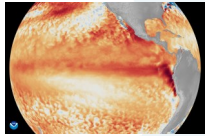




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○ ISSUE 54

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Tallahassee Topics

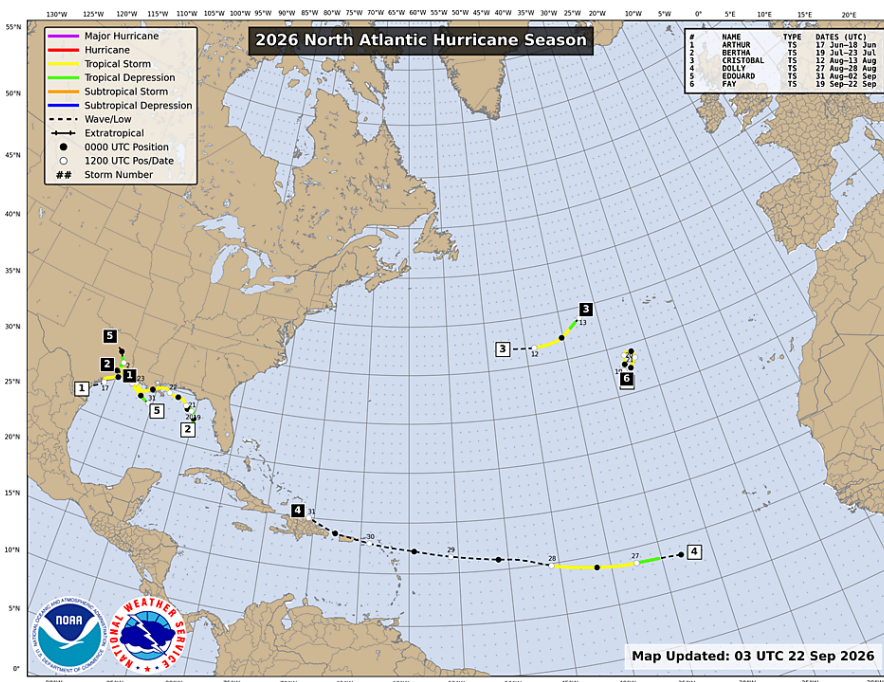
NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE.

The National Weather Service (NWS) office in Tallahassee, FL provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for Southeast Alabama, Southwest & South Central Georgia, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend across 48 counties, and the adjacent Gulf coastal waters. Our primary mission is the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the local economy.

A Historic Atlantic Hurricane Season, but for Unremarkable Reasons

As of the Autumn Equinox, September 22nd, the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season has been very quiet with only 6 named storms and zero hurricanes. The latter set a new satellite-era record (1966-present) for longest streak to start a season, surpassing September 11, 2002 & 2013. The latest forming first hurricane on record is October 8, 1905. This season is poised to challenge that date after Tropical Storm Fay narrowly missed out on staving off September 21, 1941, previously 2nd place. Otherwise, it is conceivable that 2026 eventually joins 1907 & 1914 as the only seasons on record, which reliably date back to 1851, to not feature any hurricanes. If this rare feat occurs, then it would also be the first time since 2014-2015 of back-to-back seasons without a hurricane in the Gulf. The last Gulf hurricane was Milton in early October 2024, thus making for nearly a 2-year drought to date. Melissa was the most recent hurricane observed in the Atlantic, October

2025.



The primary driver for such pronounced suppression is the prevalence of a highly amplified El Niño that is projected to strengthen further over the next few months to potentially historic levels. More information is available on page 5. El Niño tends to suppress Atlantic tropical activity via strong vertical wind shear and subsidence (i.e., sinking air). The pre-season NOAA May Outlook highlighted a greater-than-normal probability of a below average season with respect to number of named storms as there was high confidence then of an El Niño developing some time in the summer and potentially becoming strong. The latter became an understatement a couple months later, which prompted an updated outlook in August to further increase the odds of a suppressed season. Despite the very quiet trends, there are still over 2 full months left to potentially make up ground, so people are urged to not let their guards down.

