



PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

COST OF LIVING INDEX

Beginning with quarter four of 2007, C2ER has annually published an unweighted average of prices accumulated from the previous three quarters. This analysis uses average prices submitted for the first three quarters of 2020. For further details on the annual average methodology, please visit our website at coli.org.

Among the 269 urban areas that participated in the 2020 *Cost of Living Index*, the after-tax cost for a professional/managerial **standard of living ranged from more than twice the national average in New York (Manhattan), NY, to almost 25 percent below the national average in Harlingen, TX.**

The Cost of Living Index is published quarterly by C2ER – The Council for Community and Economic Research.

The Ten Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas in the Cost of Living Index (COLI)

Year-End Review of Three Quarters in 2020
National Average for 269 Urban Areas = 100

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	New York (Manhattan) NY	244.7	1	Harlingen TX	75.0
2	Honolulu HI	198.6	2	Kalamazoo MI	77.8
3	San Francisco CA	194.0	3	McAllen TX	78.1
4	New York (Brooklyn) NY	178.8	4	Pittsburg KS	80.6
5	Washington DC	159.0	5	Amarillo TX	80.7
6	Seattle WA	156.8	6	Muskogee OK	80.8
7	Oakland CA	154.7	7	Richmond IN	80.9
8	Orange County CA	150.3	8	Tupelo MS	81.0
9	Boston MA	150.0	9	Joplin MO	81.2
10	Arlington VA	149.8	10	Conway AR	82.5

The *Cost of Living Index* measures regional differences in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures, for professional and managerial households in the top income quintile. It is based on more than 50,000 prices covering almost 60 different items for which prices are collected three times a year by chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, or university applied economic centers in each participating urban area. Small differences in the index numbers should not be interpreted as significant.

The composite index is based on six components – housing, utilities, grocery items, transportation, health care, and miscellaneous goods and services.

Now with a year's worth of data, which communities have the highest and lowest prices of chicken sandwich and digital newspaper subscription?

C2ER collects more than 50,000 prices from communities across the US for the COLI. Two of those items were updated at the start of 2020, chicken sandwich and digital newspaper, in order to keep the index pricing relevant to the ever-evolving demands of the current market. Below is a list of the most, and least, expensive places to buy those items.

The Five Most and Least Expensive Places to Buy a Chicken Sandwich Averaged over Three Quarters in 2020 Average for 269 Urban Areas in 2020 = \$4.03

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Price	Ranking	Urban Areas	Price
1	Fairbanks AK	\$7.15	1	Harlingen TX	\$2.75
2	Anchorage AK	\$6.18	2	Valdosta GA	\$2.77
3	Spokane WA	\$5.85	3	Laramie WY	\$2.83
4	Bullhead City AZ	\$5.76	4	Rio Rancho NM	\$3.06
5	Bakersfield CA	\$5.73	5	Findlay OH	\$3.07

The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for a Monthly Digital Newspaper Subscription Averaged over Three Quarters in 2020 Average for 269 Urban Areas in 2020 = \$9.99

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Price	Ranking	Urban Areas	Price
1	Fayetteville AR	\$34.00	1	Stockton CA	\$2.16
2	Little Rock AR	\$34.00	2	Rockford IL	\$2.50
3	Boston MA	\$30.03	3	Spartanburg SC	\$2.78
4	Texarkana TX-AR	\$26.66	4	Peoria IL	\$2.85
5	Jonesboro AR	\$24.91	5	Thibodaux LA	\$3.33

The quarterly Cost of Living Index is available by subscription at: \$175 per year for the print edition, \$165 per year for the PDF version, or \$275 per year for an electronic (excel) version. Send check, payable to C2ER, P.O. Box 12546, Arlington VA 22209, or subscribe at coli.org.

If you need additional information on the Cost of Living Index or other COLI-related products such as the COLI Web Calculator, COLI Historical Index, County-Level Index, or Library Web Application, please contact Jennie Allison at jallison@crec.net or Erol Yildirim at ey@crec.net or by phone at 703-522-4980.