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Consumer Price Index, Anchorage area – April 2021

Area prices were up 1.8 percent over the past two months, up 4.8 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Anchorage area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), advanced 1.8 percent for the two months ending in April 2021, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Chris Rosenlund noted that the April increase was influenced by higher prices for gasoline and shelter. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 4.8 percent. Food prices increased 3.4 percent. Energy prices jumped 21.5 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy rose 3.7 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices rose 1.5 percent for the two months ending in April. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home increased 1.9 percent, influenced by higher prices for cereals and bakery products (5.7 percent) and meats, poultry, fish, and eggs (4.1 percent). Food away from home advanced 0.9 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices increased 3.4 percent. Prices for food at home increased 3.8 percent since a year ago, largely due to higher prices for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs (15.1 percent). Prices for food away from home increased 2.6 percent.

Energy

The energy index rose 7.3 percent for the two months ending in April. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (16.1 percent). Prices for natural gas service were unchanged, while prices for electricity declined 0.8 percent for the same period.

Energy prices jumped 21.5 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for gasoline (55.6 percent). Prices paid for electricity rose 0.5 percent, but prices for natural gas service decreased 1.7 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.3 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (4.7 percent), household furnishings and operations (4.7 percent), new and used motor vehicles (4.2 percent), and shelter (1.6 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for motor vehicle insurance (-8.8 percent) and alcoholic beverages (-1.1 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 3.7 percent. Components contributing to the increase included new and used motor vehicles (13.3 percent), medical care (5.3 percent), and shelter (2.5 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decrease in alcoholic beverages (-2.5 percent).

The June 2021 Consumer Price Index for the Anchorage area is scheduled to be released on July 13, 2021.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on April 2021 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 April 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 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. 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 6,000 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; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/.

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 Alaska area covered in this release consists of Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the State of Alaska.

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

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2020	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021
Expenditure category						
All items.....	229.478	-	233.519	4.8	1.8	-
All items (1967=100).....	612.508	-	623.294	-	-	-
Food and beverages.....	227.589	-	230.581	2.9	1.3	-
Food.....	235.164	-	238.736	3.4	1.5	-
Food at home.....	232.547	238.372	236.967	3.8	1.9	-0.6
Cereals and bakery products.....	231.673	-	244.907	7.4	5.7	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	228.772	-	238.063	15.1	4.1	-
Dairy and related products.....	220.600	-	226.903	-1.8	2.9	-
Fruits and vegetables.....	361.660	-	359.675	1.6	-0.5	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1).....	157.240	-	152.271	-4.4	-3.2	-
Other food at home.....	191.672	-	194.942	0.8	1.7	-
Food away from home.....	236.422	-	238.543	2.6	0.9	-
Alcoholic beverages.....	155.019	-	153.369	-2.5	-1.1	-
Housing.....	206.349	-	209.749	2.3	1.6	-
Shelter.....	205.080	205.448	208.261	2.5	1.6	1.4
Rent of primary residence(2).....	200.903	201.511	201.399	1.2	0.2	-0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2).....	206.180	206.486	206.461	0.6	0.1	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2).....	206.180	206.486	206.461	0.6	0.1	0.0
Fuels and utilities.....	348.085	-	347.283	0.8	-0.2	-
Household energy.....	356.480	356.930	355.460	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4
Energy services.....	396.417	396.417	394.740	-0.6	-0.4	-0.4
Electricity.....	337.281	337.281	334.650	0.5	-0.8	-0.8
Utility (piped) gas service.....	474.924	474.924	474.924	-1.7	0.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations.....	134.426	-	140.759	3.1	4.7	-
Apparel.....	145.167	-	152.008	9.6	4.7	-
Transportation.....	220.966	-	231.476	16.4	4.8	-
Private transportation.....	234.513	-	247.247	19.5	5.4	-
New and used motor vehicles(3).....	116.517	-	121.453	13.3	4.2	-
New vehicles(1).....	258.799	-	256.658	2.8	-0.8	-
Used cars and trucks(1).....	285.539	-	319.416	22.7	11.9	-
Motor fuel.....	218.260	251.087	253.057	54.9	15.9	0.8
Gasoline (all types).....	219.366	252.518	254.616	55.6	16.1	0.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....	210.886	243.220	245.175	56.8	16.3	0.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....	211.678	243.031	245.466	50.6	16.0	1.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....	226.712	258.266	260.725	50.1	15.0	1.0
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....	874.057	-	797.305	4.7	-8.8	-
Medical care.....	664.821	-	664.289	5.3	-0.1	-
Recreation(3).....	127.966	-	128.520	0.2	0.4	-
Education and communication(3).....	115.096	-	115.007	1.8	-0.1	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	755.483	-	757.141	1.3	0.2	-
Other goods and services.....	378.716	-	379.700	4.6	0.3	-
Commodity and service group						
All items.....	229.478	-	233.519	4.8	1.8	-
Commodities.....	187.961	-	193.596	7.9	3.0	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	167.636	-	174.530	11.3	4.1	-
Nondurables less food & beverages.....	205.754	-	217.202	14.3	5.6	-
Durables.....	133.522	-	137.063	8.4	2.7	-
Services.....	265.014	-	267.498	2.7	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 Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2020	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	214.513	-	218.672	4.7	1.9	-
All items less shelter.....	239.812	-	244.269	5.9	1.9	-
Commodities less food	167.421	-	173.876	10.6	3.9	-
Nondurables	218.014	-	224.873	7.6	3.1	-
Nondurables less food.....	202.350	-	212.343	12.6	4.9	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	363.793	-	364.693	3.1	0.2	-
Services less medical care services.....	241.570	-	244.149	2.2	1.1	-
Energy	276.514	296.052	296.605	21.5	7.3	0.2
All items less energy	227.086	-	230.180	3.7	1.4	-
All items less food and energy	226.036	-	229.050	3.7	1.3	-

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a December 1978=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.