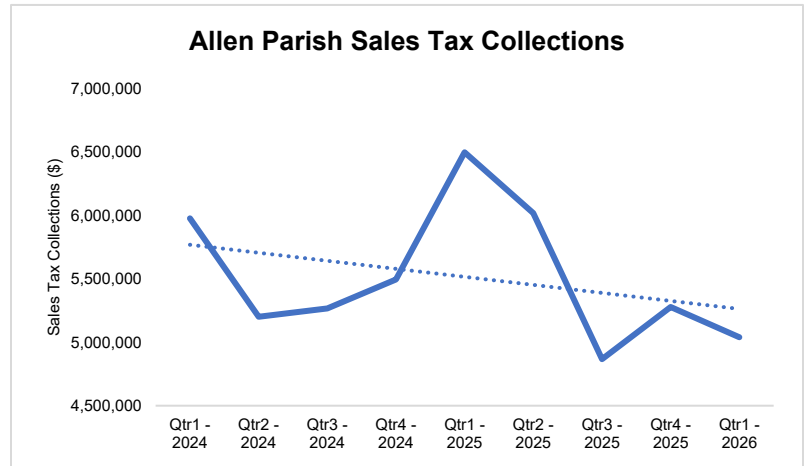
Allen parish had a decrease in SNAP recipients and in households, along with a decrease in benefits over the year. The parish had an average of 3,346 recipients of SNAP benefits in the 1st quarter of 2026. 782 fewer people received benefits compared to the 1st quarter of 2025 for a 19.0% decrease over this time. The total number of first quarter households receiving SNAP was 1,683, which was 325 less than the same quarter in the previous year. This represented a 16.2% decrease. In terms of benefits, the parish received \$564,875 in total during the 1st quarter of 2026, which was a \$118,587 decrease over-the-year. This was a 17.4% decrease in benefits in the parish. March 2023 marked a large

drop in total benefits to bring down the whole of quarter 1 due to emergency benefits expiring and that showed up markedly in the 2nd and 3rd quarters. This lower level should be persistent in future quarters, as has begun to show in the graph.

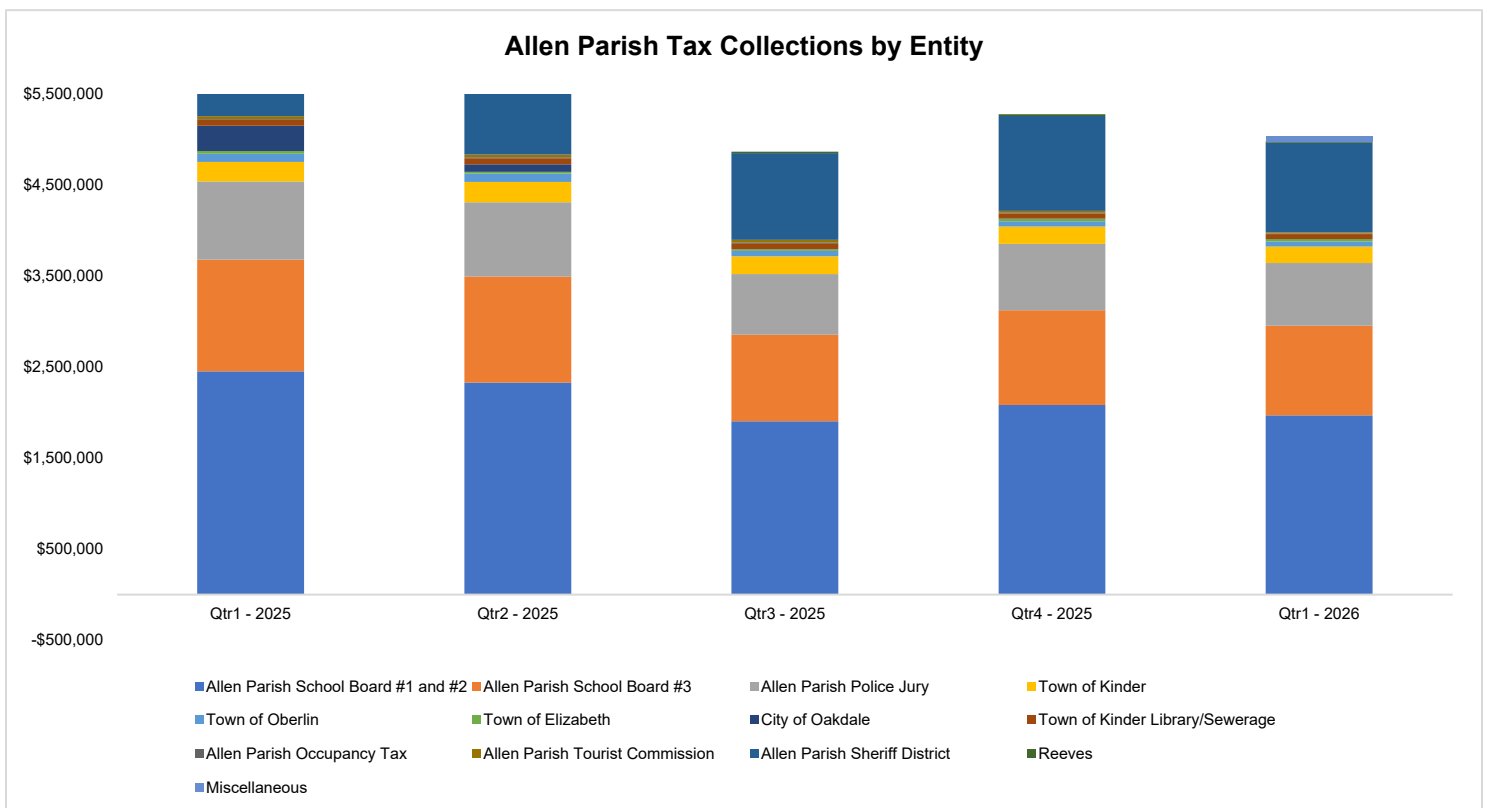
Tax Collections

The Drew CBEA has built a history of Allen Parish sales tax collections with the help of the Allen Parish School Board. The numbers show a downward trend throughout the 1st quarter of 2026.

Compared to the 1st quarter of 2026, Allen Parish has seen an overall decrease in tax collections. Total tax collections decreased \$1.5 million for a 22.4% decrease. This decrease is most likely driven by a spike seen in previous months due to a completion of a large scale construction project.



Allen Parish Sales Tax Collections by Entity	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Allen Parish School Board #1 and #2	2,454,296	2,331,274	1,904,185	2,083,922	1,969,513	-484,784	-19.8
Allen Parish School Board #3	1,227,005	1,165,609	952,058	1,041,694	984,661	-242,344	-19.8
Allen Parish Police Jury	858,905	815,928	666,442	729,187	689,264	-169,641	-19.8
Town of Kinder	214,651	222,917	194,411	190,639	181,363	-33,287	-15.5
Town of Oberlin	90,907	92,053	60,061	56,969	57,015	-33,892	-37.3
Town of Elizabeth	30,045	18,095	17,880	27,714	26,114	-3,932	-13.1
City of Oakdale	277,199	83,139	2,236	2,108	257	-276,942	-99.9
Town of Kinder Library/Sewerage	64,396	66,876	58,323	57,192	54,409	-9,986	-15.5
Allen Parish Occupancy Tax	10,151	9,948	11,047	7,149	4,592	-5,559	-54.8
Allen Parish Tourist Commission	30,452	29,843	33,141	21,448	13,776	-16,676	-54.8
Allen Parish Sheriff District	1,227,005	1,165,609	952,058	1,041,694	984,661	-242,344	-19.8
Reeves	14,734	18,354	15,379	19,080	18,386	3,652	24.8
Total	6,499,747	6,019,644	4,867,221	5,278,886	5,040,754	-1,458,993	-22.4



