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WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.

Technical information: (415) 625-2270 BLSinfoSF@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/west

Media contact: (415) 625-2270

Consumer Price Index, Honolulu Area – September 2020

Area prices were up 0.6 percent over the past two months, up 1.9 percent from a year ago

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

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.9 percent. The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.9 percent over the year. Food prices rose 7.6 percent. Energy prices dropped 13.0 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1](#).)

Food

Food prices increased 1.4 percent for the two months ending in September. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home increased 2.9 percent influenced by a higher price for fruits and vegetables (4.9 percent). Prices for food away from home declined 0.3 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 7.6 percent. Prices for food at home increased 9.6 percent since a year ago largely due to a price increase in fruits and vegetables (13.5 percent). Prices for food away from home advanced 5.2 percent.

Energy

The energy index was unchanged for the two months ending in September. Prices for natural gas service increased 4.3 percent. Gasoline prices edged up 0.1 percent, but electricity prices decreased 0.2 percent for the same period.

Energy prices dropped 13.0 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-14.8 percent). Prices paid for electricity fell 11.3 percent, and prices for natural gas service declined 7.5 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.5 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (9.4 percent), new and used motor vehicles (2.5 percent), and shelter (0.2 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for motor vehicle insurance (-6.1 percent), household furnishings and operations (-0.4 percent), and recreation (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 1.9 percent. Components contributing to the increase included recreation (4.9 percent), education and communication (4.1 percent), and shelter (2.8 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price decreases in motor vehicle insurance (-10.5 percent) and apparel (-5.0 percent).

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on September 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 September 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 <https://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 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/pub/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-		
	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Sep. 2019	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items.....	285.725	-	287.529	1.9	0.6	-
All items (1967=100).....	786.592	-	791.559	-	-	-
Food and beverages.....	306.660	-	311.244	7.8	1.5	-
Food.....	307.593	-	311.952	7.6	1.4	-
Food at home.....	297.773	312.523	306.362	9.6	2.9	-2.0
Cereals and bakery products.....	320.643	-	327.514	2.1	2.1	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	279.965	-	282.299	9.0	0.8	-
Dairy and related products.....	246.897	-	253.952	5.3	2.9	-
Fruits and vegetables.....	376.886	-	395.392	13.5	4.9	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1).....	382.557	-	371.609	9.0	-2.9	-
Other food at home.....	281.084	-	296.740	12.1	5.6	-
Food away from home.....	311.014	-	310.097	5.2	-0.3	-
Alcoholic beverages.....	289.926	-	-	-	-	-
Housing.....	313.311	-	313.643	1.9	0.1	-
Shelter.....	344.245	344.591	344.773	2.8	0.2	0.1
Rent of primary residence(2).....	341.672	340.926	341.856	5.0	0.1	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2).....	353.932	353.323	354.121	1.5	0.1	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2).....	353.932	353.323	354.121	1.5	0.1	0.2
Fuels and utilities.....	348.911	-	348.975	-6.2	0.0	-
Household energy.....	259.112	251.262	259.084	-11.1	0.0	3.1
Energy services.....	254.423	246.605	254.426	-11.1	0.0	3.2
Electricity.....	251.536	242.813	251.039	-11.3	-0.2	3.4
Utility (piped) gas service.....	266.669	281.473	278.252	-7.5	4.3	-1.1
Household furnishings and operations.....	149.938	-	149.362	1.6	-0.4	-
Apparel.....	104.858	-	114.753	-5.0	9.4	-
Transportation.....	209.549	-	210.089	-6.6	0.3	-
Private transportation.....	212.518	-	213.191	-5.7	0.3	-
New and used motor vehicles(3).....	101.126	-	103.666	-	2.5	-
New vehicles(1).....	161.863	-	165.852	-	2.5	-
Used cars and trucks(1).....	242.850	-	261.495	9.2	7.7	-
Motor fuel.....	232.543	232.780	232.780	-14.8	0.1	0.0
Gasoline (all types).....	238.594	238.859	238.859	-14.8	0.1	0.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....	246.005	246.452	246.452	-15.8	0.2	0.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....	217.286	212.780	212.780	-8.8	-2.1	0.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....	227.496	227.750	227.750	-11.4	0.1	0.0
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....	458.914	-	431.087	-10.5	-6.1	-
Medical care.....	-	-	438.896	-	-	-
Recreation(3).....	134.768	-	134.486	4.9	-0.2	-
Education and communication(3).....	149.224	-	149.183	4.1	0.0	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,808.765	-	1,810.241	0.8	0.1	-
Other goods and services.....	494.762	-	506.162	0.1	2.3	-
Commodity and service group						
All items.....	285.725	-	287.529	1.9	0.6	-
Commodities.....	208.476	-	212.899	2.1	2.1	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	149.909	-	154.142	-3.4	2.8	-
Nondurables less food & beverages.....	186.114	-	191.406	-5.9	2.8	-
Durables.....	109.299	-	112.357	-	2.8	-
Services.....	353.126	-	352.718	1.8	-0.1	-

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-		
	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Sep. 2019	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	277.628	-	279.437	1.9	0.7	-
All items less shelter.....	259.892	-	262.412	1.3	1.0	-
Commodities less food	154.856	-	159.230	-2.7	2.8	-
Nondurables	249.485	-	254.342	2.7	1.9	-
Nondurables less food.....	192.645	-	198.122	-4.6	2.8	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	361.300	-	359.300	0.2	-0.6	-
Services less medical care services.....	344.032	-	343.554	1.6	-0.1	-
Energy	242.810	239.447	242.927	-13.0	0.0	1.5
All items less energy	290.135	-	292.053	2.8	0.7	-
All items less food and energy	288.624	-	290.069	1.9	0.5	-

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.