



D.C. Office of the Tenant Advocate Historical Comparison of the "Rent Control CPI" and the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment through 2022

By March 1st of each year, the Rental Housing Commission publishes what the standard annual rent increase caps will be for units under rent control for the following "rent control year." The rent control year starts on May 1st and ends the following calendar year on April 30th. The "rent control CPI" is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the greater DC metropolitan area, as published by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For tenants who are elderly (age 62 and over) or have a disability, the standard rent increase cap is the CPI-W, the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (SS COLA), or five (5) percent, whichever is least. In order to qualify for this lower cap, the tenant must have registered their "elderly" or "disability" status with the Rent Administrator's office. For all other tenants, the standard rent increase cap is equal to either the CPI-W + two (2) percent or ten (10) percent, whichever is less.

Please note there was no separate rent increase cap category for elderly tenants or tenants with disabilities before Law 16-145, the "Rent Control Reform Amendment Act of 2006," effective August 5, 2006. Law 21-239, the "Elderly and Tenants with Disabilities Protection Amendment Act of 2016," effective April 7, 2017, added the SS COLA as a further cap that applies to elderly tenants and tenants with disabilities. Also note that prior to Law 16-145, the rent could be increased once every six months. Under Law 16-145, the rent cannot be raised more than once every 12 months.

<i>Year</i>	Rent Control CPI-W <i>(May-April)</i>	SS COLA <i>(Jan.-Dec.)</i>
1985	4.4%	3.5%
1986	4.0%	3.1%
1987	1.6%	1.3%
1988	4.7%	4.2%
1989	4.6%	4.0%
1990	5.6%	4.7%
1991	5.4%	5.4%
1992	2.7%	3.7%
1993	2.9%	3.0%
1994	2.1%	2.6%
1995	1.7%	2.8%
1996	1.9%	2.6%
1997	2.8%	2.9%
1998	1.8%	2.1%
1999	1.0%	1.3%
2000	2.1%	2.5%
2001	3.3%	3.5%
2002	2.6%	2.6%
2003	2.1%	1.4%
2004	2.9%	2.1%
2005	2.7%	2.7%
2006	4.2%	4.1%
2007	3.5%	3.3%
2008	3.4%	2.3%
2009	4.8%	5.8%
2010	0.05%	0.0%
2011	2.2%	0.0%
2012	3.6%	3.6%
2013	2.2%	1.7%
2014	1.4%	1.5%
2015	1.5%	1.7%
2016	0.0%	0.0%
2017	1.1%	0.3%
2018	1.4%	2.0%
2019	2.3%	2.8%
2020	1.0%	1.6%
2021	1.0%	1.3%
2022	4.2%	5.9%