Selected Employment Indicators – Beauregard Parish

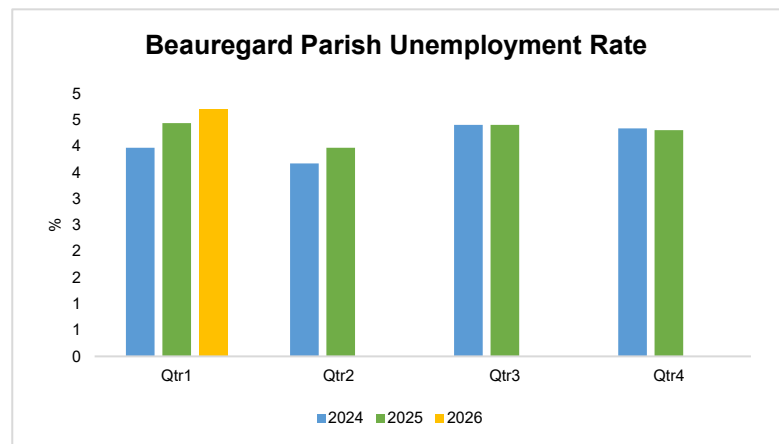
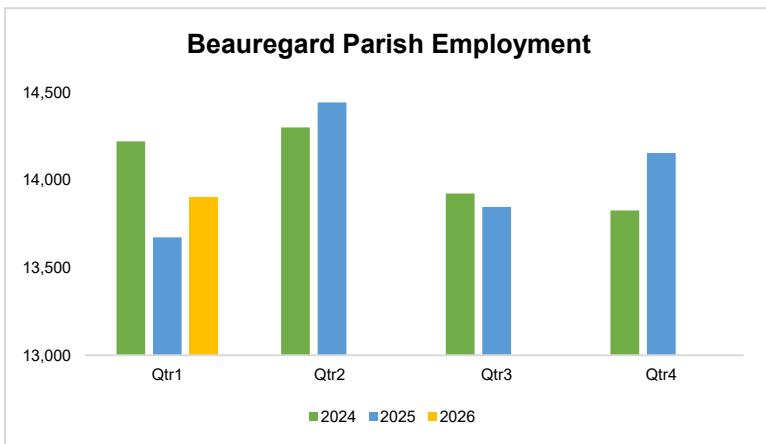
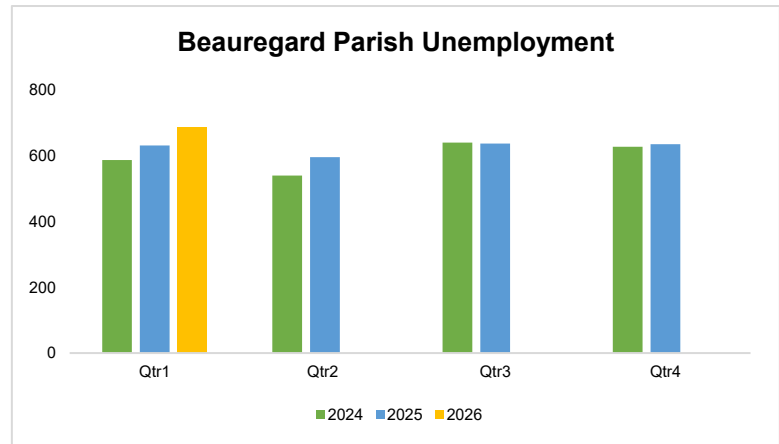
	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Household Employment	13,672	14,442	13,846	14,154	13,903
Year-Over-Year Change	-548	143	-77	328	230
Year-Over-Year % Change	-3.9	1.0	-0.6	2.4	1.7
Household Unemployment	631	596	637	635	685
Year-Over-Year Change	44	56	-3	8	54
Year-Over-Year % Change	7.6	10.4	-0.4	1.2	8.6
Labor Force	14,304	15,038	14,483	14,789	14,588
Year-Over-Year Change	-503	199	-80	336	284
Year-Over-Year % Change	-3.4	1.3	-0.5	2.3	2.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.4	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.7
Year-Over-Year Change	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total Job Openings	204	260	320	296	270
Year-Over-Year Change	-191	-89	39	-4	66
Year-Over-Year % Change	-48.4	-25.4	13.9	-1.2	32.5

In the 1st quarter of 2026, Beauregard parish saw a rise in household employment of 230 over the year (+1.7%) while the number of unemployed people rose by 54 (+8.6%) over the year. This led to an increase of 284 (+2.0%) in the total labor force. The unemployment rate rose by 0.3 percentage points over the year to 4.7%.

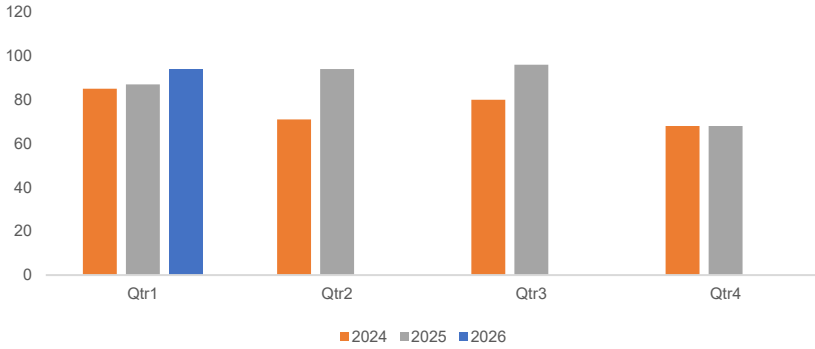
Job openings in the 1st quarter averaged 270. Openings rose by 66 (+32.5%) over the year.

The graphs show the levels of household employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate for each quarter compared to the same quarter the previous two years. In the 1st quarter of 2026, Beauregard has higher unemployment figures and average employment level compared to the previous two years.



New Business Filings

Beauregard Parish New Domestic Business Filings



The graph shows the number of new business filings each quarter compared to the same quarter in the previous two years.

The number of new business filings in Beauregard parish was 94 in the 1st quarter of 2026, which was 7 more than in the 1st quarter in 2025 and 9 more compared to the same quarter 2 years ago. The YTD total for the 1st quarter of 2026 was 94. There were 7 more businesses in the 1st quarter of 2026 than in 2025 YTD and 9 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2024 YTD.

Qtrly New Business Filings	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	85	71	80	68
2025	87	94	96	68
2026	94			

Qtrly New Business Filings YTD	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	85	156	236	304
2025	87	181	277	345
2026	94			

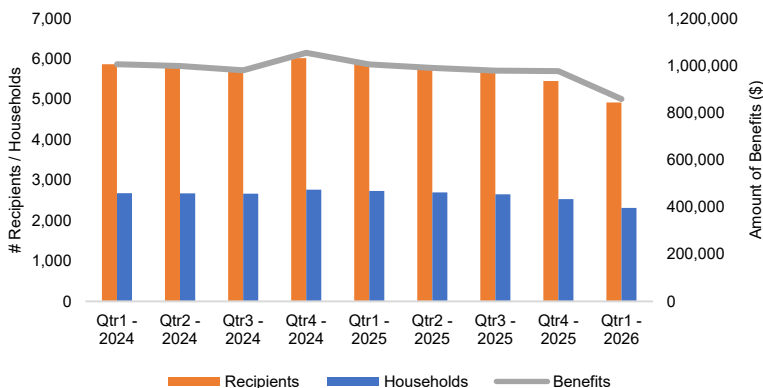
SNAP Benefits

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Recipients	5,924	5,833	5,729	5,448	4,920	-1,004	-16.9
Households	2,733	2,697	2,648	2,528	2,310	-423	-15.5
Benefits	1,004,539	989,566	978,041	976,048	857,830	-146,709	-14.6

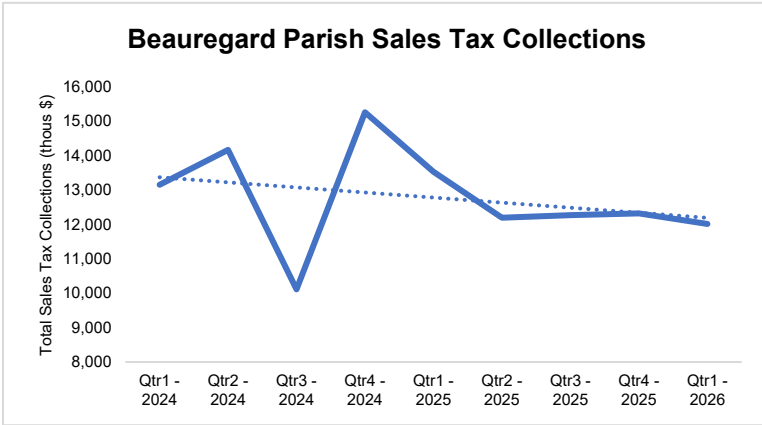
Beauregard parish has experienced decreases in SNAP recipients and households and drops in benefits over the year. The parish had an average of 4,920 recipients of SNAP benefits in the 1st quarter of 2026. 1,004 less people received benefits compared to the 1st quarter of 2025 for a 16.9% decrease over this time. The total number of households receiving SNAP averaged 2,310, which was 423 less than the same quarter in the previous year. This represented a 15.5% decrease. In terms of benefits, the parish received an average of \$857,830 in total during the 1st quarter of 2026, which was a \$146,709 decrease over-the-year. This was a 14.6% decrease in benefits in the parish.

Looking at the graph illustrates relative flat trends in benefits, households, and recipients, over the past two years. Benefit amounts have been up and down, but the trend remains flat.

Beauregard Parish SNAP Data



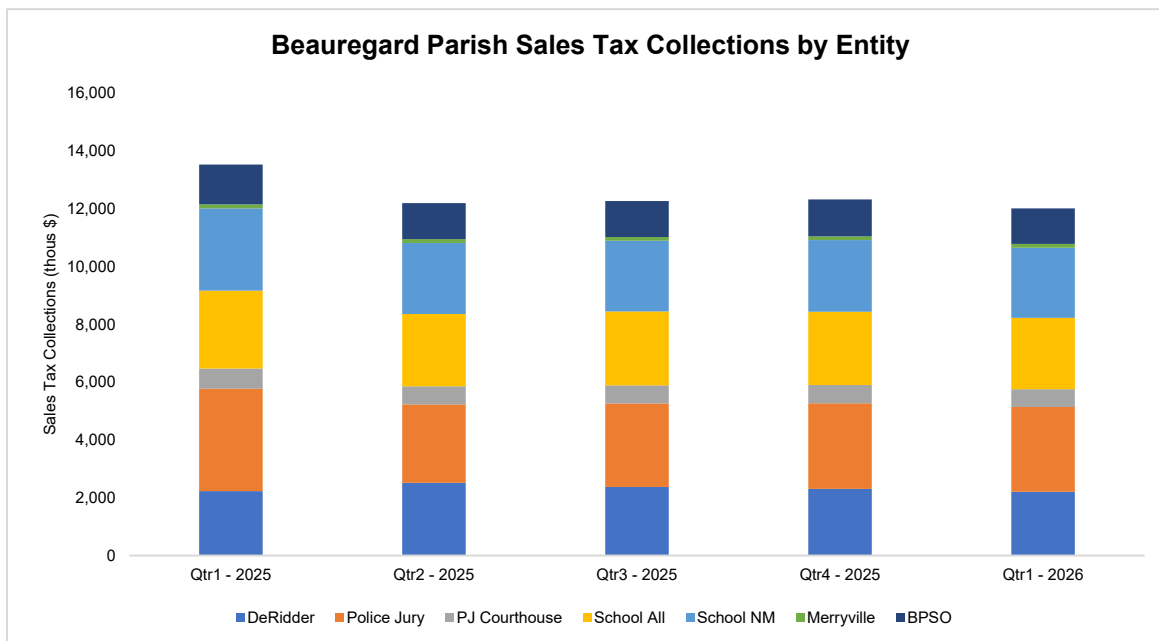
Tax Collections



Beauregard parish has seen an overall decrease in its sales tax collections in the 1st quarter of 2026, compared to the same quarter the previous year. Sales tax collections fell by \$1.5 million over the year for an 11.2% decrease. Looking at the entities that receive sales tax distributions shows that Police Jury collects the most revenue, but other areas are close. The Police Jury category saw a \$609 thousand decrease (-17.2%). DeRidder saw a year-over-year decrease of \$25.7 thousand (-1.2%) over the year. Other decreases came from Merryville, which decreased \$2.7 thousand, or a 2.0% decrease. All School board revenues fell by

roughly \$228 thousand (-8.5%). BPSO collections fell by \$152.2 thousand (-11.0%) and PJ Courthouse fell \$80.3 thousand (-11.5%). School NM tax collections saw a decrease in sales taxes of \$417.8 thousand, marking a 14.7% decrease.

