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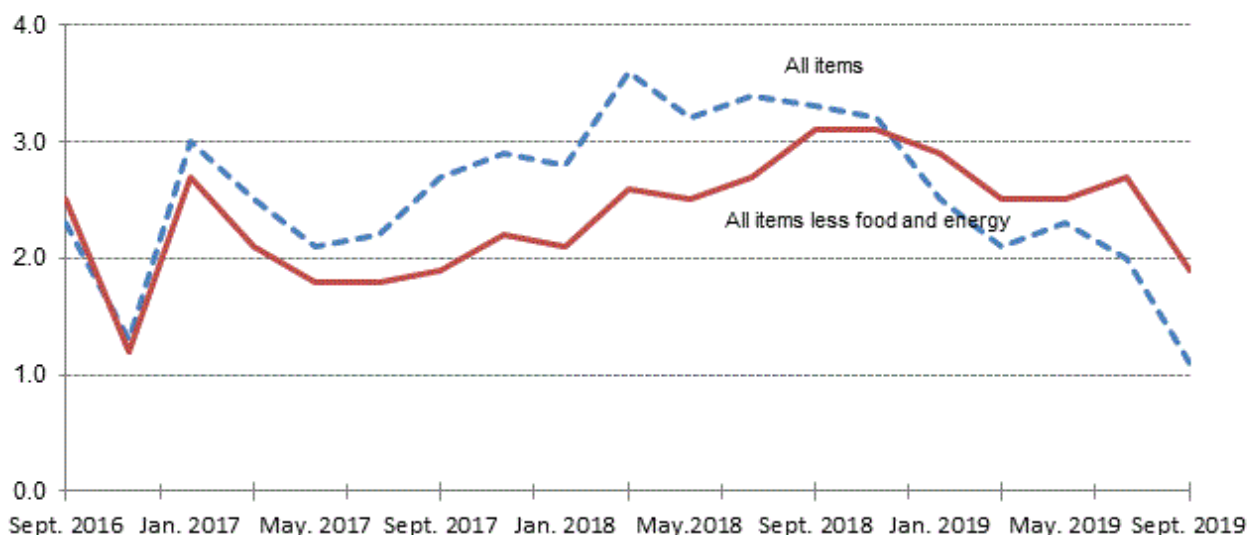
**Consumer Price Index, Boston-Cambridge-Newton — September 2019**  
**Area prices increased by 0.2 percent over two months; up 1.1 percent from a year ago**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston-Cambridge-Newton area increased 0.2 percent in September, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that this was mainly attributable to higher prices within all items less food and energy, up 0.6 percent. Lower energy prices, down 2.2 percent, and, to a lesser extent, lower food prices, down 0.7 percent, partially offset the increase. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bimonthly changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the Boston CPI-U rose 1.1 percent. The increase was largely attributable to higher prices within all items less food and energy, up 1.9 percent. Lower energy prices, down 5.4 percent, and, to a lesser extent, lower food prices, down 1.0 percent, partially offset the increase. (See [chart 1.](#))

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, September 2016 - September 2019**

Percent



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Food**

Food prices decreased 0.7 percent since July, mainly due to lower food at home or grocery prices, down 1.5 percent. Higher food away from home or restaurant prices, up 0.5 percent, partially offset the decrease. Lower food at home prices were mainly driven by lower fruits and vegetables prices, down 8.8 percent.

Food prices decreased 1.0 percent over the year, due to lower grocery store prices, down 3.1 percent. Partially offsetting this decrease, were higher restaurant prices, up 2.4 percent. Lower grocery store prices were mainly driven by lower fruits and vegetable prices, down 17.7 percent.

## **Energy**

The energy index decreased 2.2 percent over the two months, mainly driven by lower gasoline prices, down 4.1 percent.

Energy prices were down 5.4 percent from a year ago, largely attributable to lower gasoline prices, down 9.7 percent. Lower prices for electricity and utility (piped) gas, down 0.9 and 1.0 percent, respectively, also contributed to the decrease.

## **All items less food and energy**

The index for all items less food and energy increased from July (0.6 percent) mainly due to higher apparel costs, up 12.8 percent and followed normal seasonal patterns, and higher education and communication costs, up 1.8 percent. Lower recreation costs, down 2.5 percent, and lower prices for new and used motor vehicles, down 1.7 percent, partially offset the increase.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.9 percent, with higher shelter costs being the main driver of the increase, up 3.1 percent. Within shelter, higher costs for owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 3.5 percent, and to a lesser extent, higher rent of primary residence, up 3.0 percent, led the increase. Higher medical care and education and communication costs, up 6.0 and 1.7 percent, respectively, also contributed to the overall increase. Within education and communication expenses, higher tuition and child care costs, up 3.4 percent, led the increase.

## **CPI-W**

In September, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 279.876. The CPI-W increased 0.3 percent over two months and 0.8 percent over the year.

