## PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

**COST OF LIVING INDEX QUARTERLY UPDATE**

Among the 265 urban areas that participated in the first quarter 2021 *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 more than 20 percent below the national average in Kalamazoo, MI.** The *Cost of Living Index* is published quarterly by C2ER – The Council for Community and Economic Research.

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| **The Ten Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas**  **in the Cost of Living Index (COLI)**  **First Quarter 2021**  **National Average for 265 Urban Areas = 100** | | | | | | | |
| **Most Expensive** | |  | | **Least Expensive** | |  | |
|  |  | **COL** | |  |  | **COL** | |
| **Ranking** | **Urban Areas** | **Index** | | **Ranking** | **Urban Areas** | | **Index** |
| 1 | New York (Manhattan) NY | | 240.6 | 1 | Kalamazoo MI | | 76.3 |
| 2 | San Francisco CA | | 188.0 | 2 | Harlingen TX | | 77.0 |
| 3 | Honolulu HI | | 187.6 | 3 | McAllen TX | | 78.4 |
| 4 | New York (Brooklyn) NY | | 174.6 | 4 | Muskogee OK | | 79.4 |
| 5 | Washington DC | | 154.7 | 5 | Richmond IN | | 80.9 |
| 6 | Boston MA | | 151.8 | 6 | Jackson-Madison County TN | | 81.2 |
| 7 | Seattle WA | | 151.8 | 7 | Amarillo TX | | 81.2 |
| 8 | Orange County CA | | 151.0 | 8 | Kokomo IN | | 82.3 |
| 9 | Oakland CA | | 150.3 | 9 | Tupelo MS | | 82.3 |
| 10 | New York (Queens) NY | | 148.1 | 10 | Pittsburg KS | | 82.4 |

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 90,000 prices covering 60 different items for which prices are collected quarterly by chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and university applied economic centers in each participating urban area. Small differences should not be interpreted as showing a measurable difference.

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

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| **What Do Groceries Cost?**  Each quarter, C2ER collects more than 90,000 prices from communities across the US for the Cost of Living Index. With food prices still being a big part of the national conversation, C2ER decided to once again feature those communities with the most and least expensive food costs as measured by the grocery item index number. C2ER collects data on twenty-six items from a variety of surrogate categories to represent the grocery item component of the index.  **The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for Grocery Items by Index Number**  **in the Cost of Living Index (COLI)**  **First Quarter 2021**  **Average for 265 Urban Areas = 100** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Most Expensive** | |  | | **Least Expensive** | | |  | | |
|  |  |  | |  |  | |  | | |
| **Ranking** | **Urban Areas** | **Index** | | **Ranking** | **Urban Areas** | | **Index** | | |
| 1 | Honolulu HI | | 157.9 | 1 | | Temple TX | | 77.0 |
| 2 | New York (Manhattan) NY | | 147.4 | 2 | | Kalamazoo MI | | 77.9 |
| 3 | Kodiak AK | | 144.7 | 3 | | Waco TX | | 78.5 |
| 4 | Juneau AK | | 140.6 | 4 | | Harlingen TX | | 79.2 |
| 5 | Seattle WA | | 131.4 | 5 | | Nacogdoches TX | | 84.5 |

**The Most Expensive and Least Expensive Cities to Get A Men’s Haircut**

Since the start of the pandemic, the process of getting a haircut has gone through rapid change and shops across the U.S. coped with the new reality by implementing sanitation fees, decreasing the number of clients see at once, just to name a few. With increased demand in conjunction with additional safety measures, the haircut prices have increased. Now with the country beginning to reopen, it is important to highlight how the price of a haircut has shifted. To examine female or longer haircuts, check out the “Beauty Salon” price in the full dataset.

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| **The Five Most and Least Expensive Places to get a Haircut**  **First Quarter 2021**  **Average for 265 Urban Areas = $19.76** | | | | | |
| **Most Expensive** | |  | **Least Expensive** | |  |
| **Ranking** | **Urban Areas** | **Avg. Rate** | **Ranking** | **Urban Areas** | **Avg. Rate** |
| 1 | Washington DC | $44.60 | 1 | Harlingen TX | $10.00 |
| 2 | Boston MA | $43.89 | 2 | McAllen TX | $10.63 |
| 3 | Portland OR | $37.13 | 3 | Thomasville-Lexington NC | $11.50 |
| 4 | Chicago IL | $34.80 | 4 | Hastings NE | $12.00 |
| 5 | Stamford CT | $32.60 | 5 | Dare County NC | $12.00 |

The quarterly Cost of Living Index is available by subscription for $175 per year for the print version and $165 per year for the PDF. The electronic version is available for $275 per year. Be sure and ask about our new Expanded Excel version which covers more household and income types. Send check, payable to C2ER, P.O. Box 12546, Arlington VA 22209, or subscribe on the Internet at [www.coli.org](http://www.coli.org).

If you need additional information on the Cost of Living Index or other COLI-related products such as the COLI Web Calculator and the COLI Historical Index, please contact Jennie Allison at [jallison@crec.net](mailto:jallison@crec.net) or by phone at 703-522-4980.