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Summer Highlights

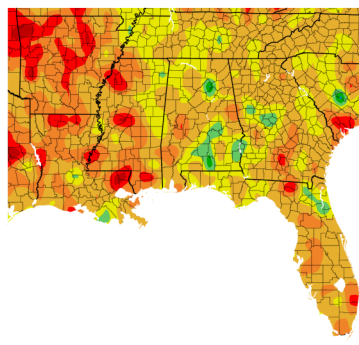
Convectively active, hazardous heat, improved drought

June was highlighted by hot, wet weather, and continued improving drought conditions. The first Heat Advisory of the year was issued on the 13th, followed by 4 additional advisories the remainder of the month (including the final 3 days). Our local criteria are heat indices in the 108°-112° range. Although not as wet as May, the Tri-State area received more beneficial rainfall, especially west of the Apalachicola-Flint River basin where drought was removed. Bouts of severe weather also occurred, particularly when the remnants of Tropical Storm Arthur moved across the Deep South. [Three weak tornadoes](#) of no higher than EF-0 intensity were confirmed from the 17th-18th: Ewell, AL, Enterprise, AL, and Millers Ferry, FL.

July was a very busy month defined by multiple rounds of severe weather, hazardous heat, and local peripheral impacts from [Tropical Storm Bertha](#). A total of 86 Severe Thunderstorm Warnings (SVR) were issued—nearly half the total were on the 10th, 17th, and 29th (40 combined SVRs). All but Quitman County, GA in our office's county warning area had an active SVR at some point during the month. There were numerous local storm reports consisting of downed trees/power lines, and 40+ mph thunderstorm-marine gusts, including several near or explicitly severe gusts of at least 58 mph! In terms of heat, 6 Heat Advisories and 2 Extreme Heat Warnings were issued for various parts of the Tri-State area. The latter was the first of the year for heat indices of 113° or higher. The final week of July, especially on the 29th, was the hottest when the majority of these hazards were in effect.

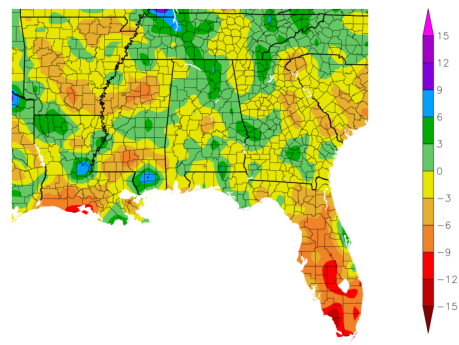
August 2026 will be remembered for an unusually long-duration heat wave (lasting about 2 weeks) and having the most SVRs issued in our office's history for that month. Fourteen Heat Advisories and 3 Extreme Heat Warnings were issued. The high number of convective warnings were attributed to the combination of very high instability fostered by the abnormal heat and persistent upper-level disturbances providing a frequent source for convection. Usually during heat waves, convection is largely suppressed because of the strong subsidence (sinking air) from high pressure systems.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
6/1/2026 – 8/31/2026



Generated 9/10/2026 using provisional data.

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
6/1/2026 – 8/31/2026



Generated 9/10/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Summer Climate Summary: Tallahassee's average season mean temperature during the summer months (June-July-August) was 83.2°, or 1.2° above normal based on the current 30-year climatological period (1991-2020). The highest/lowest temperatures of the season were 101°/57°. August 1st saw the coolest high at 83° while 79° was the warmest low, occurring on August 17th. The first 100° day was observed at TLH for the first time since September 2, 2024 on July 29th. There were a total of seventy-six 90° days and three 100° days. Rainfall was well below normal with a 3-month accumulation of only 17.32 inches (5.18-inch deficit). There were 42 days of measurable rain of at least 0.01 inches. The greatest single-day total was 3.68 inches on August 1st, which set a new daily record.