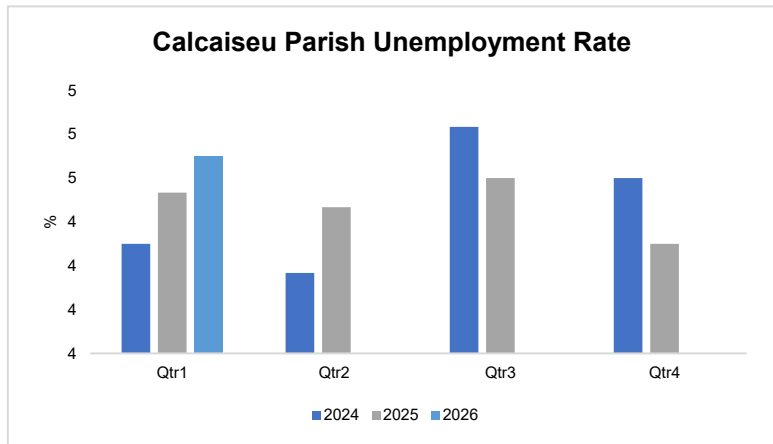
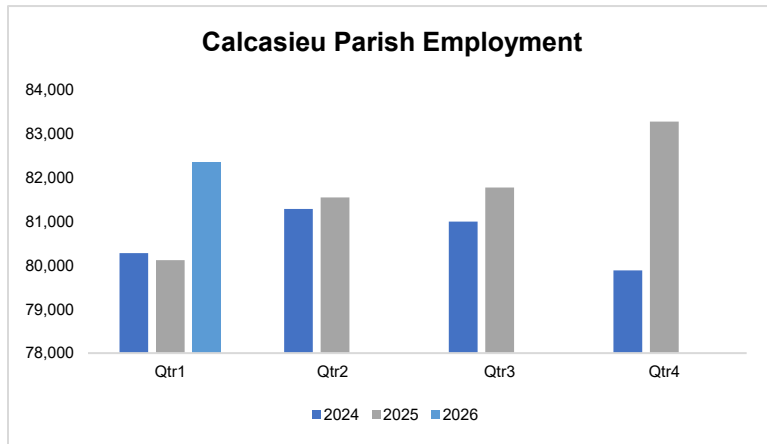
Sales Tax Collections (thous \$)	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
DeRidder	2,231.7	2,517.6	2,376.4	2,307.6	2,206.0	-25.7	-1.2
Police Jury	3,543.1	2,715.0	2,886.9	2,961.9	2,933.8	-609.3	-17.2
PJ Courthouse	696.0	623.5	628.5	629.8	615.7	-80.3	-11.5
School All	2,696.8	2,501.1	2,555.4	2,537.0	2,468.3	-228.5	-8.5
School NM	2,847.9	2,462.5	2,449.5	2,481.4	2,430.1	-417.8	-14.7
Merryville	133.8	128.4	127.2	126.6	131.1	-2.7	-2.0
BPSO	1,382.6	1,246.0	1,245.0	1,277.3	1,230.5	-152.2	-11.0
Total	13,531.8	12,194.2	12,269.0	12,321.5	12,015.4	-1,516.4	-11.2



Selected Employment Indicators – Calcasieu Parish

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Household Employment	80,121	81,551	81,777	83,279	82,341
Year-Over-Year Change	-159	264	779	3,391	2,220
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.2	0.3	1.0	4.2	2.8
Household Unemployment	3,783	3,839	3,950	3,739	4,086
Year-Over-Year Change	175	300	-169	-98	303
Year-Over-Year % Change	4.9	8.5	-4.1	-2.5	8.0
Labor Force	83,904	85,390	85,727	87,018	86,427
Year-Over-Year Change	17	563	610	3,294	2,522
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.0	0.7	0.7	3.9	3.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.7
Year-Over-Year Change	0.2	0.3	-0.2	-0.3	0.2

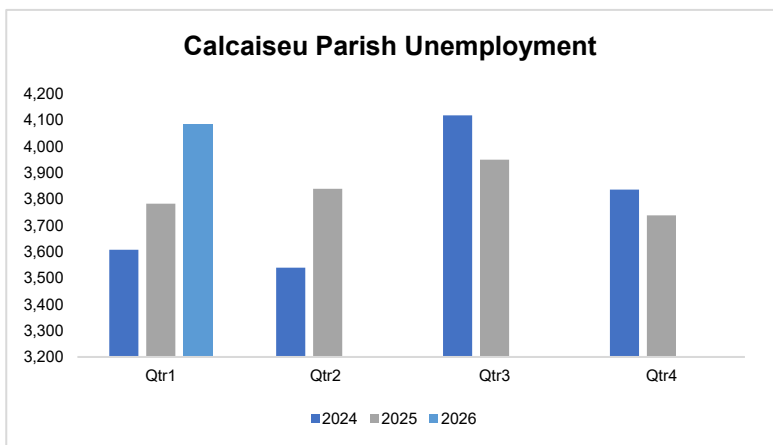
	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total Job Openings	3,647	3,893	3,862	3,463	3,789
Year-Over-Year Change	-938	-693	-184	-284	141
Year-Over-Year % Change	-20.5	-15.1	-4.5	-7.6	3.9



In the 1st quarter of 2026, Calcasieu Parish saw an increase in the labor force of 2,522 (+3.0%). This was due to an increase in household employment of 2,220 over the year (+2.8%) while the number of unemployed people rose by 303 (+8.0%). The unemployment rate rose 0.2 percentage points over the year to 4.7%.

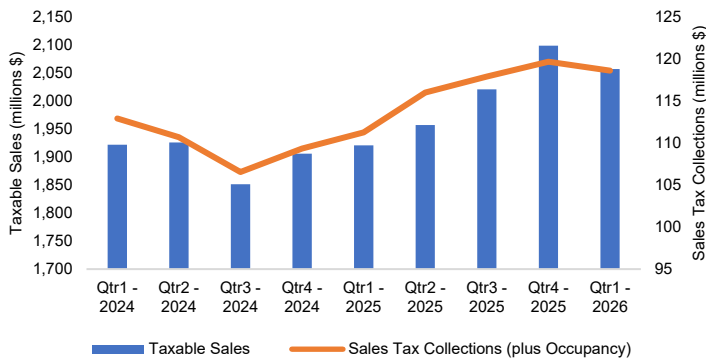
Job openings in the 1st quarter of 2026 averaged 3,789. Openings rose by 141 (+3.9%) over the year.

The graphs show the levels of household employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate for each quarter compared to the same quarter the previous two years. Calcasieu had a higher employment level in the 1st quarter of 2026 compared to 2025. The unemployment level is slightly higher than in the 1st quarter of 2025.

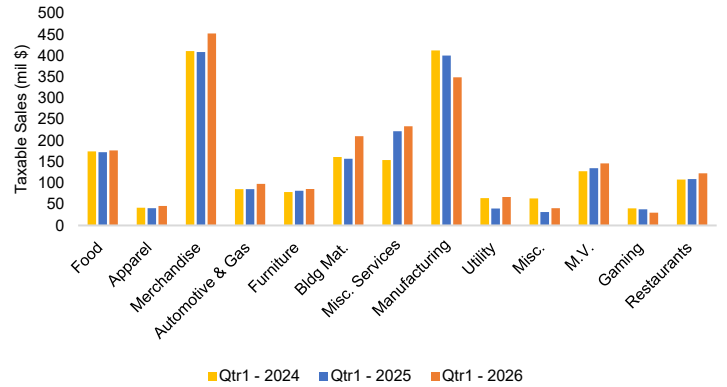


Tax Collections

Calcasieu Parish Taxable Sales and Sales Tax Collections



Calcasieu Parish Taxable Sales - Qtr 1 YTD



Collections (mil \$)	Qtr1- 2025	Qtr2- 2025	Qtr3- 2025	Qtr4- 2025	Qtr1- 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Food	172.5	167.9	162.8	163.8	176.6	4.1	2.4
Apparel	40.6	39.1	37.0	46.3	45.9	5.2	12.9
Merchandise	408.3	401.9	403.0	417.3	452.0	43.7	10.7
Automotive & Gas	85.3	98.6	104.2	98.5	97.9	12.6	14.7
Furniture	81.7	74.3	75.4	87.1	85.7	4.0	5.0
Bldg Mat.	157.1	185.2	177.9	199.8	210.3	53.2	33.8
Misc. Services	221.7	209.8	219.6	242.0	233.6	11.8	5.3
Manufacturing	399.9	374.7	443.8	415.0	348.6	-51.3	-12.8
Utility	39.8	38.8	40.5	84.9	67.0	27.2	68.2
Misc.	31.8	41.8	42.3	44.9	40.5	8.7	27.5
M.V.	134.8	153.2	150.7	153.0	146.0	11.2	8.3
Gaming	38.1	44.2	42.8	31.3	29.9	-8.1	-21.3
Restaurants	109.1	127.3	120.5	114.5	122.7	13.6	12.5
Total	1,920.8	1,956.9	2,020.4	2,098.3	2,056.7	135.9	7.1

Taxable sales in Calcasieu parish have seemed to be more volatile over the past two years with more spikes and drops when looking at the data on a quarterly basis.

