



Consumer Prices in Martin, TN — First Quarter 2026

Consumer prices in Martin rose about **6.6% over the year ending March 2026** on the urban-weighted index, which is roughly double the 3.3% national rate. The index climbed 3.0% over the quarter itself, led by a large but thinly-sampled rise in medical care alongside firmer apparel, transportation, and energy prices, with softer food prices a partial offset. The rural-weighted index rose 4.9% over the year. All figures use January 2025 as the base month (= 100) and compare not-seasonally-adjusted twelve-month changes.

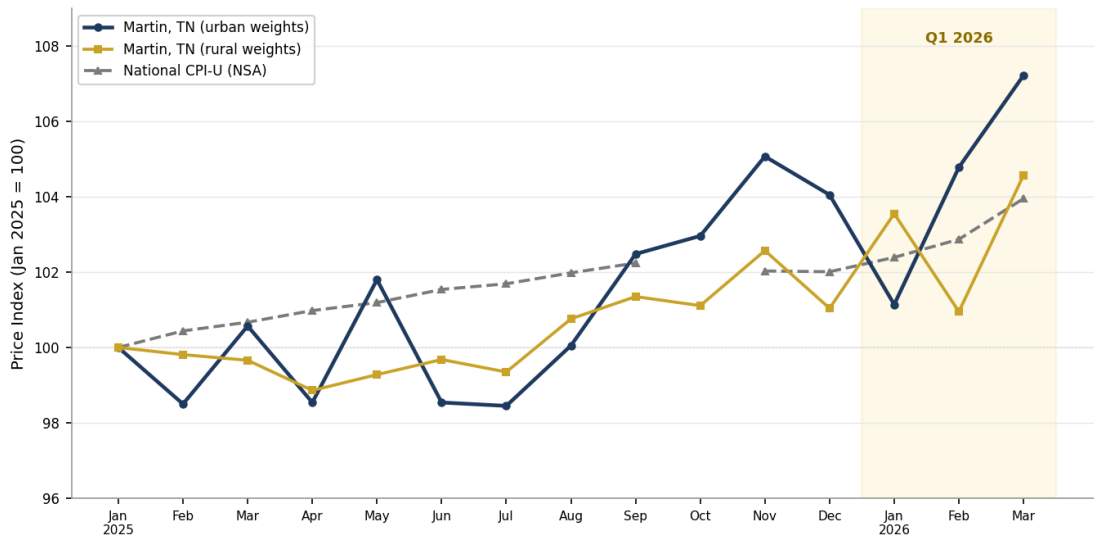


Figure 1. Martin urban and rural indexes vs. the national CPI-U, Jan 2025–Mar 2026 (Jan 2025 = 100); Q1 2026 shaded.

Measure (base Jan 2025 = 100)	Martin Urban	Martin Rural	National
Q1 2026 average index	104.38	103.02	103.07
12-month change (March)	+6.6%	+4.9%	+3.3%
Change vs. Q4 2025 average	+0.3%	+1.4%	—

National figures use complete monthly data for the quarter; the October 2025 national index (a 2025 appropriations-lapse gap) falls outside Q1 and does not affect these comparisons.

Why the gap. Higher transportation costs, localized scarcity, and limited retail competition let a few price movements exert outsized pressure on the rural cost of living. The first quarter’s rise leaned heavily on a small number of medical-care observations, so the category detail is best read as indicative of direction rather than precise magnitudes.

Method. Item prices are collected the first Wednesday of each month, converted to relatives against the January 2025 base, combined within ~26 expenditure sub-groups by geometric mean, and weighted to all-items totals using BLS (urban) and harmonized R-HICP (rural) weights held fixed within the year. The national series is BLS CPI-U, all items, not seasonally adjusted (CUUR0000SA0), rebased to January 2025.

This is a product of the Economics & Business Innovation Lab (EBIL), prepared by its founding director, Dr. Anthony R. Delmond. Full report and data available on request.