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Consumer Price Index, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson – August 2019 **Area prices increased 0.3 percent since June; up 1.1 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson edged up 0.3 percent from June to August, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent two-month increase was due to a 0.5-percent rise in the all items less food and energy index. The energy index and food index decreased since June, down 2.0 and 0.2 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 1.1 percent. The over-the-year rise was due almost entirely to an increase in the all items less food and energy index (2.0 percent). The food index also rose over the year, up 0.9 percent, while prices for energy decreased, down 8.3 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Food

The food index edged down 0.2 percent over the last two months. Prices declined for food at home, down 0.4 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for various items including eggs, while prices were higher for items including bread, among others. Prices for food away from home were unchanged over the last two months.

Over the year, the food index increased 0.9 percent. Prices rose for food away from home (3.0 percent) while those for food at home declined (-0.9 percent).

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 2.0 percent since June. Prices were lower for gasoline and electricity over the last two months, down 2.3 and 1.3 percent, respectively. Utility (piped) gas service prices also decreased, down 2.9 percent.

Over the year, the energy index declined 8.3 percent. Prices were lower for gasoline (-9.8 percent) and electricity (-8.4 percent) since June 2018, while those for utility (piped) gas service increased 11.6 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.5 percent from June to August. Higher prices for medical care (7.6 percent), recreation (2.8 percent), and education and communication (1.8 percent) were moderated by lower prices for shelter (-1.8 percent), among others.

The index for all items less food and energy increased 2.0 percent since August 2018, led by higher prices for medical care (8.9 percent) and education and communication (3.6 percent). Prices were also higher for shelter (0.4 percent), but were lower for apparel (-1.5 percent).

The Consumer Price Index for October 2019 is scheduled to be released Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 8:30 am (ET).

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 population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total 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 (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

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, Baltimore City, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's Counties in Maryland.















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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	Historical data	Indexes			Percent change from		
		Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019	Aug. 2018	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019
All items.....		256.790		257.455	1.1	0.3	
Food and beverages		263.144		262.635	0.9	-0.2	
Food		262.632		261.992	0.9	-0.2	
Food at home		233.001	232.663	232.020	-0.9	-0.4	-0.3
Cereals and bakery products		292.247		290.367	-2.2	-0.6	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		221.891		228.113	0.5	2.8	
Dairy and related products		234.598		234.772	5.2	0.1	
Fruits and vegetables		282.710		275.860	2.2	-2.4	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		173.212		169.434	-4.6	-2.2	
Other food at home		210.144		208.059	-3.9	-1.0	
Food away from home.....		306.042		305.904	3.0	0.0	
Alcoholic beverages		267.490		268.622	1.4	0.4	
Housing(1).....		264.060		260.005	0.0	-1.5	
Shelter		314.310	311.219	308.804	0.4	-1.8	-0.8
Rent of primary residence		361.766	362.132	363.560	1.0	0.5	0.4
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		321.745	322.476	323.488	1.3	0.5	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		321.745	322.476	323.488	1.3	0.5	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....		217.004		214.808	-5.5	-1.0	
Household energy		189.194	187.191	186.136	-6.6	-1.6	-0.6
Energy services.....		202.385	200.127	199.366	-6.7	-1.5	-0.4
Electricity		189.160	189.050	186.652	-8.4	-1.3	-1.3
Utility (piped) gas service		186.177	166.963	180.720	11.6	-2.9	8.2
Household furnishings and operations.....		121.688		121.797	1.2	0.1	
Apparel		118.413		124.256	-1.5	4.9	
Transportation		203.246		202.211	-0.6	-0.5	
Private transportation		199.947		199.938	-1.8	0.0	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		95.766		96.300	-0.5	0.6	
New vehicles(1).....		192.810		194.261	-0.8	0.8	
Used cars and trucks(1)		242.883		248.517	2.1	2.3	
Motor fuel		229.006	237.695	223.823	-9.8	-2.3	-5.8
Gasoline (all types).....		224.125	232.738	219.032	-9.8	-2.3	-5.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		226.192	235.347	220.814	-10.2	-2.4	-6.2
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		241.084	246.533	237.014	-7.9	-1.7	-3.9
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		234.616	240.330	231.123	-7.3	-1.5	-3.8
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		853.642		853.690	4.3	0.0	
Medical care		440.777		474.169	8.9	7.6	
Recreation		126.399		129.907	2.6	2.8	
Education and communication(3).....		146.497		149.157	3.6	1.8	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,203.697		1,232.067	5.2	2.4	
Other goods and services		420.855		425.533	0.2	1.1	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		182.526		183.272	-0.8	0.4	

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, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019	Aug. 2018	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019
Commodities less food and beverages .		145.818		146.882	-1.7	0.7	
Nondurables less food and beverages.....		191.278		193.484	-2.6	1.2	
Durables		100.273		100.559	-0.6	0.3	
Services.....		329.202		329.810	2.1	0.2	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		234.829		238.258	1.5	1.5	
All items less medical care		247.658		246.614	0.4	-0.4	
Commodities less food.....		149.488		150.562	-1.6	0.7	
Nondurables		224.508		225.555	-0.9	0.5	
Nondurables less food.....		195.531		197.682	-2.4	1.1	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		357.331		366.632	4.1	2.6	
Services less medical care services.....		318.357		315.911	1.2	-0.8	
Energy(1).....		213.241	216.611	209.044	-8.3	-2.0	-3.5
All items less energy		261.871		263.008	1.9	0.4	
All items less food and energy		261.642		263.008	2.0	0.5	

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.