Collections experienced an increase in the 1st

quarter of 2026. Looking at the 1st quarter, compared to the same quarter the previous year, sales tax collections, plus occupancy, have risen by \$7.3 million over the year for a 6.6% increase. General sales taxes rose by \$7.1 million (+6.5%) over the year. Occupancy taxes rose by \$0.2 million (+11.2%). This occurred as total taxable sales in the parish rose \$135.9 million (+7.1%) over the year. Building Mat. rose the largest in absolute terms (+\$53.2 million, +33.8%). While Utility rose the largest in percentage points (+\$27.2 million, +68.2%). Manufacturing fell the largest in absolute terms (-\$51.3 million, -12.8%). While Gaming fell the largest in percentage points (-\$8.1 million, -21.3%). Misc. had a notable increase in percentage terms (+27.5%). Apparel (+12.9%), Merchandise (+10.7%), Automotive & Gas (+14.7%), and Restaurants (+12.5%) all had double digit percentage increases. While Food (+2.4%), Furniture (+5.0%), Misc. Services (+5.3%), and M.V. (+8.3%) all experienced increases in collections as well.

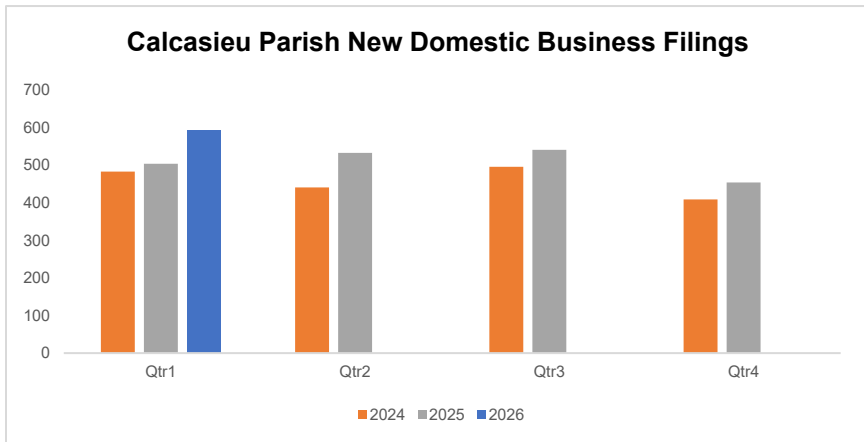
Collections (mil \$)	Qtr1- 2025	Qtr2- 2025	Qtr3- 2025	Qtr4- 2025	Qtr1- 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
General Sales Tax Collections	109.5	113.8	115.6	117.4	116.6	7.1	6.5
Occupancy Taxes	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.0	0.2	11.2
Sales Tax Collections	111.3	116.0	117.9	119.6	118.6	7.3	6.6

YTD figures show that total taxable sales have risen in the parish by \$135.9 million compared to the 1st quarter of 2024 YTD figure for a 7.1% increase. There was a \$7.3 million increase in sales tax collections (+6.6%) YTD.

Taxable Sales YTD (mil \$)	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
2024	1,921.8	3,847.4	5,698.8	7,604.6
2025	1,920.8	3,877.7	5,898.1	7,996.4
2026	2,056.7			

Sales Tax YTD (mil \$)	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
2024	112.9	223.6	330.1	439.5
2025	111.3	227.3	345.1	464.8
2026	118.6			

New Business Filings



The graph shows the number of new business filings each quarter compared to the same quarter in the previous two years.

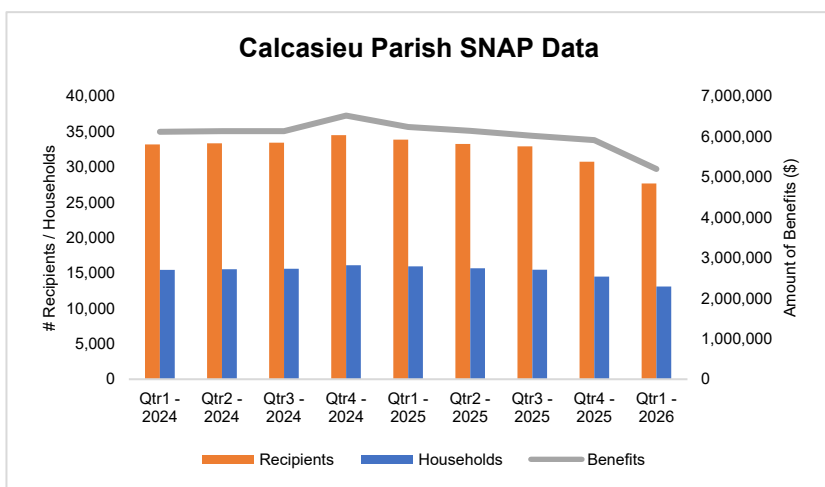
The number of new business filings in Calcasieu parish was 593 in the 1st quarter of 2026, which was 89 more than the same quarter in 2025 and 110 more than the same quarter 2 years ago. The YTD total for the 1st quarter of 2026 was 593. This was 89 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2025 YTD and 110 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2024 YTD.

Qtrly New Business Filings	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	483	441	496	409
2025	504	533	541	454
2026	593			

Qtrly New Business Filings YTD	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	483	924	1,420	1,829
2025	504	1,037	1,578	2,032
2026	593			

SNAP Benefits

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Recipients	33,862	33,250	32,897	30,735	27,666	-6,196	-18.3
Households	15,943	15,669	15,468	14,506	13,099	-2,843	-17.8
Benefits	6,236,055	6,143,421	6,019,076	5,913,253	5,198,949	-1,037,106	-16.6



Calcasieu parish has had decreases in SNAP recipients and in households, along with a decrease in benefits over the year. The parish had an average of 27,666 recipients of SNAP benefits in the 1st quarter of 2026. This was 6,196 less people receiving benefits compared to the 1st quarter of 2025 for a 18.3% decrease over this time. The total number of households receiving SNAP averaged 13,099, which was 2,843 less than in the same quarter in the previous year. This represented a 17.8% decrease. In terms of benefits, the parish received close to \$5.2 million in total during the 1st quarter of 2026, which was a \$1.04 million decrease over-the-year. This was a 16.6% decrease in

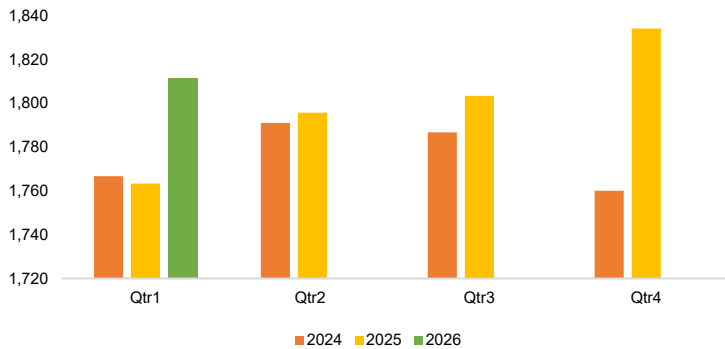
benefits in the parish. Looking at the graph illustrates a falling trend in benefits from the time period where variables peaked in the 4th quarter of 2024. Throughout 2025, the amount of benefits has come down after peaking at the end of 2024. This trend has continued into the first quarter of 2026.

Selected Employment Indicators – Cameron Parish

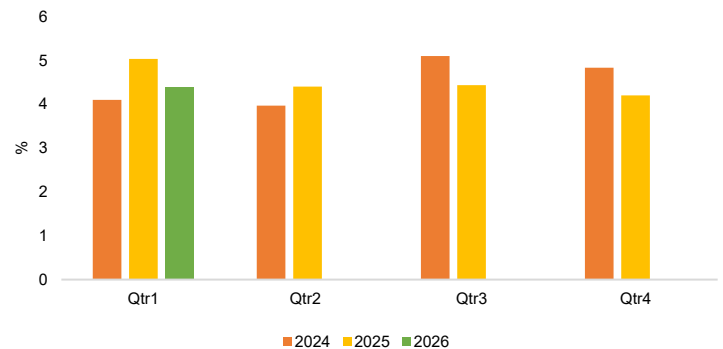
	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Household Employment	1,763	1,796	1,803	1,834	1,811
Year-Over-Year Change	-3	5	17	74	48
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.2	0.3	0.9	4.2	2.7
Household Unemployment	93	83	83	80	83
Year-Over-Year Change	18	9	-13	-10	-10
Year-Over-Year % Change	23.3	12.2	-13.5	-10.8	-11.1
Labor Force	1,857	1,879	1,887	1,914	1,894
Year-Over-Year Change	14	14	4	64	38
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.8	0.7	0.2	3.5	2.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.0	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.4
Year-Over-Year Change	0.9	0.4	-0.7	-0.6	-0.6

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total Job Openings	75	134	294	367	333
Year-Over-Year Change	-160	49	208	245	257
Year-Over-Year % Change	-68.0	57.3	241.5	200.5	341.6

Cameron Parish Employment



Cameron Parish Unemployment Rate

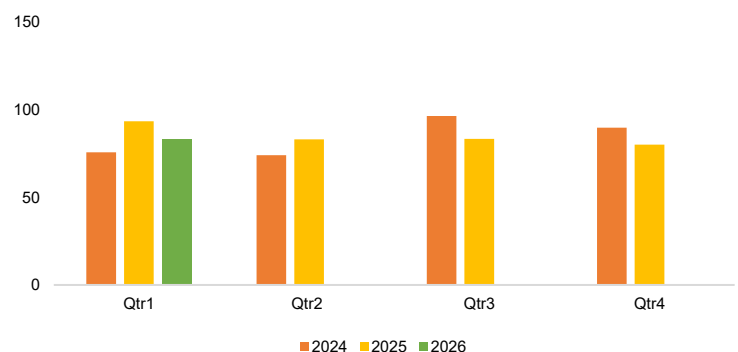


In the 1st quarter of 2026, Cameron parish had an increase in household employment of 48 over the year (+2.7%) while the number of unemployed people fell by 10 (-11.1%). This meant an increase of 38 (+2.0%) in the total labor force. The unemployment rate fell 0.6 percentage points over the year to 4.4%.

