



For Release: Tuesday, September 14, 2021

21-1672-PHI

MID-ATLANTIC INFORMATION OFFICE: Philadelphia, Pa.

Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic

Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

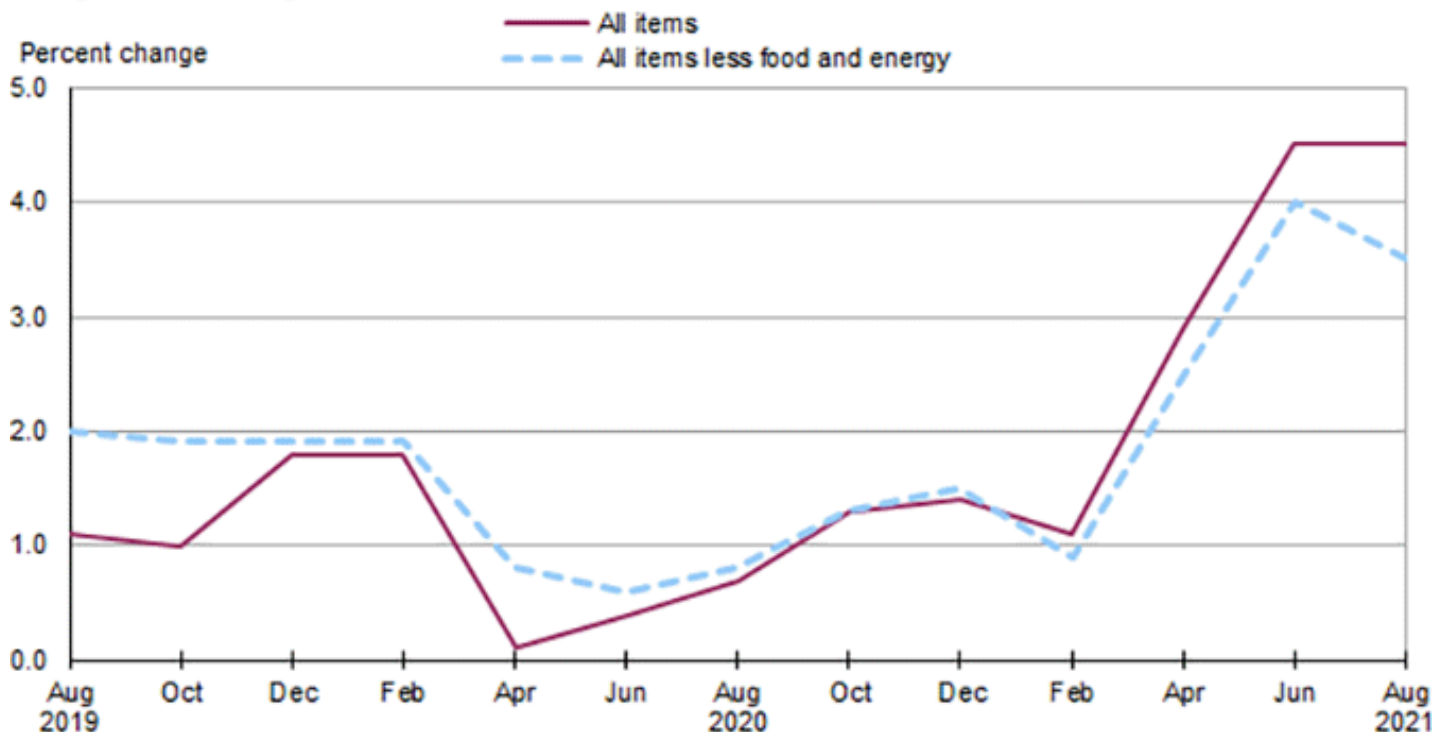
Consumer Price Index, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson – August 2021

Area prices increased 0.5 percent since June; up 4.5 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson increased 0.5 percent from June to August, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Alexandra Hall Bovee noted that the recent bi-monthly increase was led by a rise in the all items less food and energy index, up 0.3 percent, due almost entirely to a 4.2-percent increase in medical care. Transportation prices, which had large increases in April and June, had only a modest increase in August. The food index and the energy index rose since June, both up 1.6 percent. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 4.5 percent. The over-the-year rise was due to increases in the all items less food and energy index (3.5 percent) and the energy index (20.5 percent). (See [chart 1.](#)) The food index also increased, up 3.9 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, August 2019–August 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index rose from June to August, up 1.6 percent. Prices increased for food at home, up 2.4 percent since June, and for food away from home, up 0.8 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for frozen and freeze dried prepared foods as well as fresh fish and seafood.

