



For Release: Wednesday, February 10, 2021

21-267-PHI

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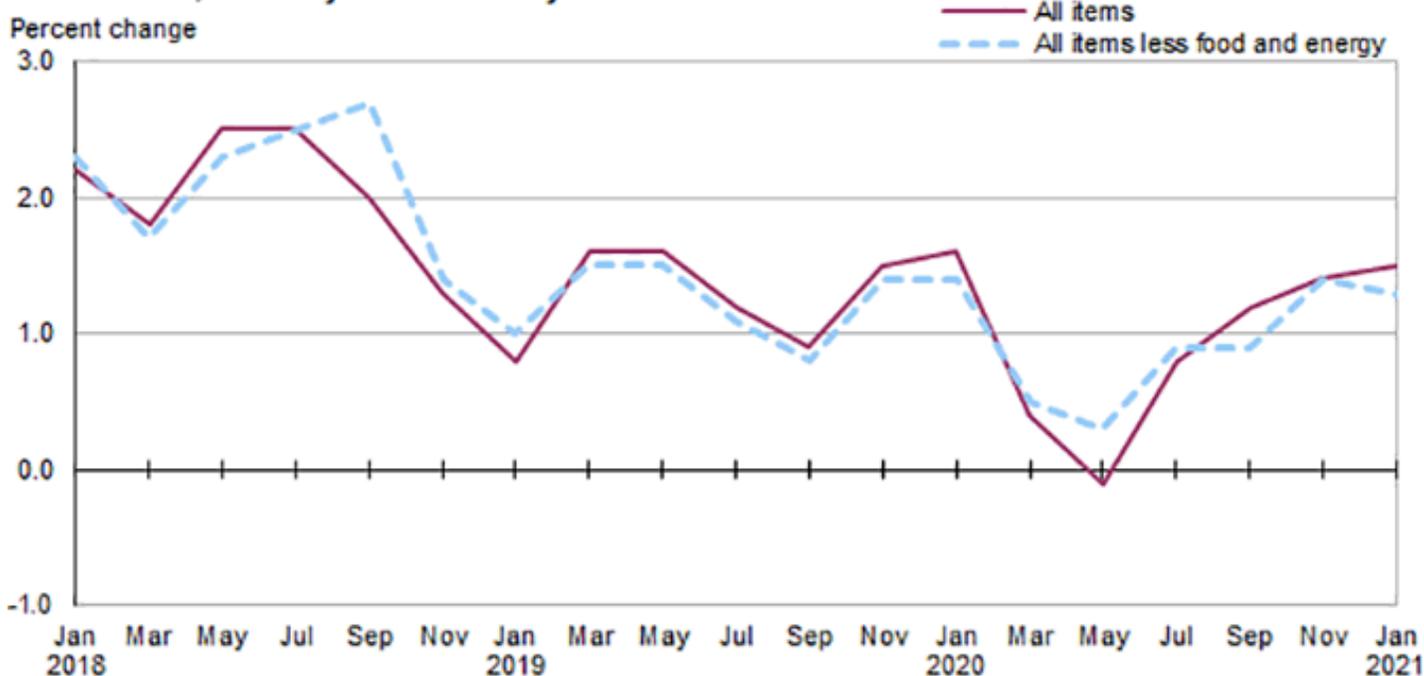
Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – January 2021

Area prices up 0.7 percent since November, 1.5 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria increased 0.7 percent from November to January, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Frank Waligorski, the Bureau’s acting regional commissioner, noted that the recent increase was due largely to an increase in the all items less food and energy index, up 0.4 percent. The energy index and the food index also increased, up 3.8 and 1.0 percent, respectively. (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 1.5 percent, due mostly to a 1.3-percent rise in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Since January 2020, the food index also increased, up 4.6 percent, while the energy index decreased 5.0 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, January 2018–January 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Following a 0.9-percent decrease from September to November, the food index increased 1.0 percent over the last two months. Prices for food at home rose 1.1 percent, and those for food away from home increased 0.9 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for carbonated drinks, canned fruits and vegetables, as well as potatoes, while prices were lower for breakfast cereal and eggs, among others.

Food prices increased 4.6 percent over the year. Prices were higher for both food away from home (6.2 percent) and for food at home (3.0 percent) since January 2020.

Energy

Since November, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, increased 3.8 percent, due almost entirely to higher prices for gasoline (7.9 percent). Prices were also higher for electricity (0.9 percent), while those for utility (piped) gas were lower (-2.2 percent) over the past two months.