Job openings in the 1st quarter of 2026 averaged 333. Openings rose by 257 (+341.6%) over the year.

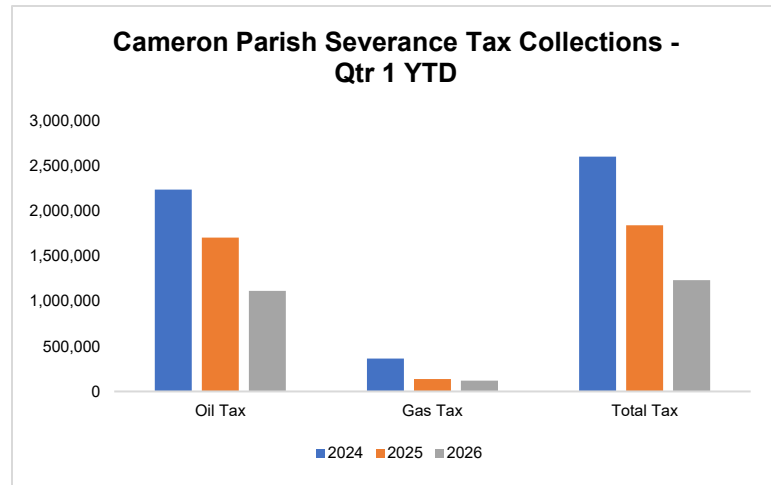
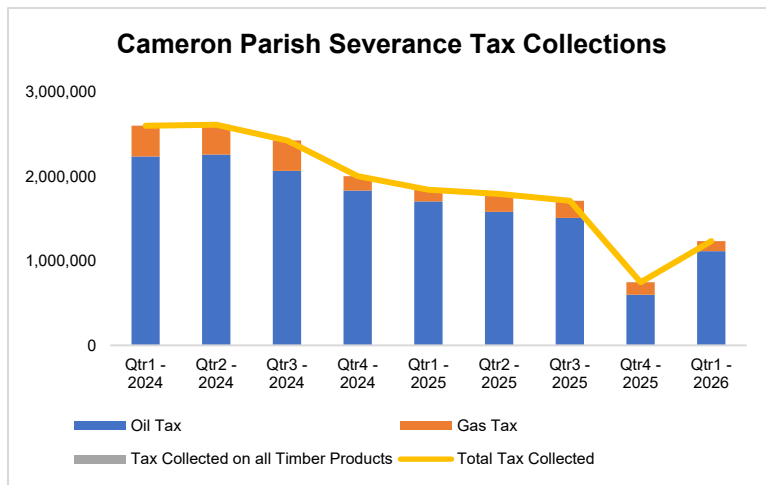
Cameron Parish had a higher employment level in the 1st quarter of 2026 compared to the same quarter the previous year and the unemployment measures were lower. These results led to a slight rise in the labor force in Cameron Parish.

Cameron Parish Unemployment



Tax Collections

Cameron parish collects no local sales tax, so it is not possible to show the monthly or quarterly trends in those tax collections in the parish. However, Cameron is the parish in SWLA that is generally responsible for the highest amount of state severance tax collections. To give some view into the severance tax collections in the parish, below are figures and data relating to the recent severance tax collections by category for Cameron.



The graph on the above left shows the total severance tax collections from each source with the line representing total collections. The graph on the upper right shows the latest 1st quarter YTD figures for each severance tax type (as well as total) over the past three years. Total severance tax collections have been slowly falling since the end of 2022.

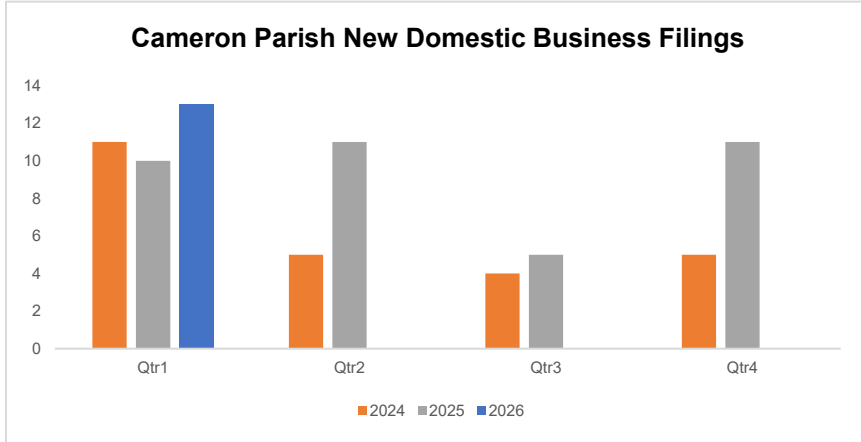
Severance Tax Collections	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Oil Tax	1,704,321	1,581,963	1,508,376	600,126	1,114,286	-590,035	-34.6
Gas Tax	137,579	210,896	204,284	146,825	119,306	-18,273	-13.3
Tax Collected on all Timber Products	23	11	0	9	0	-23	-100.0
Total Tax Collected	1,841,922	1,792,869	1,712,660	746,959	1,233,592	-608,330	-33.0

Total Severance Tax Collections (YTD)	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	2,601,045	5,213,425	7,639,232	9,643,056
2025	1,841,922	3,634,791	5,347,451	6,094,411
2026	1,233,592			

The largest amount of severance tax collections from Cameron are taxes on oil. Oil tax collections in the 1st quarter of 2026 fell by \$590 thousand compared to the same quarter the previous year. This represented a 34.6% decrease. In terms of gas collections, those fell \$18.3 thousand over that period for a 13.3% decrease. Timber product collections were \$0 in the 1st quarter. The 1st quarter of 2026 saw some decreases in gas severance taxes collected while the biggest component continued its decline.

The YTD figures show that in 2026 there was a decline in 1st quarter total severance taxes collected compared to the same quarter in the previous year. In the 1st quarter of 2026 YTD, severance taxes fell \$608 thousand for a decrease of 33.0%.

New Business Filings



The graph shows the number of new business filings each quarter compared to the same quarter in the previous two years.

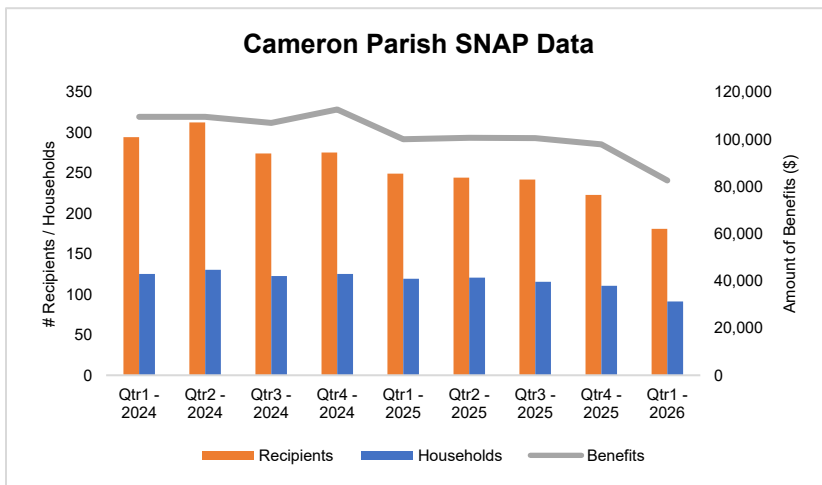
The number of new business filings in Cameron parish was 13 in the 1st quarter of 2026, which was 3 more than the same quarter in 2025 and 2 more compared to the same quarter 2 years ago. The YTD total for the 1st quarter of 2026 was 13. This was 3 business more than the 1st quarter of 2025 YTD and 2 more than of the 1st quarter of 2024 YTD.

Qtrly New Business Filings	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	11	5	4	5
2025	10	11	5	11
2026	13			

Qtrly New Business Filings YTD	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	11	16	20	25
2025	10	21	26	37
2026	13			

SNAP Benefits

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Recipients	249	244	242	223	181	-68	-27.4
Households	119	121	116	111	91	-28	-23.5
Benefits	100,072	100,682	100,524	97,902	82,587	-17,484	-17.5



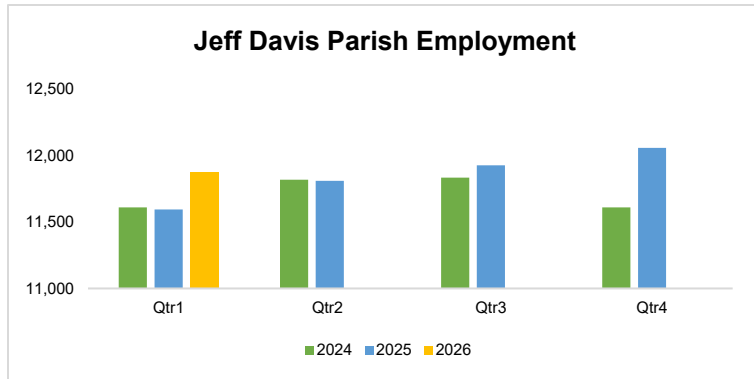
Cameron parish has had drops in SNAP recipients and households, and benefits over the year. The parish had an average of 181 recipients of SNAP benefits in the 1st quarter of 2026. This was 68 less than the amount of people receiving benefits in the 1st quarter of 2025 for a 27.4% decrease over this time. The total number of households receiving SNAP averaged 91, which was 28 fewer than in the 1st quarter of 2025. This represented a 23.5% decrease. The parish received an average of \$82.6 thousand in total during the 1st quarter of 2026, which was a \$17,484 decrease over-the-year. This was a 17.5% decrease in benefits in the parish.

