

Ohio families incomes not enough to get by

New report and Ohio fact sheet highlight basic budget needs

Working people in Cleveland aren't making enough to support their families, according to a new report by the Economic Policy Institute. Policy Matters Ohio released a companion state fact sheet with data for Cleveland communities across Ohio.

Estimated costs for a household with two adults and two children living in the Cleveland area are \$62,050 for 2013. That's significantly more than the median household income of \$49,715 for married-couple families in the city of Cleveland, and \$32,656 for two full-time workers earning minimum wage.

"The fact that hardworking families are struggling to make ends meet even with full-time jobs makes it clear how critical good public policy is to the well-being of our communities," said Amanda Woodrum, researcher at Policy Matters Ohio. "We need to make public investments in our workforce to ensure that our families can afford basic necessities like food, child care, housing, transportation, and health care."

EPI's basic family budget for Cleveland is more than 2½ times the \$23,550 federal poverty line for a family of four. The report also provides budget information for families in communities across Ohio.

Access to better jobs with better wages and paid training opportunities are part of the solution," said Woodrum. "Also important are public work supports like affordable and convenient public transit, Medicaid benefits, low-income weatherization programs, food and housing assistance, and subsidized child care."

Woodrum will participate in a press call organized by Fight for a Fair Economy to bring awareness to wage disparity, scheduled for today at 2 p.m. Woodrum will participate in a press call today at 2 p.m.

Conference number: 866.244.8528 Code: 605865#

"What Families Need to Get By: The 2013 Update of EPI's Family Budget Calculator," is available on the website of the Economic Policy Institute at www.epi.org/resources/budget/. It can be used to estimate basic-needs budgets for families in communities across the country.

Key findings

- A family of four living in Cleveland will need \$62,050 to meet basic family needs.
- An Ohio household with two full-time minimum-wage workers earns \$32,656. Median household income for married couples in Cleveland is \$49,715.
- Cleveland's cost of living is similar to Chicago, Columbus, Cincinnati, and St. Louis but less than New York City, Boston and Washington, D.C.