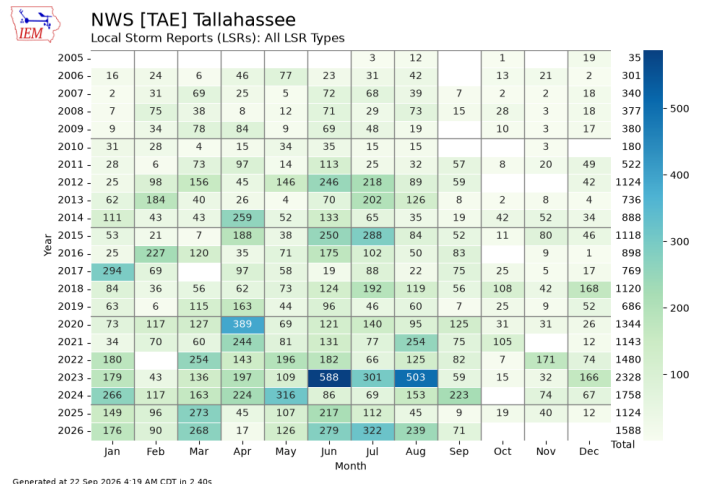
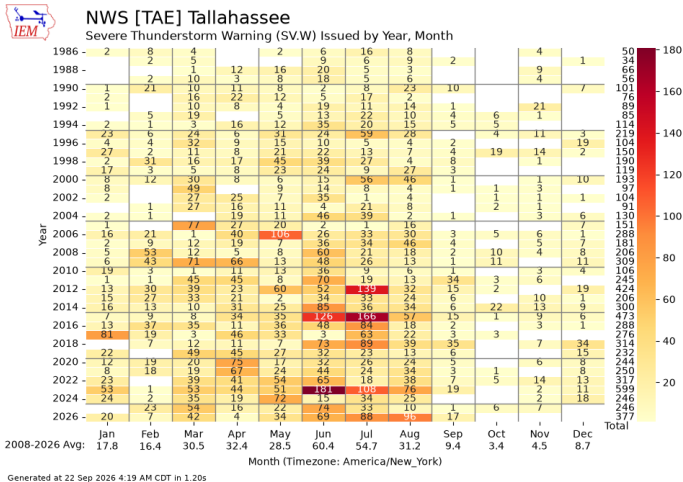
Autumn Climate Normals: Tallahassee's average mean temperature during the autumn months (September-October-November) is 69.9°. The normal high/low temperatures are 80.9°/58.8°. The last 90° day of the year typically occurs near the end of September while the first freeze of the season arrives by late November, on average. The latest 90° day on record is September 3, 1907 and the earliest freeze is October 18, 1977. Usual seasonal rainfall amounts are 11.25 inches. Tropical systems, fronts, and high pressure are the primary local drivers of the autumn climate and weather.