Looking at the graph illustrates recipients, households, and benefits falling since the end of 2022. March 2023 marked a large drop in total benefits to bring down the whole of quarter 1 due to emergency benefits expiring, and that has been showing in future quarters. The number of benefits, number recipients and households, has fallen to a much lower level for 2026.

Selected Employment Indicators – Jefferson Davis Parish

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Household Employment	11,594	11,810	11,926	12,057	11,876
Year-Over-Year Change	-16	-9	93	447	282
Year-Over-Year % Change	-0.1	-0.1	0.8	3.9	2.4
Household Unemployment	577	570	578	546	593
Year-Over-Year Change	19	15	-59	-53	16
Year-Over-Year % Change	3.4	2.7	-9.3	-8.9	2.7
Labor Force	12,171	12,380	12,504	12,603	12,468
Year-Over-Year Change	3	6	33	394	298
Year-Over-Year % Change	0.0	0.1	0.3	3.2	2.4
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.7
Year-Over-Year Change	0.2	0.1	-0.5	-0.6	0.0

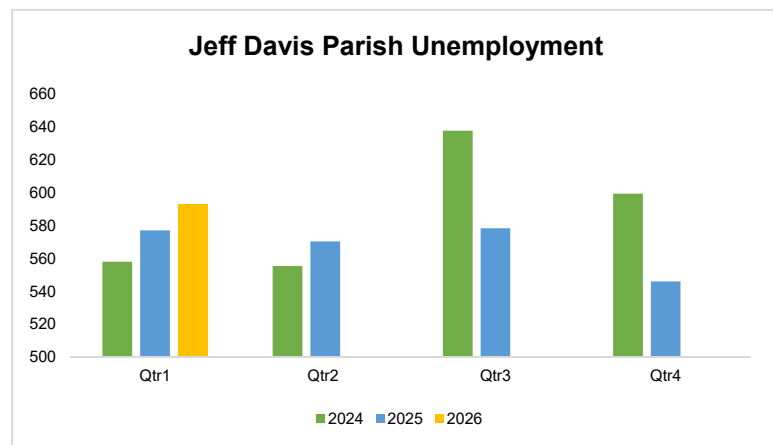
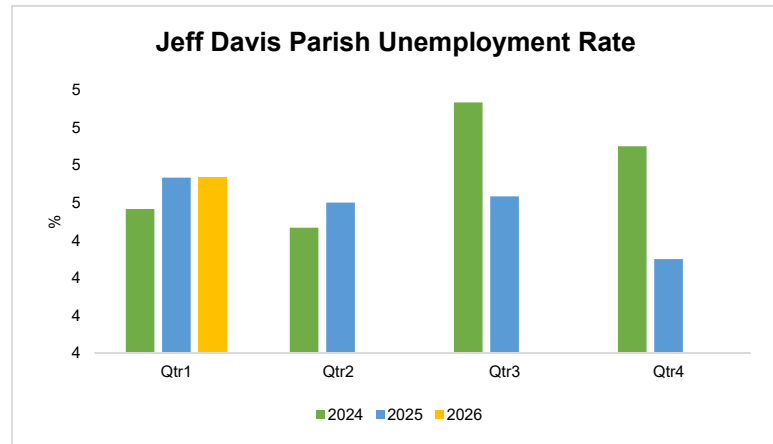
	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026
Total Job Openings	326	306	284	308	358
Year-Over-Year Change	-127	-55	18	-28	32
Year-Over-Year % Change	-28.0	-15.3	6.9	-8.2	9.8



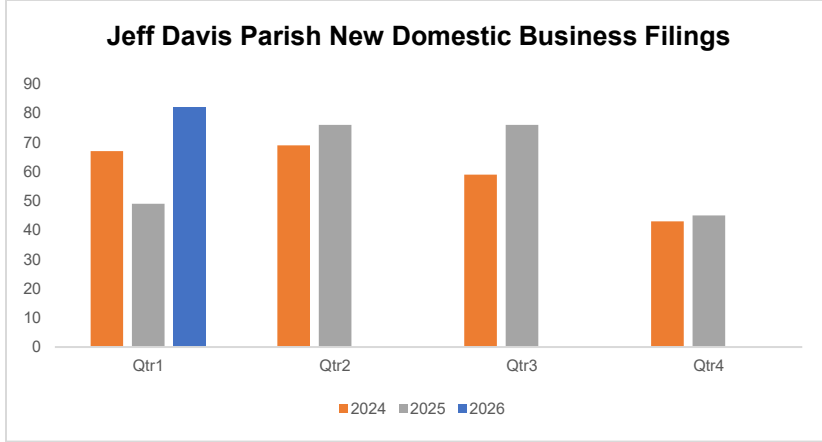
In the 1st quarter of 2026, Jefferson Davis Parish saw an increase of 298 (+2.4%) in the total labor force. This was broken down by an increase in household employment of 282 over the year (+2.4%) while the number of unemployed people rose by 16 (+2.7%). The unemployment rate stayed the same compared to last year at 4.7%.

Job openings in the 1st quarter of 2026 averaged 358. Openings rose by 32 (+9.8%) over the year.

The graphs show the levels of household employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate for each quarter compared to the same quarter the previous two years. Jeff Davis Parish had slightly higher figures for employment in the 1st quarter of 2026 compared to 2025, with slightly higher unemployment figures and the same unemployment rate.



New Business Filings



The graph shows the number of new business filings each quarter compared to the same quarter in the previous two years.

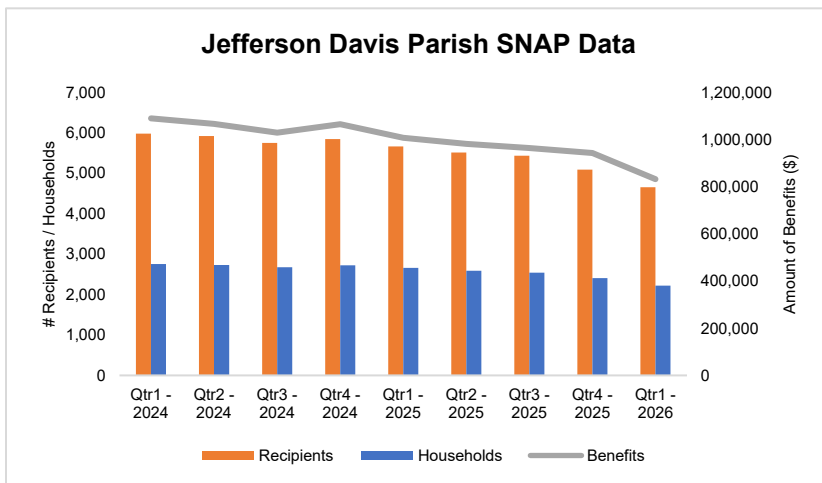
The number of new business filings in Jefferson Davis parish was 82 in the 1st quarter of 2026 which was 33 more than the same quarter in 2025 and 15 more compared to the same quarter 2 years ago. The YTD total for the 1st quarter of 2026 was 82. This was 33 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2025 YTD and 15 businesses more than the 1st quarter of 2024 YTD.

Qtrly New Business Filings	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	67	69	59	43
2025	49	76	76	45
2026	82			

Qtrly New Business Filings YTD	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
2024	67	136	195	238
2025	49	125	201	246
2026	82			

SNAP Benefits

	Qtr1 - 2025	Qtr2 - 2025	Qtr3 - 2025	Qtr4 - 2025	Qtr1 - 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Recipients	5,662	5,512	5,433	5,088	4,652	-1,010	-17.8
Households	2,661	2,589	2,541	2,407	2,221	-440	-16.5
Benefits	1,007,004	981,278	963,989	943,076	831,908	-175,096	-17.4

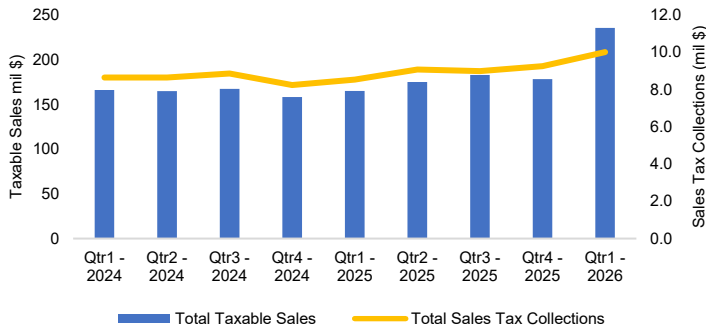


Jefferson Davis parish has had decreases in SNAP recipients, households, and drops in benefits over the year. The parish had an average of 4,652 recipients of SNAP benefits in the 1st quarter of 2026. This was 1,010 less people receiving benefits compared to the 1st quarter of 2025 for a 17.8% decrease over this time. The total number of households receiving SNAP averaged 2,221, which was 440 less than the same quarter in the previous year. This represented a 16.5% decrease. In terms of benefits, the parish received \$831.9 thousand in total during the 1st quarter of 2026, which was a \$175.1 thousand decrease over-the-year. This was a 17.4% decrease in benefits in the parish.

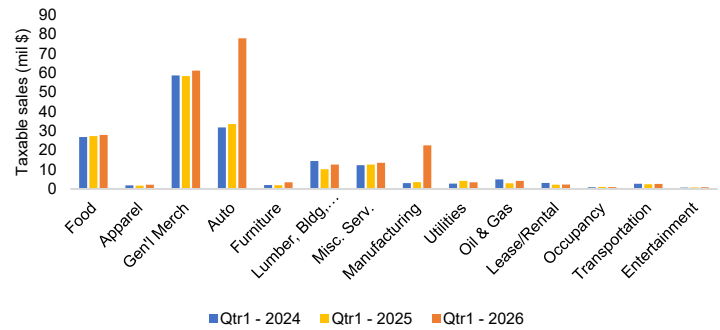
Looking at the graph illustrates an overall flat trend in benefits since the fourth quarter of 2022. The number of households and recipients receiving benefits has been flat since falling in early 2023. March 2023 marked a large drop in total benefits to bring down the whole of quarter 1 due to emergency benefits expiring, and that will show in future quarters. The variables have been slightly falling since 2023, and benefits have fallen quite a bit through 2025.

