



Court ruling puts Florida stores in middle of open carry gun debate

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Persistent inflation up again in September

Economists say rate cuts are still likely this year

Rachel Barber
USA TODAY

Inflation rose again in September, revealing the persistence of rising prices as the job market showed signs of cooling and consumers begin to think about the holiday season.

Consumer prices increased 3% from a year earlier, slightly up from 2.9% in August, according to the Labor Department’s Consumer Price Index, a measure of goods and services costs across the country.

On a monthly basis, costs increased 0.3% after rising 0.4% in August.

Price gains were led by increases for gasoline and energy, which rose 4.1% and 1.5% over the month, respectively. Shelter, airline fares, recreation, house-

hold furnishings and operations, and apparel prices all increased. The cost of motor vehicle insurance, used cars and trucks, and goods and services in the communications industry declined in September.

Core prices, which exclude volatile food and energy costs, rose 0.2% after rising 0.3% the month before. That moved the annual core inflation rate to 3%.

“Tariffs are still pushing up goods

prices and the passthrough is broadening, with clothing, furniture and personal goods prices all posting strong gains,” Michael Pearce, deputy chief U.S. economist at Oxford Economics, said in an Oct. 24 note.

Digging into the data, results were mixed for travel and transportation.

Airline fares increased 2.7%, after rising 5.9% in August.

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On average, workers this year paid \$6,850 for family health insurance plans while employers paid most of the bill, \$20,143, according to a KFF survey. GETTY IMAGES

Workplace family health insurance costs climbing

Average nearly \$27,000 this year, survey finds

Ken Alltucker
USA TODAY

If it seems like your health insurance bill is rising faster than your paycheck, you’re not mistaken.

The average cost for a family health insurance plan offered through the workplace was \$26,993 in 2025, an increase of 6% from a year ago, according to the annual employer health

benefits survey released Oct. 22 by KFF, a health policy nonprofit.

By comparison, workers’ wages grew 4% and inflation is up 2.7% from a year ago.

Other surveys project steeper price hikes are on the way for 2026. Working-age Americans who get health insurance through their jobs next year will see the largest health cost increases since 2010, according to Mercer, a benefits consultant.

The rise in the costs of health care and health insurance premiums are a challenge to both employers who under-

write the bulk of the tab and workers who contribute through payroll deductions.

With the average family insurance plan approaching \$27,000 per year, “it’s like buying a car every year just to cover a family of four,” said Matthew Rae, associate director of KFF’s health care marketplace program. It’s “an astronomical amount of money.”

As the government shutdown debate in Washington focuses on the millions of consumers who might lose lucrative

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Trump says he cut off trade talks with Canada

Swapna Venugopal Ramaswamy
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – A day after President Donald Trump announced that all trade talks with Canada had been terminated for using a “FAKE” advertisement showing former President Ronald Reagan speaking negatively about tariffs, he said the country’s tariff actions had been targeting American farmers.

“Canada has long cheated on Tariffs, charging our farmers as much as 400%,” Trump said in a Truth Social post Oct. 24. “Now they, and other countries, can’t take advantage of the U.S. any longer.”

“CANADA CHEATED AND GOT CAUGHT!!! They fraudulently took a big buy ad saying that Ronald Reagan did not like Tariffs, when actually he LOVED TARIFFS FOR OUR COUNTRY, AND ITS NATIONAL SECURITY,” he wrote.

Trump also repeated the claim that Canada had been trying to “illegally influence” the U.S. Supreme Court “in one of the most important rulings in the history of our country.”

The Supreme Court is set to hear arguments Nov. 5 on whether Trump has the authority to impose tariffs under the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act. Lower courts have ruled he overstepped his authority under a law historically used for imposing economic sanctions and other penalties on foreign enemies.

Tariffs have become the centerpiece of Trump’s economic policy. The tariffs are projected to help the U.S. economy by \$4 trillion over the next decade through taxes paid on imported goods and a reduction in interest paid on the national debt.

Trump also has said that he might attend the Supreme Court arguments

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