

NEWS RELEASE

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

U. S. D E P A R T M E N T O F L A B O R



For Release: Wednesday, June 10, 2020

20-1219-ATL

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

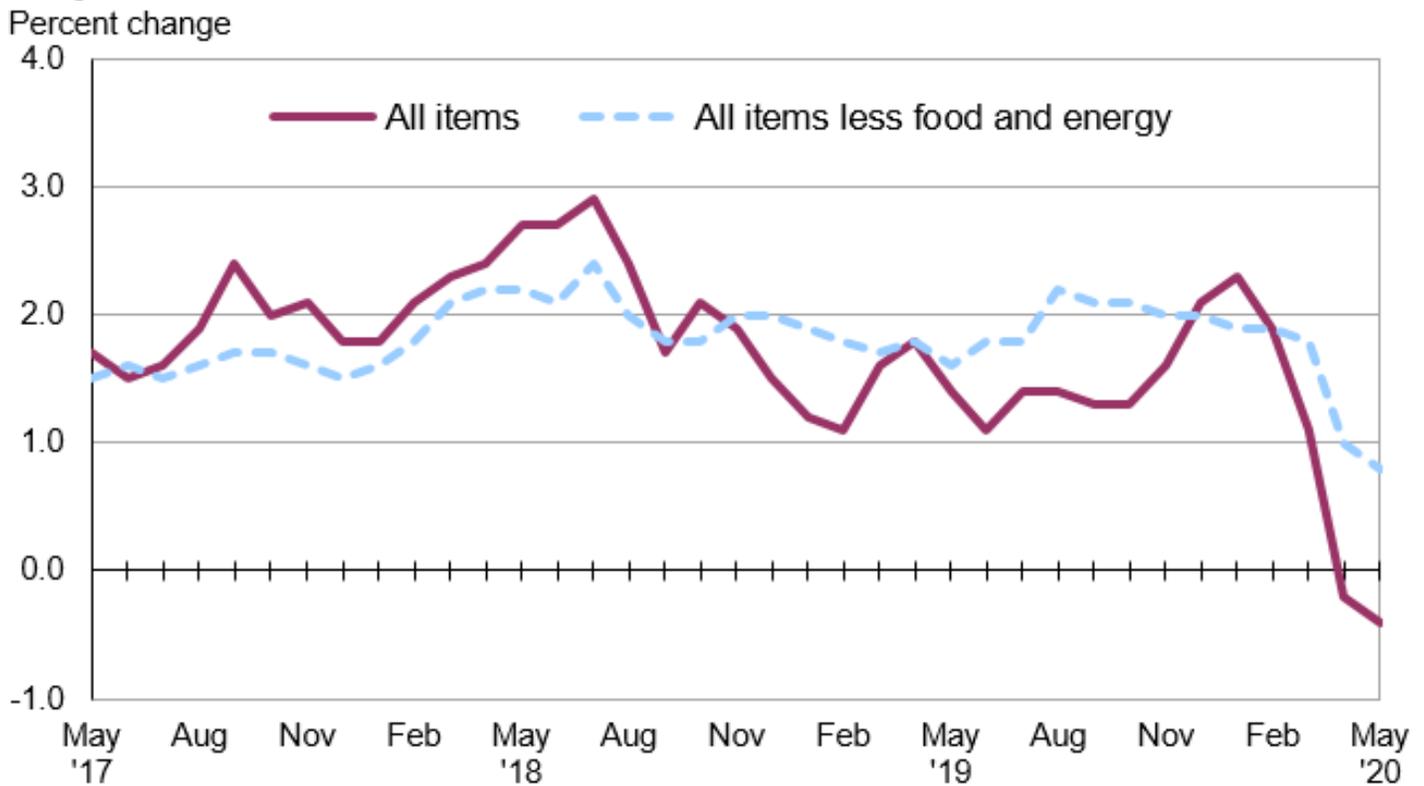
Consumer Price Index, South Region – May 2020

Prices in the South down 0.2 percent over the month and 0.4 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the South declined 0.2 percent in May, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The index for all items less food and energy edged down 0.3 percent since April, while the energy index declined 1.8 percent. In contrast, the food index rose 0.7 percent in May. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

The all items CPI-U for the South declined 0.4 percent for the 12 months ending May 2020. The 12-month decline in the all items index was attributed to a 19.9-percent drop in the energy index. The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.8 percent over the past year, while the food index advanced 3.8 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, South region, May 2017–May 2020



Food

The food index rose 0.7 percent in May, led by a 0.9-percent increase in the food at home index. The food away from home index also rose in May, up 0.3 percent.