Tax Collections

Jefferson Davis Parish Taxable Sales and Sales Tax Collections



Jeff Davis Parish Taxable Sales - 1st Quarter YTD



Taxable Sales (mil \$)	Qtr1- 2025	Qtr2- 2025	Qtr3- 2025	Qtr4- 2025	Qtr1- 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Food	27.3	30.4	28.5	28.1	27.9	0.6	2.1
Apparel	1.7	1.9	1.3	2.1	2.2	0.5	26.2
Gen'l Merch	58.3	58.7	57.0	58.0	61.1	2.8	4.9
Auto	33.5	44.3	53.0	44.4	77.8	44.3	132.1
Furniture	2.0	1.6	2.6	2.5	3.5	1.5	77.3
Lumber, Bldg, Contractors	10.2	9.7	9.6	13.6	12.6	2.3	22.9
Misc. Serv.	12.6	12.2	14.2	12.3	13.6	0.9	7.3
Manufacturing	3.6	3.2	4.2	4.1	22.5	18.9	531.9
Utilities	4.2	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	-0.8	-18.4
Oil & Gas	2.9	2.6	2.8	2.9	4.2	1.3	43.5
Lease/Rental	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.3	0.1	5.1
Occupancy	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.1	0.9	-0.1	-7.2
Transportation	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.6	0.2	8.1
Entertainment	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.1	10.4
Total	165.0	175.0	182.9	178.3	235.4	70.5	42.7

Tax Collections (mil \$)	Qtr1- 2025	Qtr2- 2025	Qtr3- 2025	Qtr4- 2025	Qtr1- 2026	YoY Change	YoY % Change
Total Sales Tax Collections	8.5	9.1	9.0	9.3	10.0	1.5	17.2

Taxable Sales YTD (mil \$)	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
2024	166.1	330.8	498.2	656.4
2025	165.0	340.0	522.9	701.1
2026	235.4			

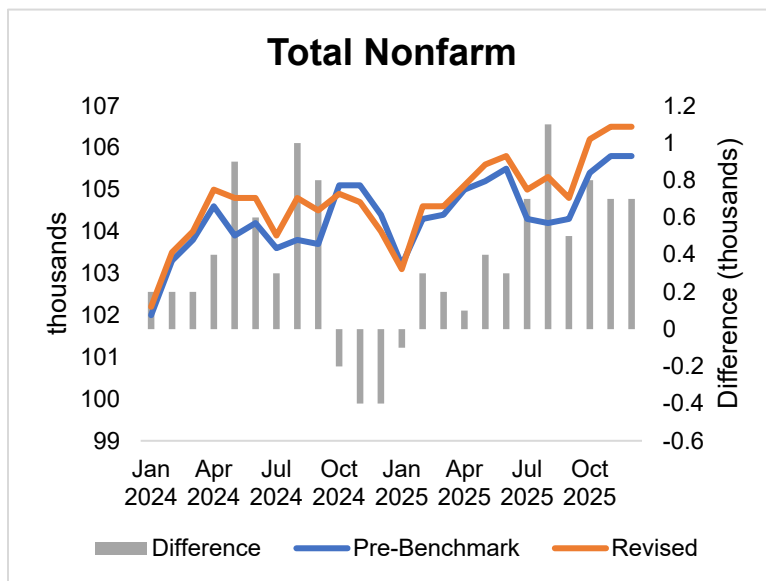
Sales Tax YTD (mil \$)	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
2024	8.6	17.3	26.1	34.4
2025	8.5	17.6	26.6	35.8
2026	10.0			

Jefferson Davis Parish saw a 17.2% increase in its sales tax collections in the 1st quarter of 2026, compared to the same quarter the previous year. Sales tax collections have risen by approximately \$1.5 million over the year. This occurred as taxable sales in the parish rose by \$70.5 million (+42.7%) over the year. The largest percentage increase occurred in Manufacturing (+\$18.9 million, +531.9%), The largest increase in absolute terms was from Auto (+\$44.3 million, +132.1%). Food experienced an increase in taxable sales (+\$0.6 million, +2.1%) as did Apparel (+\$0.5 million, +26.2%), General Merch. (+\$2.8 million, 4.9%), Furniture (+\$1.5 million, +77.3%), Lumber, Building, Contractors (+\$2.3 million, +22.9%), Misc. Services (+\$0.9 million, +7.3%), Oil & Gas (+\$1.3 million, +43.5%), Lease/Rental (+\$0.1 million, +5.1%), Transportation (+\$0.2 million, +8.1%), and Entertainment (+\$0.1 million, +10.4%). Utilities had the largest decrease in absolute terms and percentage (-\$0.8 million, -18.4%). While Occupancy (-\$0.1 million, -7.2%) also saw drops.

The 1st quarter of 2026 YTD figures show that total taxable sales have increased in the parish by \$70.4 million compared to the same quarter in 2025 for a 42.7% increase. There was a \$1.5 million increase in 2026 YTD sales tax collections (+17.2%).

Every first quarter, this report gets to analyze the recent benchmark revisions to the nonfarm employment measures. These employment figures are not available at the parish level, but are focused on the MSA's, states, and the nation. Every month, the BLS releases monthly estimates of the nonfarm employment of areas throughout the United States. Generally, the latest month is preliminary and the previous month is revised as more data comes in. This is due to the fact that the measures rely on surveys sent to businesses throughout the nation. A preliminary estimate is made for the latest month based on the initial responses and the previous month is revised to reflect additional data that has come in. Generally, the monthly revisions aren't drastic. However, every year, the nonfarm estimates are further revised to incorporate a more complete source of employment data, the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Whereas the initial estimates are based on a survey, the **census** comes from actual employment and unemployment insurance records. There has been some controversy recently that the employment estimates are "wrong". However, it's most likely the case that survey participation is down and that affects the accuracy of preliminary estimates. Recently, [GAO released a report analyzing this](#).

While a detailed look at accuracy and potential improvements (as well as federal budgeting considerations) is well beyond the scope of this essay, we can now see how these annual benchmark revisions affected Lake Charles, MSA employment estimates. And, finally, we have seen revisions upward.



The graph to the left shows the original pre-benchmark estimates in blue and the revised benchmark estimates in blue. The gray bars show the difference between the revised and preliminary data.

For every month in 2025, with the exception of January, the total nonfarm employment measure was revised upward. The largest increase occurred in August 2025 which saw total nonfarm employment revised up by 1,100 jobs. The 2025 annual average of jobs was preliminarily estimated at 104,800. After the benchmark revisions, that total became 105,300.

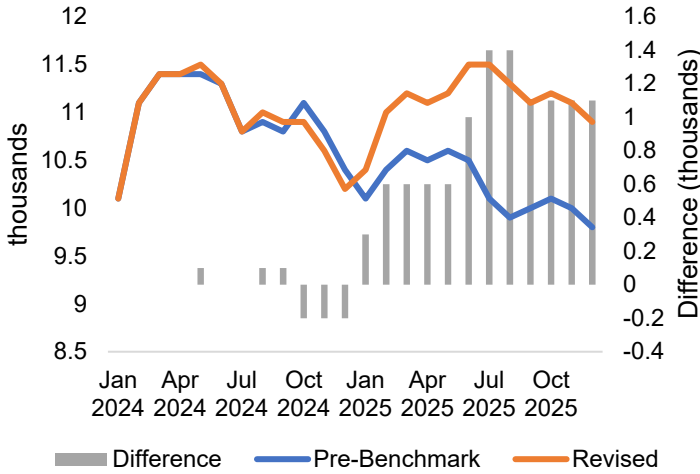
When looking at the major sectors, the most dramatic revisions came in Construction. The preliminary estimates from the BLS did not point to the increases in construction the area was seeing on the ground. This is most likely the case of surveys not picking up the

increases in employment. As shown in the graph on the following page, the revisions to construction are striking. In previous years, construction was drastically revised downward. This year, that has been flipped, implying that construction employment in our region is difficult to estimate in real-time.

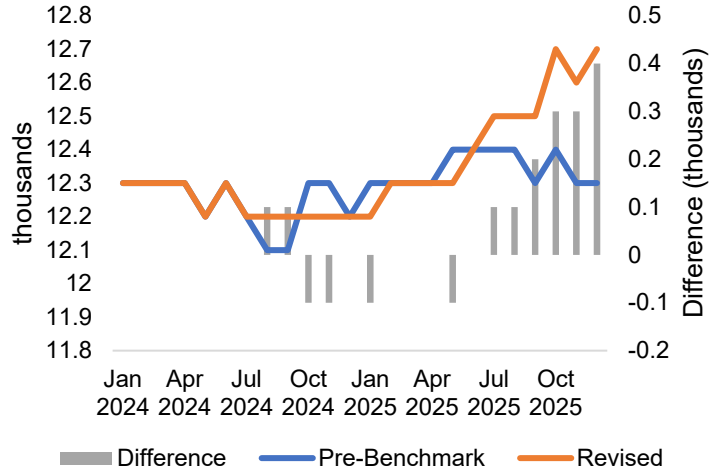
For every month, in 2025, employment in the construction industry was revised upward. The largest revisions came in July and August, which each saw employment in this area 1,400 jobs higher than previously estimated. In fact, through the last six months of the year, employment in construction was revised up by 1,000 or more jobs. The annual average of construction employment in 2025 was 900 jobs more than previously estimated.

Also on the next page is a graph showing Manufacturing employment. While the revisions were not as dramatic as Construction, the upward revisions through the last half of 2025 illustrate this important industry was growing more than previously thought.

