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Consumer Price Index, Honolulu Area – March 2020

Area prices were up 0.6 percent over the past two months, up 1.8 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Honolulu area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), advanced 0.6 percent for the two months ending in March 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the March increase was influenced by higher prices for shelter and new and used motor vehicles. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 1.8 percent. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.0 percent over the year. Energy prices advanced 4.0 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of gasoline. Food prices declined 0.2 percent. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices decreased 0.3 percent for the two months ending in March. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home decreased 0.6 percent, while prices for food away from home were virtually unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices inched down 0.2 percent. Prices for food at home declined 0.5 percent since a year ago, but prices for food away from home edged up 0.2 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 2.2 percent for the two months ending in March. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-6.7 percent). Prices for natural gas service advanced 4.7 percent, and prices for electricity rose 3.0 percent for the same period.

Energy prices advanced 4.0 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for gasoline (3.5 percent). Prices paid for electricity rose 4.0 percent, and prices for natural gas service increased 3.1 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 0.9 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for new and used motor vehicles (4.2 percent) and shelter (1.3 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for apparel (-2.3 percent) and education and communication (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.0 percent. Components contributing to the increase included household furnishings and operations (4.7 percent), apparel (3.8 percent), and shelter (3.2 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decrease in new and used motor vehicles (-1.8 percent).

The May 2020 Consumer Price Index for the Honolulu area is scheduled to be released on June 10, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on March 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) program suspended data collection by personal visit on March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in March 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 being 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/bls/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-bls-price-indexes.htm#CPI.

Specific information about the impact of COVID-19 on March 2020 CPI data collection is available at www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/covid19-statement-march-2020.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 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 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 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 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/homch17_a.htm.

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 Urban Hawaii area covered in this release consists of Honolulu in the State of Hawaii.

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 Urban Hawaii (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items	283.683	-	285.321	1.8	0.6	-
All items (1967=100)	780.971	-	785.482	-	-	-
Food and beverages	287.529	-	286.863	0.0	-0.2	-
Food	287.991	-	287.172	-0.2	-0.3	-
Food at home	275.011	276.218	273.390	-0.5	-0.6	-1.0
Cereals and bakery products	314.141	-	309.718	3.4	-1.4	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	253.585	-	246.844	-4.1	-2.7	-
Dairy and related products	243.193	-	229.950	-2.8	-5.4	-
Fruits and vegetables	341.342	-	343.781	1.3	0.7	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	323.127	-	355.739	1.8	10.1	-
Other food at home	264.147	-	261.214	0.5	-1.1	-
Food away from home	295.804	-	295.985	0.2	0.1	-
Food away from home	295.804	-	295.985	0.2	0.1	-
Alcoholic beverages	278.555	-	280.372	3.2	0.7	-
Housing	312.234	-	316.535	3.5	1.4	-
Shelter	340.693	342.419	344.956	3.2	1.3	0.7
Rent of primary residence(2)	336.832	340.870	343.719	6.0	2.0	0.8
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)	351.412	352.842	355.694	1.9	1.2	0.8
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2)	351.412	352.842	355.694	1.9	1.2	0.8
Fuels and utilities	371.774	-	378.353	4.7	1.8	-
Household energy	292.183	303.053	300.816	3.9	3.0	-0.7
Energy services	287.032	297.961	295.825	3.9	3.1	-0.7
Electricity	284.569	295.386	293.084	4.0	3.0	-0.8
Utility (piped) gas service	282.504	293.695	295.866	3.1	4.7	0.7
Household furnishings and operations	149.283	-	152.906	4.7	2.4	-
Apparel	120.218	-	117.490	3.8	-2.3	-
Transportation	219.118	-	217.690	-2.2	-0.7	-
Private transportation	220.848	-	221.314	0.1	0.2	-
New and used motor vehicles(3)	98.747	-	102.891	-1.8	4.2	-
New vehicles(1)	156.216	-	165.702	-0.6	6.1	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	235.047	-	242.686	-0.2	3.2	-
Motor fuel	274.467	263.663	256.175	3.4	-6.7	-2.8
Gasoline (all types)	281.655	270.560	262.866	3.5	-6.7	-2.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	293.625	281.412	273.309	3.0	-6.9	-2.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	236.436	231.359	226.460	8.0	-4.2	-2.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	258.978	250.610	243.616	4.7	-5.9	-2.8
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	477.600	-	485.057	-0.9	1.6	-
Medical care	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreation(3)	134.652	-	135.112	1.8	0.3	-
Education and communication(3)	144.896	-	144.651	0.9	-0.2	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,795.863	-	1,795.863	2.5	0.0	-
Other goods and services	500.222	-	501.925	0.3	0.3	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	283.683	-	285.321	1.8	0.6	-
Commodities	206.493	-	206.317	0.8	-0.1	-
Commodities less food & beverages	157.361	-	157.458	1.5	0.1	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	204.192	-	199.450	2.7	-2.3	-
Durables	108.001	-	111.779	-0.1	3.5	-
Services	351.022	-	354.211	2.3	0.9	-

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 Urban Hawaii (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	275.911	-	277.435	1.7	0.6	-
All items less shelter.....	258.618	-	258.886	0.8	0.1	-
Commodities less food	161.757	-	161.907	1.6	0.1	-
Nondurables	247.264	-	244.773	1.1	-1.0	-
Nondurables less food.....	208.782	-	204.473	2.8	-2.1	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	361.733	-	362.992	0.9	0.3	-
Services less medical care services.....	342.549	-	345.744	2.2	0.9	-
Energy	280.515	279.426	274.324	4.0	-2.2	-1.8
All items less energy	285.658	-	287.784	1.7	0.7	-
All items less food and energy	287.133	-	289.860	2.0	0.9	-

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a December 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.

- Data not available

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