



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact

Juan Espinoza, Communications Associate
jespinoza@economicprogressri.org
401-456-2752 (office) 813-526-3043 (cell)

What does it cost to live in the Ocean State?

Interactive tools show cost-of-living and public & private resources to help Rhode Islanders

Providence, RI - What does it cost to raise a family in Rhode Island? What resources are available to help Rhode Islanders make ends meet?

Today, the Economic Progress Institute released its updated Cost of Living Calculator, an interactive tool that shows how much a family needs to earn to enjoy a secure, yet modest standard of living in the Ocean State. The calculator is available online at www.economicprogressri.org/calculator.

The Institute's Cost of Living Calculator provides a more realistic measure of economic security than the commonly used federal poverty level (FPL) which measures economic security based on the cost of food. The Calculator allows users to see what it costs families of different sizes to pay for housing, child care, health care, food, transportation, and taxes and then calculates the pre-tax (gross) income they need to meet their expenses.

For example, a single-parent, with an infant (age 0-1) and a school-aged child (age 6-12) needs to earn \$62,693 a year or \$30.14/hour to cover the basic expenses required to raise a family in Rhode Island. More than one-fourth of that family's expenses will go towards child care—a whopping \$1,446 a month.

A single adult without children needs to earn \$24,640 a year or \$11.85/hour to meet his or her basic needs. That is more than the current \$9.00 minimum wage and the \$9.60 minimum wage that will be effective in January 2016.

The Institute also publishes a comprehensive "Guide to Assistance" explaining the government assistance programs and community resources available to help individuals and families meet basic needs including food assistance, tax credits, and child care subsidies which can all help lower-wage working families make ends meet.

The Guide is available at The Institute's website at www.economicprogressri.org/guide

Social service providers, policymakers, human resource professionals and members of the community can use the guide and sign up for the Institute's "Guide Updates"—an e-news that alerts users to changes in eligibility guidelines for these programs.

“We hope these tools serve to better educate the public and policymakers about the cost-of-living in the Ocean State and the importance of government assistance programs for the large number of Rhode Islanders working in low-wage jobs” said Kate Brewster, Executive Director of the Economic Progress Institute. “Many people often don’t realize they are eligible for help paying for basic needs like child care and food. We encourage Rhode Islanders who are struggling to pay the bills to review the Guide to see if they qualify for assistance.”

###

About The Economic Progress Institute

The Economic Progress Institute - formerly The Poverty Institute - is a nonpartisan research and policy organization dedicated to improving the economic well-being of low- and modest-income Rhode Islanders. For more information visit www.economicprogressri.org.