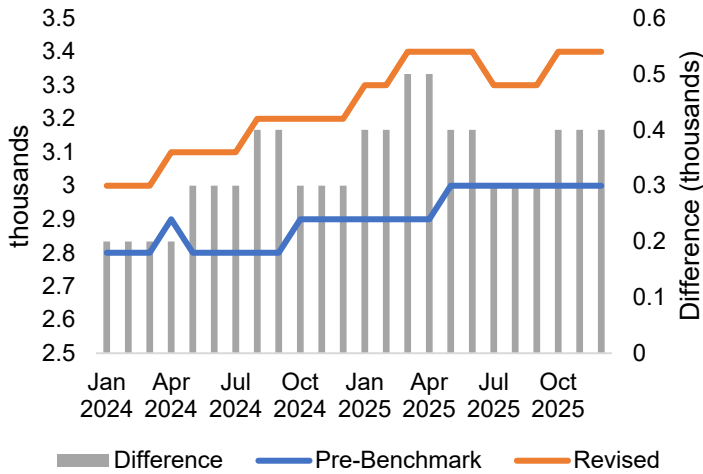
Construction



Manufacturing



Other Services



Finally, Other services also had revisions upward ranging from 300 to 400 a month throughout 2025. While the Construction, Manufacturing, and Other Services sectors show significant upward revisions, other sectors showed minor downward adjustments which affected the total nonfarm. Trade, Transportation and Utilities, Professional and Business Services, Leisure and Hospitality, and Government, all had decreases in jobs

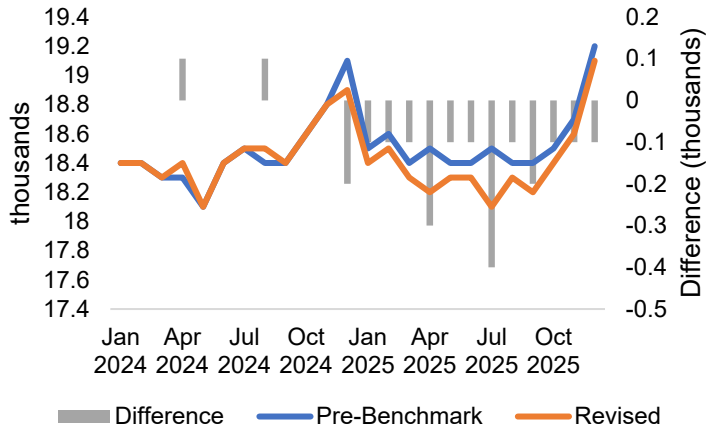
Trade, Transportation and Utilities, saw decreases downward revisions ranging from 100 to 400 jobs. Professional and business services downward revisions ranged from 200 to 400 jobs every month through 2025. Leisure and hospitality had some upward revisions in 2024 and for one month (May) in 2025 before showing decreases every month. Although not shown, Education and health services had decreases from 100 to 200 for

eleven months of 2025 (one month had no change).

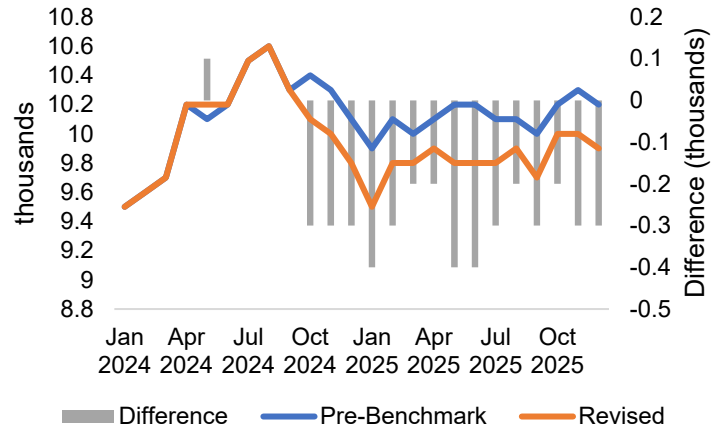
The most visually striking was the Government sector. Every month in 2024 had drops from the pre-benchmark estimate and the decreases get bigger as the year continues. In the first part of the year, the revisions range from 100 to 300 jobs lower. After that the range goes from 300 to 700 jobs lower (with 600 lower in November and 500 lower in September and December).

These dramatic drops in Government employment resulted in large upward revisions in private sector employment. Throughout 2025, the monthly revisions resulted in a range from 400 to 1,500 jobs each month.

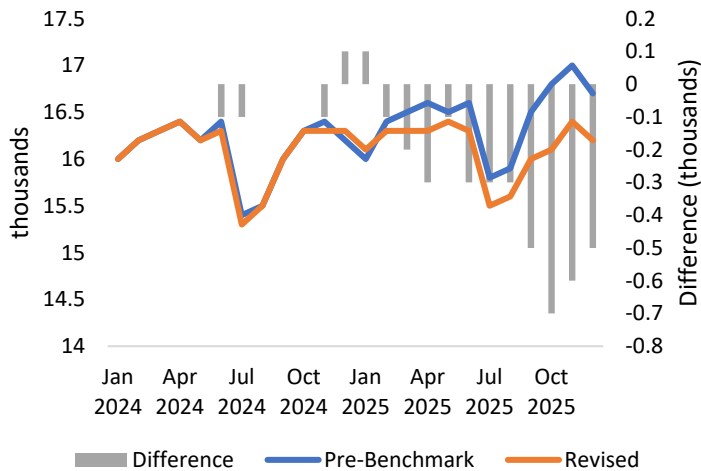
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities



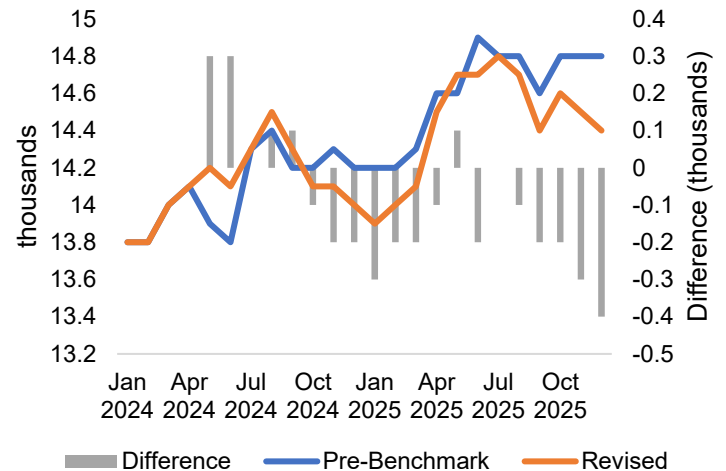
Professional and Business Services



Government



Leisure and Hospitality



The 2025 benchmark revisions to nonfarm employment data for the Lake Charles MSA reinforce an important reality: while monthly estimates provide a useful real-time snapshot of the labor market, they are inherently imperfect and subject to meaningful revision as more complete data becomes available. This year's revisions, which were largely upward, suggest that economic activity in the region, particularly within the private sector, was stronger than initially reported. Importantly, the net effect of these revisions was a more favorable picture of the regional economy in 2025. Ultimately, these revisions do not indicate that the initial estimates were "wrong," but rather that they are part of an evolving measurement process. As survey response rates and economic conditions change, so too will the precision of early estimates. The benchmark process remains essential in providing a more accurate and complete understanding of local labor market trends, and in the case of Lake Charles, it reveals a regional economy that was more resilient and dynamic than first believed.

The following sources were utilized for each of the graphs and tables shown in the report. Data transformations are described in the footnotes, and it should be noted some of the totals in the report may be off due to rounding. The monthly data used for the report, and more not shown, is available at our website, mcneesedrewecon.org/.

1. Lake Charles MSA Employment Indicators – BLS CES/SAE and LAUS^a

Total nonfarm employment, average weekly hours, and average weekly earnings statistics for the area come from the BLS State and Metro Area Employment, Hours, & Earnings (SAE) measures which are derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES). The household employment measures for the MSA (and parishes) come from the BLS Local Area Employment Statistics (LAUS). The CES/SAE measures are derived from a survey of businesses while LAUS figures come from a survey of households that become part of a BLS formula/model to derive the household employment statistics. For more information, please contact the Drew CBEA.

2. Quarterly Housing Price Indexes - Federal Housing Finance Agency (rebased to have the first quarter of 2011 equal 100)
3. Lake Charles MSA Building Permits – Census Building Permits Survey (BPS)^b

Note: While the building permit YTD figures in this report are calculated by summing up the monthly values, they may not match the YTD values given from pulling data directly from the Census BPS. The YTD monthly values at the BPS are changed due to late and missed filings. However, the monthly values of permits and valuations, which this report uses, are not changed at the Census BPS. These differences appear to be fairly minor, however. For more information, please contact the Drew CBEA.

4. Lake Charles Regional Airport Statistics – Bureau of Transportation Statistics, TranStats^b
5. Lake Charles Port Statistics – Census USA Trade Online^b
6. Lake Charles Gaming Statistics – Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections, Louisiana Gaming Control Board^b
7. Parish Employment Indicators – BLS LAUS^a
The labor force is the sum of household employment and household unemployment.
8. Parish Job Openings – Louisiana Workforce Commission^a
9. New Business Filings – Louisiana Secretary of State^b
10. Parish SNAP Benefits – Louisiana Department of Children & Family Services^a
11. Allen Parish Tax Collections – Allen Parish School Board^b
12. Beauregard Parish Tax Collections – Beauregard Parish Sheriff's Office^b
13. Calcasieu Parish Tax Collections – Calcasieu Parish School Board^b
14. Cameron Parish Severance Tax Collections – Louisiana Department of Revenue^b
15. Jefferson Davis Parish Tax Collections – Jefferson Davis Parish School Board^b
16. Unemployment Insurance Claims – Louisiana Workforce Commission

- a. Quarterly values are obtained from averaging the monthly values
- b. Quarterly values are obtained from summing the monthly values