Breakdown of Local Summer 2026 Storminess & Heat

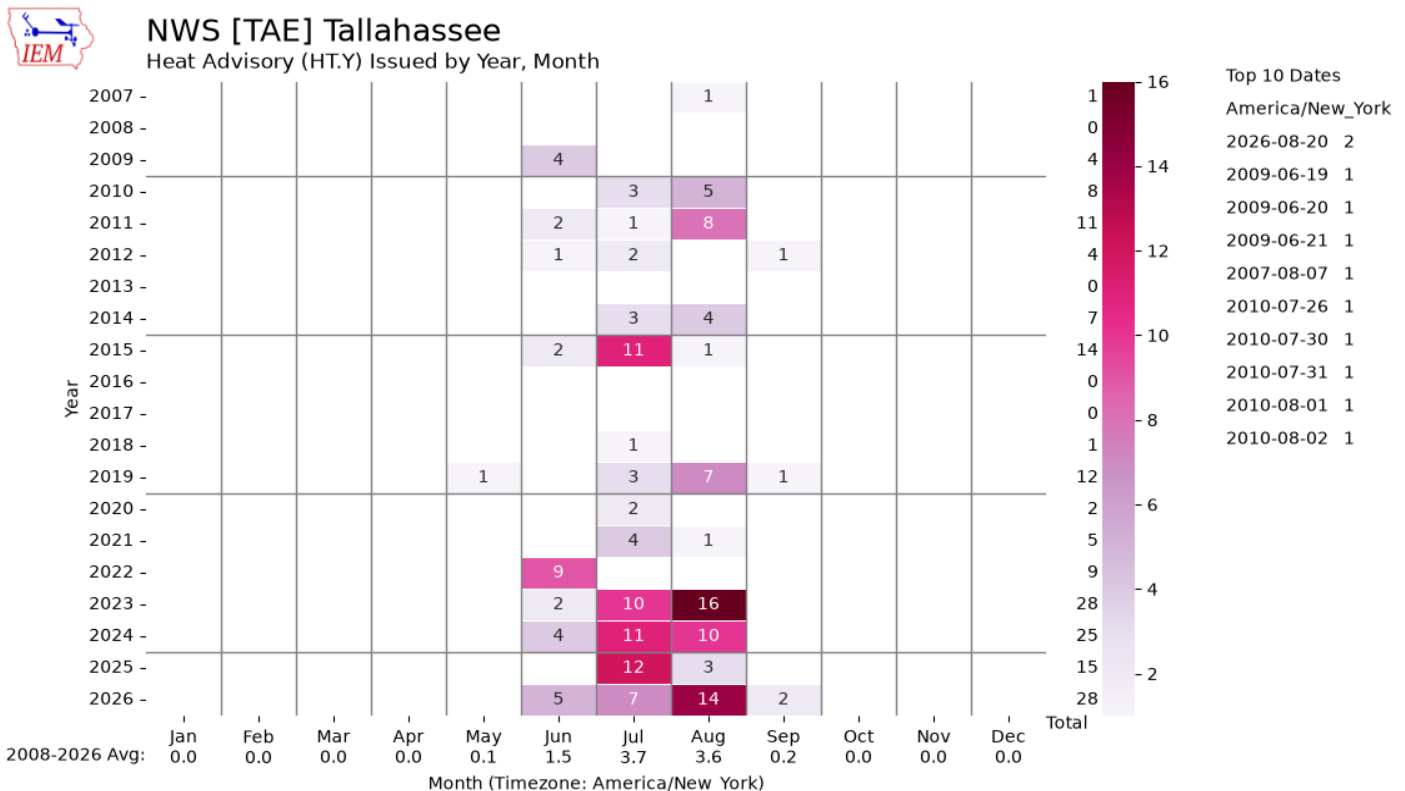
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sr-tae.webmaster@noaa.gov

Summer 2026 will be remembered for its exceptional storminess across the Tri-State area from June through August. A total of 253 Severe Thunderstorm Warnings (SVR, *bottom-left figure*) were issued by NWS Tallahassee with 840 Local Storm Reports (LSR, *bottom-right figure*). This past July saw the most number of LSRs in our office's history at 322 ranging from thunderstorm/marine wind gust & damage, hail, and flooding reports. We also issued the most SVRs (96) for the month of August in our history. Only 2023 and 2015 stand out more, especially with respect to SVRs.



Looking at heat, a total of 26 Heat Advisories (HTY, *figure below*) were issued: 5 in June, 7 in July, 14 in August. This tally is the 2nd most, behind 28 in 2023 and just ahead of 25 in 2025. For perspective, the 14 HTY's this past August were 1 shy of the total issued last summer! Five Extreme Heat Warnings, formally known as Excessive Heat Warnings, were issued in July (2) and August (3). Outside of the anomalously hot 2023, no other year saw more than 2 issued.



Summer Outreach



Management-Admin Team

Meteorologist-In-Charge
Warning Coordination Meteorologist
Science & Operations Officer
Electronic Systems Analyst
Information Technology Officer
Administrative Assistant
Senior Service Hydrologist
Observation Program Leader

Operational Team

Lead Forecasters (5)
General Forecasters (6)
Electronic Technicians (2)

Summer 2026 was the most active summer ever for outreach across the NWS Tallahassee service area. In June, staff completed 17 various engagements spanning emergency management training, media interviews, and public preparedness. Our Senior Service Hydrologist (SSH) presented in-person at Florida's Training for Emergency Management Symposium at the Hyatt Grand Cypress Conference Center and conducted virtual television and newspaper interviews focusing on earthquakes and droughts. Our Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) handled a heavy schedule of hurricane preparations, participating in the annual Leon Co. Hurricane Season Briefing Press Conference, virtual hurricane exercises and outlooks for FAMU and FSU, a virtual coordination meeting for the GA Region L Healthcare Coalition, a StormReady Verification Visit at the Calhoun County FL EOC, and a presentation for a City of Tallahassee PREP Workshop. An NWS Tallahassee meteorologist and marine team member targeted coastal hazards by hosting an in-person beach safety meeting and acting as primary instructor for a Partner Rip Current Training at the St. George Island Volunteer Fire Department. Media outreach was active and the NWS Tallahassee office collectively handling virtual newspaper and television interviews for the Panama City News Herald, Tallahassee Democrat, and CBS News, while also staffing an in-person booth for emergency managers and the general public at the Wakulla County Preparedness Expo.

