



Cost of Living Index Contributors Guide

Since 1968, the Cost of Living Index (COLI) has been the #1 most trusted source of relevant, up-to-date data when it comes to understanding the real cost of living in any given area. COLI data is recognized by both the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Our data and methodology are described in detail and completely transparent to users. Both data and methodology are reviewed by an Advisory Board composed of academic researchers and government officials. The Cost of Living Index is referenced in the Census Bureau's Statistical Abstract of the U.S.

What are the benefits of contributing?

Ensure accurate data you can trust

Compare your city and community with others across the country

Recruit businesses and residents by marketing your community's quality of life and affordability

Receive a free copy of the data each quarter and discounts on other COLI products

High demand areas may be eligible for financial compensation

Expected Activities

Participating in the Cost of Living Index, contributors are asked to collect data on 22 goods and services in their geographic area. These items cover 4 categories: Housing, Transportation, Healthcare, and Miscellaneous. The entire process typically demands approximately 5-10 hours of effort. The process for participating in any specific quarter is split into two parts:

- Collecting price data during the designated collection period
- Data entry into the Cost of Living Index Database

Scheduled for three quarters of the year, the pricing periods are designated times to allow for the best comparison across all cities.

Method

Reporting methods can include both in-person, over-the-phone, and online pricing. Dates for collection periods and (flexible) data entry deadlines are available at <http://coli.org/participants/>. This page includes a training video with an overview of the process and methodology.

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