



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

W. FRANK BARTON  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Center for Economic Development  
and Business Research

## Cost of Living Index

First Quarter 2016

The Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) released its first quarter 2016 Cost of Living Index for 260 urban areas. The table below shows the most and least expensive urban areas that participated in the pricing event for the first quarter of 2016.

| <b>The Ten Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas<br/>In the Cost of Living Index (COLI)<br/>First Quarter 2016<br/>National Average for 260 Urban Areas = 100</b> |                          |                  |                        |                               |                  |
|--|--------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Most Expensive</b>  |                          |                  | <b>Least Expensive</b> |                               |                  |
| <b>Ranking</b>   | <b>Urban Areas</b>       | <b>COL Index</b> | <b>Ranking</b>         | <b>Urban Areas</b>            | <b>COL Index</b> |
| 1  | New York (Manhattan), NY | 227.0            | 1                      | McAllen, TX                   | 76.9             |
| 2  | Honolulu, HI             | 192.8            | 2                      | Harlingen, TX                 | 79.1             |
| 3  | San Francisco, CA        | 177.5            | 3                      | Norman, OK                    | 79.3             |
| 4  | New York (Brooklyn), NY  | 171.5            | 4                      | Kalamazoo, MI                 | 79.4             |
| 5  | Orange County, CA        | 155.3            | 5                      | Richmond, IN                  | 79.9             |
| 6  | Boston, MA               | 151.1            | 6                      | Ashland, OH                   | 80.1             |
| 7  | Seattle, WA              | 149.4            | 7                      | Memphis, TN                   | 83.3             |
| 8  | Stamford, CT             | 148.4            | 8                      | Martinsville-Henry County, VA | 83.3             |
| 9  | Oakland, CA              | 147.3            | 9                      | Cleveland, TN                 | 83.5             |
| 10   | San Diego, CA            | 146.9            | 10                     | Tupelo, MS                    | 83.7             |
|  |                          |                  |                        |                               |                  |

Wichita's Cost of Living Index in the first quarter of 2016 was 92.6, nearly 7 percent below the national average.

| <b>Cost of Living Index (COLI)<br/>in Surrounding Metro Areas</b> |                      |                  |
|---|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Ranking</b>  | <b>Urban Areas</b>   | <b>COL Index</b> |
| 1   | Oklahoma City, OK    | 84.7             |
| 2   | Tulsa, OK            | 87.9             |
| 3   | Des Moines, IA       | 88.8             |
| 4   | St. Louis, MO-IL     | 90.4             |
| 5   | Kansas City, MO-KS   | 91.3             |
| 6   | Omaha, NE            | 91.6             |
| 7   | Wichita, KS          | 92.6             |
| 8   | Colorado Springs, CO | 92.6             |
| 9   | Dallas, TX           | 97.9             |
| 10  | Denver, CO           | 109.3            |
|   |                      |                  |

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 that are priced each quarter. 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. When analyzing the most current price data, C2ER identified the five most and least expensive urban areas for purchasing groceries. The grocery item index number used to determine those areas is based on 26 items from a variety of surrogate categories used to represent the grocery item component of the composite index.

| <b>The Five Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas for Grocery Items by Index Number<br/>In the Cost of Living Index (COLI)<br/>First Quarter 2016<br/>Average for 260 Urban Areas = 100</b> |                    |              |                        |                            |              |
|--|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Most Expensive</b>  |                    |              | <b>Least Expensive</b> |                            |              |
| <b>Ranking</b>   | <b>Urban Areas</b> | <b>Index</b> | <b>Ranking</b>         | <b>Urban Areas</b>         | <b>Index</b> |
| 1  | Honolulu, HI       | 167.3        | 1                      | San Antonio, TX            | 80.5         |
| 2  | Kodiak, AK         | 149.8        | 2                      | Jackson-Madison County, TN | 80.5         |
| 3  | Stamford, CT       | 136.9        | 3                      | Temple, TX                 | 80.6         |
| 4  | New Haven, CT      | 134.6        | 4                      | Waco, TX                   | 80.7         |
| 5  | San Francisco, CA  | 129.1        | 5                      | Brownsville, TX            | 81.0         |
|  |                    |              |                        |                            |              |

The grocery index number for Wichita in the first quarter 2016 was 96.8, 3.2 percent below the national average.

With The Oscars ceremony happening during the first quarter and with cinema being a popular leisure activity for a significant share of Americans, C2ER decided to find the five most and least expensive

places to buy a ticket to an indoor, first run, Saturday evening movie. Those places are shown in the table below.

| <b>The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for a Saturday Night Movie Ticket</b><br><b>First Quarter 2016</b><br><b>Average for 260 Urban Areas = \$10.10</b> |                            |                   |                        |                             |                   |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Most Expensive</b>  |                            |                   | <b>Least Expensive</b> |                             |                   |
| <b>Ranking</b>   | <b>Urban Areas</b>         | <b>Avg. Price</b> | <b>Ranking</b>         | <b>Urban Areas</b>          | <b>Avg. Price</b> |
| 1  | Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA | 14.79             | 1                      | Thomasville-Lexington, NC   | 5.50              |
| 2  | New York (Manhattan), NY   | 14.68             | 2                      | Danville, IL                | 5.99              |
| 3  | Grand Rapids, MI           | 14.00             | 3                      | Salina, KS                  | 6.00              |
| 4  | Juneau, AK                 | 13.50             | 4                      | Vero Beach-Indian River, FL | 6.22              |
| 5  | Sacramento, CA             | 13.50             | 5                      | Peoria, IL                  | 6.50              |
|  |                            |                   |                        |                             |                   |

The price of a ticket to an indoor, first run, Saturday evening movie in Wichita in the first quarter of 2016 was \$9.10, 1 dollar below the national average.

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. To subscribe, or learn more about the Index and C2ER, visit their website at [www.coli.org](http://www.coli.org).