Over the year, the food index increased 3.9 percent. Prices rose for food away from home (3.6 percent), and for food at home (4.1 percent). The 4.1-percent increase in food at home was the largest 12-month increase since November 2020.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, increased 1.6 percent since June, due to higher prices for gasoline (2.4 percent). Prices for utility (piped) gas service also rose over the past two months, up 5.3 percent, while those for electricity inched down 0.1 percent.

Over the year, the energy index increased 20.5 percent, led by higher prices for gasoline (34.9 percent). Prices were also higher for electricity (5.0 percent) and utility (piped) gas service (12.5 percent) since August 2020.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.3 percent from June to August. Prices were higher for medical care (4.2 percent), the highest 2-month rise since April 2020. Education and communication (2.3 percent) and shelter (0.3 percent) also rose. Prices were lower for public transportation and new vehicles (-0.9 percent).

The index for all items less food and energy increased 3.5 percent since August 2020. The rise was led by higher prices for new and used motor vehicles (14.7 percent), particularly those for used cars and trucks (32.3 percent). Prices were also higher for shelter (2.3 percent), while they were lower for medical care (-1.6 percent) over the year.

The Consumer Price Index for October 2021 is scheduled to be released Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 8:30 am (ET).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on August 2021 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in August was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson is published bi-monthly. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.











































The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/. In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, Core Based Statistical Area** includes Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's counties, as well as Baltimore City, in Maryland.














Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021	Aug. 2020	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021
All items.....		269.598		271.067	4.5	0.5	
Food and beverages		277.793		282.159	4.1	1.6	
Food		277.003		281.500	3.9	1.6	
Food at home		246.497	248.222	252.477	4.1	2.4	1.7
Cereals and bakery products		299.056		300.653	1.8	0.5	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		255.841		268.324	14.4	4.9	
Dairy and related products		240.477		248.928	4.3	3.5	
Fruits and vegetables		290.198		294.589	1.1	1.5	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		173.093		170.323	-5.9	-1.6	
Other food at home		221.822		228.103	2.3	2.8	
Food away from home.....		321.856		324.413	3.6	0.8	
Alcoholic beverages		286.392		288.735	7.1	0.8	
Housing(1).....		270.380		271.311	2.8	0.3	
Shelter		320.577	321.555	321.563	2.3	0.3	0.0
Rent of primary residence		363.471	366.093	367.576	-0.7	1.1	0.4
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		338.531	339.639	339.912	2.6	0.4	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		338.531	339.639	339.912	2.6	0.4	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		231.840		234.130	6.5	1.0	
Household energy		201.357	202.886	202.850	7.1	0.7	0.0
Energy services.....		215.253	216.679	216.991	6.3	0.8	0.1
Electricity		198.863	199.467	198.696	5.0	-0.1	-0.4
Utility (piped) gas service		206.366	211.474	217.322	12.5	5.3	2.8
Household furnishings and operations		124.344		124.497	4.2	0.1	
Apparel		126.085		124.180	5.2	-1.5	
Transportation		231.285		226.090	14.6	-2.2	
Private transportation		228.843		228.869	14.6	0.0	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....				113.141	14.7		
New vehicles(1).....				206.404	6.5		
Used cars and trucks(1)		344.433		343.131	32.3	-0.4	
Motor fuel		259.171	262.799	265.223	34.8	2.3	0.9
Gasoline (all types).....		253.746	257.386	259.750	34.9	2.4	0.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		256.405	260.280	262.703	35.7	2.5	0.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		275.527	277.768	280.445	28.3	1.8	1.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		262.094	264.564	266.725	29.2	1.8	0.8
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		745.285		745.285	-18.5	0.0	
Medical care		450.915		469.718	-1.6	4.2	
Recreation		127.309		128.930	1.8	1.3	
Education and communication(3).....		155.472		158.999	4.1	2.3	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1)		1,272.601		1,312.470	4.4	3.1	
Other goods and services		456.912		457.205	5.0	0.1	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		198.503		199.588	8.8	0.5	
Commodities less food and beverages		161.478		161.386	11.8	-0.1	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021	Aug. 2020	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021
Nondurables less food and beverages...		204.398		204.967	11.2	0.3	
Durables		114.798		114.399	12.4	-0.3	
Services.....		338.820		340.663	2.2	0.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		250.688		252.380	5.8	0.7	
All items less medical care		260.624		261.192	5.1	0.2	
Commodities less food		165.336		165.294	11.7	0.0	
Nondurables		238.101		240.487	7.1	1.0	
Nondurables less food.....		208.967		209.634	10.8	0.3	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		371.731		374.844	2.0	0.8	
Services less medical care services.....		327.845		327.879	2.7	0.0	
Energy(1).....		234.107	236.691	237.847	20.5	1.6	0.5
All items less energy		274.208		275.503	3.6	0.5	
All items less food and energy		273.650		274.446	3.5	0.3	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a March 1978=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.
- (3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.