Energy prices decreased 5.0 percent since January 2020, due largely to a drop in gasoline prices, down 5.9 percent. Over the year, prices also declined for electricity, down 4.3 percent, and for utility (piped) gas service, down 4.2 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.4 percent since November. The advance was led by higher prices for household furnishings and operations (4.1 percent) and recreation (1.9 percent) over the last two months. Lower prices for several categories, including new and used motor vehicles (-0.5 percent), moderated the increase in the all items less food and energy index from November to January.

Since January 2020, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.3 percent. Prices were higher for shelter (1.7 percent) and medical care (6.8 percent), among others. Prices decreased for apparel (-5.8 percent) and recreation (-1.0 percent) since January 2020.

Table A. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	2-month	12-month								
January.....	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	1.6	0.7	1.5
March.....	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8	0.7	1.6	-0.4	0.4		
May.....	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5	0.6	1.6	0.1	-0.1		
July.....	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.5	-0.3	1.2	0.6	0.8		
September.....	0.9	1.7	0.4	2.0	0.1	0.9	0.6	1.2		
November.....	0.0	1.5	-0.7	1.3	-0.2	1.5	0.0	1.4		

The Consumer Price Index for March 2021 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on January 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 January 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 (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 6,000 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 **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MA-WV, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the county of Jefferson in West Virginia.

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, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020
All items.....		268.700		270.535	1.5	0.7	
Food and beverages		262.122		264.780	4.0	1.0	
Food		269.260		271.960	4.6	1.0	
Food at home		250.267	251.340	253.094	3.0	1.1	0.7
Cereals and bakery products		328.988		325.930	3.9	-0.9	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		274.381		277.715	3.8	1.2	
Dairy and related products		240.846		241.934	2.6	0.5	
Fruits and vegetables		252.036		263.970	-2.8	4.7	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		216.482		221.859	2.9	2.5	
Other food at home		214.868		213.377	6.1	-0.7	
Food away from home.....		293.464		296.055	6.2	0.9	
Alcoholic beverages		195.339		197.556	-2.0	1.1	
Housing		283.762		285.565	1.5	0.6	
Shelter		343.341	342.296	344.056	1.7	0.2	0.5
Rent of primary residence		378.448	377.920	378.504	1.5	0.0	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		352.172	351.755	351.958	2.0	-0.1	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		352.172	351.755	351.958	2.0	-0.1	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		232.302		233.361	-2.2	0.5	
Household energy		177.647	175.166	177.923	-4.1	0.2	1.6
Energy services.....		181.918	179.142	181.943	-4.3	0.0	1.6
Electricity		201.702	202.360	203.559	-4.3	0.9	0.6
Utility (piped) gas service		134.841	126.734	131.896	-4.2	-2.2	4.1
Household furnishings and operations.....		110.238		114.780	3.0	4.1	
Apparel		148.295		147.564	-5.8	-0.5	
Transportation		210.196		211.250	-2.1	0.5	
Private transportation		211.772		213.801	-0.7	1.0	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		97.236		96.789	3.8	-0.5	
New vehicles(1).....		193.141		195.243	-0.3	1.1	
Used cars and trucks(1)		327.541		320.978	9.7	-2.0	
Motor fuel		208.588	213.133	225.091	-5.9	7.9	5.6
Gasoline (all types).....		206.155	210.584	222.390	-5.9	7.9	5.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		199.945	204.496	216.086	-6.1	8.1	5.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		219.730	224.406	236.658	-1.2	7.7	5.5
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		229.896	232.707	244.759	-4.2	6.5	5.2
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		820.365		818.891	-6.5	-0.2	
Medical care		496.340		498.887	6.8	0.5	
Recreation(3).....		112.653		114.838	-1.0	1.9	
Education and communication(3).....		156.041		156.292	2.4	0.2	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,437.088		1,437.884	2.1	0.1	
Other goods and services		434.781		438.703	3.5	0.9	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		181.281		183.861	1.8	1.4	

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, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020
Commodities less food and beverages		140.842		143.352	0.1	1.8	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		182.117		187.368	-1.8	2.9	
Durables		101.208		101.807	2.2	0.6	
Services.....		348.454		349.311	1.4	0.2	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		238.858		241.041	1.5	0.9	
All items less medical care		257.947		259.748	1.1	0.7	
Commodities less food.....		143.353		145.844	-0.1	1.7	
Nondurables		221.783		225.573	1.7	1.7	
Nondurables less food.....		183.216		188.097	-1.9	2.7	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		365.598		366.794	1.0	0.3	
Services less medical care services.....		333.513		333.942	0.5	0.1	
Energy		194.942	195.476	202.311	-5.0	3.8	3.5
All items less energy		277.608		279.104	1.9	0.5	
All items less food and energy		280.272		281.522	1.3	0.4	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a November 1977=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.