During July, public engagement included six recorded activities focused on community health, coalition meetings, and media updates. Mark Wool led three engagements, including staffing a booth at the Hope Through the Storm Health Fair at Life of Christ Church, delivering an in-person presentation for the Big Bend Healthcare Coalition Meeting at FDLE HQ, and completing a virtual newspaper interview with USA Today Florida reporter Kimberly Miller. Our Meteorologist In Charge participated in an in-person, non-operational Florida State University System Emergency Management Meeting hosted at the CASS Building on the FAMU Campus to coordinate with emergency managers and government officials. Media engagements continued throughout the month, with an NWS Tallahassee meteorologist conducting an in-person newspaper interview and the NWS Tallahassee team executing a virtual phone interview with the Tallahassee Democrat.

August 2026 featured 11 activities heavily centered on targeted community preparedness, student outreach, and seasonal workshops. The WCM delivered several in-person presentations to the general public, including Hurricane Preparedness for Families at the Leroy Collins Leon County Main Public Library, and a Gulf Coast Scallop Season Kickoff Workshop at the St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve Visitor Center. The WCM also staffed a booth at the FSU New Graduate Student Orientation Table Fair (joined by our Observation Program Leader), facilitated virtual non-operational briefings for the Emerald Coast HCC and for Farmers and Ranchers. An NWS Tallahassee meteorologist briefed at an in-person coordination meeting for the Region K HCC at Albany State University. A Lead Forecaster participated in a Mag Lab Hurricane Preparedness Event. Another Lead Forecaster supported National Aviation Day (*pictured below*) by staffing a booth at the Army Aviation Museum for students and weather spotters, and completed a virtual newspaper interview with USA Today Florida. The office concluded the month's activities when a Lead Forecaster and Fire Weather Focal Point gave an in-person presentation at the Northwest Florida Prescribed Burn Association Workshop at Tall Timbers.



State of ENSO, Autumn Seasonal Climate & Drought Outlook, Year-to-Date Climate

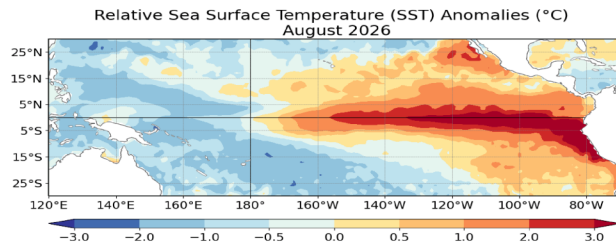


Figure 1. Average relative sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (°C) for August 2026. Anomalies are computed with respect to the 1991-2020 base period monthly means. Data: OISSTv2.1.
https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/ens0_update/Monthly_RelSSTA_map-hr.png

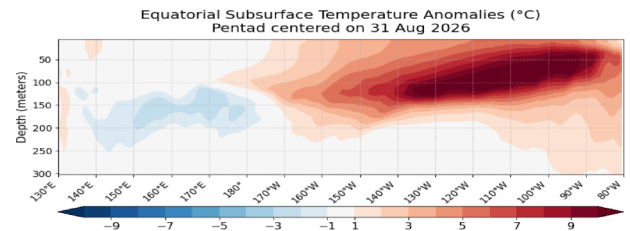
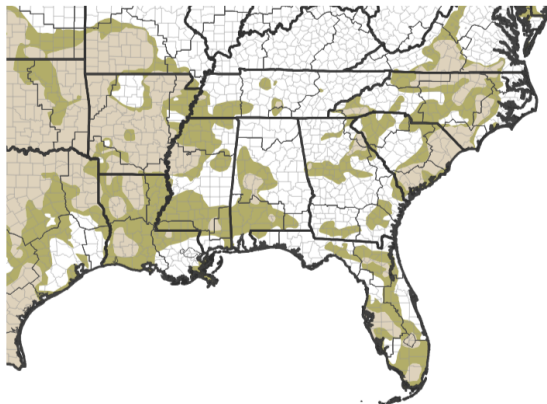


