

What is the CPI-U?

CPI-U stands for Consumer Price Index (CPI) for All Urban Consumers (U).

The United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, publishes monthly CPI-U statistics that measure price changes of a select number of products and services. This information is widely used in determining cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). MainePERS, by law, uses the CPI-U for this purpose. Social Security uses a different CPI and different time period to determine COLAs for their benefit recipients.

The eight major groups of goods and services that make up the CPI-U include:

1. Food and Beverages
2. Housing
3. Apparel
4. Transportation
5. Medical Care
6. Recreation
7. Education and Communication
8. Other Goods and Services

More information about the CPI-U is available on the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics website: <http://www.bls.gov/home.htm>. Place your cursor on Subjects at the top and click on Consumer Price Index at the top left of the drop down. Check out CPI FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) on the left.