The food index advanced 3.8 percent for the 12 months ending in May, reflecting increases in the food at home (4.7 percent) and food away from home (2.6 percent) indexes.

Energy

The energy index declined 1.8 percent in May, led by a 2.3-percent decline in the gasoline index and a 1.7 decline in the electricity index. The utility (piped) gas service index edged down 0.3 percent in May.

The energy index fell 19.9 percent for the 12 months ending in May, led by a 35.7-percent fall in the gasoline index. Over the past year, the electricity and the utility (piped) gas service indexes also declined, down 2.1 percent and 0.8 percent, respectively.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged down 0.3 percent in May. Several indexes declined over the month, most notably motor vehicle insurance (-9.0 percent) and apparel (-3.4 percent). In contrast, the shelter index edged up 0.2 percent in May, and the medical care index rose 0.6 percent.

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.8 percent over the past 12 months. The shelter index increased 2.5 percent over the 12-month span, and the medical care index rose 3.9 percent. Indexes that declined over the past year include apparel (-9.9 percent) and motor vehicle insurance (-12.2 percent).

Geographic divisions

Additional price indexes are now available for the three divisions of the South. The all items CPI-U edged down 0.2 percent in May for each of the three divisions: South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central.

Over the year, the all items index declined for the West South Central (-1.0 percent) and East South Central (-0.7 percent) divisions. The all items index for the South Atlantic division was unchanged over the past year.

Table A. South region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January.....	0.5	2.6	0.5	1.8	0.2	1.2	0.3	2.3
February.....	0.2	2.8	0.6	2.1	0.5	1.1	0.2	1.9
March.....	0.0	2.2	0.2	2.3	0.7	1.6	-0.1	1.1
April.....	0.2	2.0	0.4	2.4	0.5	1.8	-0.8	-0.2
May.....	0.0	1.7	0.3	2.7	-0.1	1.4	-0.2	-0.4
June.....	0.2	1.5	0.2	2.7	-0.1	1.1		
July.....	-0.2	1.6	0.0	2.9	0.3	1.4		
August.....	0.4	1.9	-0.1	2.4	-0.1	1.4		
September.....	0.7	2.4	0.0	1.7	0.0	1.3		
October.....	-0.2	2.0	0.2	2.1	0.2	1.3		
November.....	-0.1	2.1	-0.3	1.9	0.0	1.6		
December.....	-0.1	1.8	-0.5	1.5	0.0	2.1		