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**The November 2019 Consumer Price Index for Boston-Cambridge-Newton is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).**

## **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 94 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 28 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](http://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](http://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 Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Mass.-N.H. Core Based Statistical Area covered in this release is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk Counties in Massachusetts; Rockingham, Strafford Counties in New Hampshire.















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**Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Ma.-N.H. (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019	Sep. 2019	Sep. 2018	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019
All items.....		280.943		281.603	1.1	0.2	
All items (1967 = 100).....		816.568		818.486			
Food and beverages .....		266.557		265.357	-0.9	-0.5	
Food .....		268.511		266.716	-1.0	-0.7	
Food at home .....		250.490	251.406	246.839	-3.1	-1.5	-1.8
Cereal and bakery products .....		293.263		297.248	1.2	1.4	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		254.328		254.149	1.7	-0.1	
Dairy and related products .....		288.100		280.547	-1.5	-2.6	
Fruits and vegetables .....		320.883		292.654	-17.7	-8.8	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1) .....		161.517		162.724	0.1	0.7	
Other food at home .....		199.574		201.911	1.4	1.2	
Food away from home.....		300.065		301.568	2.4	0.5	
Alcoholic beverages .....		248.561		254.180	-0.8	2.3	
Housing .....		293.495		294.677	2.7	0.4	
Shelter .....		351.127	350.608	352.054	3.1	0.3	0.4
Rent of primary residence(2).....		360.165	361.660	363.530	3.0	0.9	0.5
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2)(3)(4) .....		370.777	372.487	373.432	3.5	0.7	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)(3)(4).....		370.777	372.487	373.432	3.5	0.7	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....		276.917		275.390	-1.2	-0.6	
Household energy .....		231.216	229.969	229.750	-1.9	-0.6	-0.1
Energy services(2) .....		238.298	238.023	237.064	-0.9	-0.5	-0.4
Electricity(2).....		289.590	289.107	289.144	-0.9	-0.2	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service(2).....		153.736	153.736	151.689	-1.0	-1.3	-1.3
Household furnishings and operations.....		127.251		130.939	2.2	2.9	
Apparel.....		128.545		144.971	-4.2	12.8	
Transportation .....		193.663		189.679	-3.9	-2.1	
Private transportation .....		194.449		190.479	-4.2	-2.0	
New and used motor vehicles(5).....		103.497		101.698	-1.3	-1.7	
New Vehicles(1) .....		201.502		201.777	-1.0	0.1	
Used cars and trucks(1) .....		329.714		318.547	3.0	-3.4	
Motor fuel .....		236.165	233.929	226.427	-9.6	-4.1	-3.2
Gasoline (all types).....		233.461	231.246	223.820	-9.7	-4.1	-3.2
Gasoline, unleaded regular(6).....		226.587	224.490	216.739	-10.1	-4.3	-3.5
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(6)(7).....		247.460	244.603	240.597	-7.5	-2.8	-1.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium(6).....		243.925	241.246	237.523	-6.5	-2.6	-1.5
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....							
Medical care .....		685.157		690.706	6.0	0.8	
Recreation(5).....		124.290		121.200	-1.7	-2.5	
Education and communication(5).....		166.789		169.723	1.7	1.8	
Tuition, other fees, and child care(1).....		1,353.260		1,394.175	3.4	3.0	
Other goods and services .....		504.718		502.331	2.1	-0.5	
<b>Commodity and service group</b>							
Commodities .....		191.373		191.569	-2.1	0.1	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Ma.-N.H. (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019	Sep. 2019	Sep. 2018	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019
Commodities less food and beverages .....		152.273		153.096	-3.1	0.5	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		200.095		201.886	-4.6	0.9	
Durables .....		106.733		106.719	-0.5	0.0	
Services .....		361.682		362.744	2.5	0.3	
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>							
All items less shelter .....		255.185		255.735	-0.3	0.2	
All items less medical care .....		265.534		266.040	0.7	0.2	
Commodities less food .....		156.154		157.148	-2.9	0.6	
Nondurables .....		232.417		232.730	-2.6	0.1	
Nondurables less food .....		202.668		204.727	-4.3	1.0	
Services less rent of shelter(3) .....		389.934		391.224	1.7	0.3	
Services less medical care services .....		338.885		339.300	2.0	0.1	
Energy .....		231.691	230.023	226.643	-5.4	-2.2	-1.5
All items less energy .....		289.518		290.696	1.5	0.4	
All items less food and energy .....		294.000		295.690	1.9	0.6	

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a January 1978=100 base.

(2) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(3) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.

(4) This index series underwent a change in composition in January 2010. The expenditure class now includes weight from secondary residences, and has been re-titled "Owners' equivalent rent of residences." The item stratum "Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence" excludes secondary residences.

(5) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(6) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(7) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.