Figure 4. Depth-longitude section of equatorial Pacific upper-ocean (0-300m) temperature anomalies (°C) centered on the pentad of 31 August 2026. Anomalies are departures from the 1991-2020 base period pentad means. Data: GODAS.
https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/ens0_update/zlon_last-hr.png

Historically Strong El Niño Possible: As of [September 10th](#), very warm sea surface and sub-sea surface temperature anomalies (SSTA) continued across the Equatorial Pacific Ocean (*figures above*). El Niño has overall strengthened since August and is poised to intensify further during the fall and winter months. There is a 90% probability of a “very strong” event, defined as SSTAs > 2° C in the aforementioned region. There is now a 3 in 4 chance of a historic event that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño’s dating back to 1950 during the October-December 2026 period. These projections imply a high likelihood of experiencing traditional impacts most pronounced during the Hurricane and Winter seasons. Atlantic basin tropical activity tends to be suppressed, which has been the case so far through mid September. A wetter and cooler than normal winter usually occurs thanks to an active subtropical jet fostering southern storm tracks.

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for September 17, 2026–December 31, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...



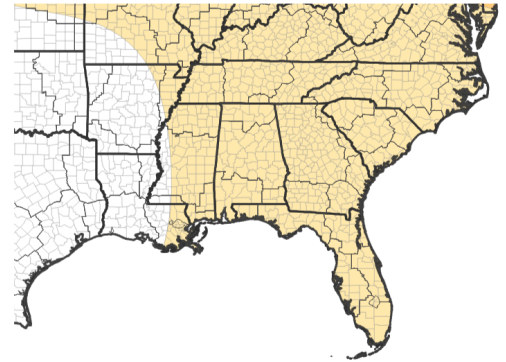
Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 09/17/26

However, there are no guarantees, so users are urged to not be alarmed at any potential future implications later this year linking El Niño’s strength to the strength/frequency of subsequent weather & climate events.

Wet Signal Remainder of the Year: The Climate Prediction Center shows odds of likely above-normal precipitation from October through December with a 50-70% probability (*bottom-right figure*). These elevated chances imply that drought would end over parts of the Tri-State area (*left-central figure*). A weaker temperature signal is apparent with only a 33-40% probability of warmer-than-normal conditions (*right-central figure*).

Tallahassee Year-To-Date Climate: Since January 1, 2026 through the end of the Summer Solstice, September 21st, the average mean temperature at Tallahassee was 72.1° (1.3° above normal) with the highest/lowest year-to-date readings of 101°/18°. The first of one-hundred ten 90° days (tied for 8th most on record) occurred on April 29th, while the first of three 100° days happened on July 29th. A total of one-hundred eighteen 70° min temperature days is the 3rd most on record. Eighty days of measurable rain (fewest since 2011) have contributed to only 31.13 inches. This amount is nearly 16 inches below normal, lowest since 2019, and top-10 lowest on record. The greatest single-day accumulation was 3.68 inches on August 1st.

Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for October 1, 2026–December 31, 2026



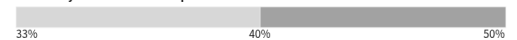
Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures



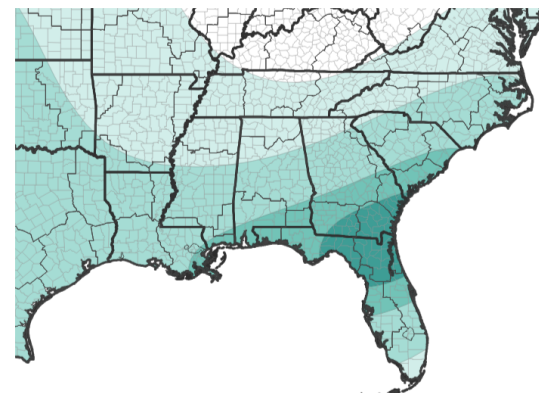
Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 09/17/26

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for October 1, 2026–December 31, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 09/17/26