The Consumer Price Index for June 2020 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on May 2020 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 May 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 population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 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 **South region** is comprised of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals 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 South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020	May 2020	May 2019	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020
Expenditure category						
All Items.....	248.136	246.254	245.696	-0.4	-1.0	-0.2
All items (December 1977=100).....	402.511	399.459	398.552	-	-	-
Food and beverages	258.934	262.288	264.124	3.7	2.0	0.7
Food	260.215	263.867	265.593	3.8	2.1	0.7
Food at home	242.822	248.549	250.905	4.7	3.3	0.9
Cereal and bakery products	281.210	289.888	290.045	3.4	3.1	0.1
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	249.783	258.935	268.389	10.1	7.4	3.7
Dairy and related products	224.933	229.212	232.250	5.7	3.3	1.3
Fruits and vegetables	283.544	289.588	290.714	1.2	2.5	0.4
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	172.012	175.774	173.800	2.3	1.0	-1.1
Other food at home	215.280	217.865	218.195	3.7	1.4	0.2
Food away from home.....	288.735	289.440	290.280	2.6	0.5	0.3
Alcoholic beverages	240.710	240.059	243.359	2.9	1.1	1.4
Housing	247.958	247.788	247.878	2.0	0.0	0.0
Shelter	287.956	287.776	288.376	2.5	0.1	0.2
Rent of primary residence	302.806	303.173	303.855	3.4	0.3	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(1).....	289.894	290.162	290.980	2.9	0.4	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)	289.908	290.170	290.985	2.9	0.4	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....	236.851	237.148	234.467	-1.0	-1.0	-1.1
Household energy	188.293	188.474	185.562	-2.2	-1.5	-1.5
Energy services.....	188.514	188.954	186.086	-2.0	-1.3	-1.5
Electricity	187.199	187.501	184.330	-2.1	-1.5	-1.7
Utility (piped) gas service	181.705	183.022	182.409	-0.8	0.4	-0.3
Household furnishings and operations.....	125.542	125.161	125.194	1.3	-0.3	0.0
Apparel	132.705	126.434	122.185	-9.9	-7.9	-3.4
Transportation	203.615	193.489	190.040	-11.0	-6.7	-1.8
Private transportation	202.913	193.478	190.017	-10.5	-6.4	-1.8
New and used motor vehicles(2).....	101.944	101.247	100.752	-1.2	-1.2	-0.5
New vehicles	153.177	153.004	152.558	-1.0	-0.4	-0.3
New cars and trucks(2)(3).....	104.288	104.174	103.870	-1.0	-0.4	-0.3
New cars(3).....	152.313	151.950	151.588	-1.4	-0.5	-0.2
Used cars and trucks.....	142.127	140.915	139.854	0.0	-1.6	-0.8
Motor fuel	185.851	154.746	151.268	-35.4	-18.6	-2.2
Gasoline (all types).....	184.533	153.280	149.829	-35.7	-18.8	-2.3
Unleaded regular(3)	178.781	147.614	144.248	-36.6	-19.3	-2.3
Unleaded midgrade(3)(4)	211.202	182.507	178.329	-30.5	-15.6	-2.3
Unleaded premium(3).....	213.666	185.317	181.597	-28.4	-15.0	-2.0
Motor vehicle insurance(5).....	969.290	911.447	829.003	-12.2	-14.5	-9.0
Medical care	483.983	486.703	489.782	3.9	1.2	0.6
Medical care commodities.....	352.718	354.069	353.230	-1.3	0.1	-0.2
Medical care services.....	528.441	531.624	536.023	5.2	1.4	0.8
Professional services	367.843	369.110	372.431	1.7	1.2	0.9
Recreation(2).....	122.344	121.903	121.219	0.6	-0.9	-0.6
Education and communication(2).....	133.811	133.983	133.959	1.0	0.1	0.0
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(5) ..	1,360.622	1,361.237	1,361.611	2.2	0.1	0.0
Other goods and services	439.029	437.990	437.909	1.9	-0.3	0.0
Commodity and service group						
All Items.....	248.136	246.254	245.696	-0.4	-1.0	-0.2
Commodities	182.934	180.342	179.915	-3.4	-1.7	-0.2

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 South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020	May 2020	May 2019	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020
Commodities less food and beverages	147.956	143.347	142.128	-7.6	-3.9	-0.9
Nondurables less food and beverages	190.260	179.485	176.937	-13.5	-7.0	-1.4
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	226.145	212.663	210.972	-14.6	-6.7	-0.8
Durables	107.723	107.143	106.817	-0.9	-0.8	-0.3
Services	313.956	312.872	312.181	1.6	-0.6	-0.2
Rent of shelter(1)	295.918	295.719	296.351	2.6	0.1	0.2
Transportation services	361.956	344.099	330.931	-8.3	-8.6	-3.8
Other services	351.316	351.516	350.643	1.6	-0.2	-0.2
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	235.307	233.208	232.473	-0.8	-1.2	-0.3
All items less food	246.024	243.301	242.395	-1.1	-1.5	-0.4
All items less shelter	233.688	231.148	230.143	-1.7	-1.5	-0.4
Commodities less food	150.706	146.178	145.065	-7.2	-3.7	-0.8
Nondurables	222.752	218.734	218.282	-4.5	-2.0	-0.2
Nondurables less food	192.887	182.736	180.541	-12.4	-6.4	-1.2
Nondurables less food and apparel	226.317	214.057	212.824	-13.1	-6.0	-0.6
Services less rent of shelter(1)	346.522	344.301	341.940	0.5	-1.3	-0.7
Services less medical care services	294.733	293.326	292.245	1.1	-0.8	-0.4
Energy	182.901	168.510	165.400	-19.9	-9.6	-1.8
All items less energy	256.103	255.461	255.154	1.3	-0.4	-0.1
All items less food and energy	255.803	254.422	253.765	0.8	-0.8	-0.3
Commodities less food and energy commodities	146.588	145.162	144.333	-1.7	-1.5	-0.6
Energy commodities	189.511	158.194	154.610	-35.0	-18.4	-2.3
Services less energy services	327.229	325.986	325.518	1.8	-0.5	-0.1

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.
 - (2) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
 - (3) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
 - (4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
 - (5) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base.
- Data not available.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.