



**THE COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY
AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH**



PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

COST OF LIVING INDEX QUARTERLY UPDATE

Among the 258 urban areas that participated in the second 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.

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

Second Quarter 2021

National Average for 258 Urban Areas = 100

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	New York (Manhattan) NY	241.0	1	Kalamazoo MI	77.1
2	San Francisco CA	187.1	2	Harlingen TX	77.3
3	Honolulu HI	185.9	3	McAllen TX	77.7
4	New York (Brooklyn) NY	171.2	4	Muskogee OK	78.9
5	Washington DC	153.3	5	Jackson MS	79.1
6	Seattle WA	150.4	6	Amarillo TX	81.7
7	Boston MA	150.3	7	Tupelo MS	82.0
8	Oakland CA	149.5	8	Pittsburg KS	82.1
9	Orange County CA	149.2	9	Anniston-Calhoun County AL	82.3
10	Los Angeles-Long Beach CA	148.9	10	Richmond IN	82.3

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.

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)
Second Quarter 2021
Average for 258 Urban Areas = 100**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	Index
1	Honolulu HI	149.3	1	Kalamazoo MI	78.2
2	Kodiak AK	147.8	2	Harlingen TX	78.2
3	Juneau AK	145.0	3	Waco TX	78.6
4	New York (Manhattan) NY	143.9	4	Temple TX	80.0
5	New York (Queens) NY	135.1	5	Cedar Park TX	83.8

The Most Expensive and Least Expensive Cities to Buy Ribeye

COVID-19 disrupted the supply chain of many industries, including the meat industry where plant shutdowns, labor shortages, and surging demand sent prices for meat-based products soaring. The pandemic particularly affected the prices of beef. For example, ribeye has consistently experienced an increase in the average price across metro areas each quarter since the start of the pandemic. It is important to highlight how the price of ribeye and similar products have shifted to track trends in the cost of living. Check out the price of other meat products in the full dataset.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places to buy Ribeye
Second Quarter 2021
Average for 258 Urban Areas = \$12.56**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Avg. Rate	Ranking	Urban Areas	Avg. Rate
1	San Francisco CA	\$16.67	1	Seguin TX	\$8.43
2	Seattle WA	\$16.32	2	Springfield IL	\$8.53
3	Lima OH	\$16.32	3	Montgomery AL	\$8.86
4	Oakland CA	\$16.32	4	Douglas County GA	\$9.16
5	Kodiak AK	\$16.29	5	Waterloo-Cedar Falls IA	\$9.19

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.

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 or by phone at 703-522-4980.