Living Wage For US is an initiative that started in 2018 under the umbrella of Oxfam America. It now runs independently as a voluntary sustainability certification that certifies U.S. employers that pay their workers and contractors a living wage. As reference for their certification, they created regional benchmarks across the U.S. grouped by county commuting zones.

Their methodology for setting living wage is based on high-level detailed data collection and investigation on the US reality and socio-economic diversity. All benchmarks are publicly available on their website.

1. COLLECTING DATA
   All calculations are based on annual data from quality third parties such as the Economic Policy Institute, USDA Economic Research Service, U.S. Census Bureau, Feeding America Map the Meal Gap reports, Kaiser Family Foundation.

2. COST OF LIVING OF A TYPICAL FAMILY
   The methodology wires on a family of two adults and two kids in keeping with the family concept.

3. ITEMS OF COST OF LIVING
   The methodology consists of: housing, food, transportation, child care, health care (insurance and out-of-pocket), miscellaneous/life necessities, education/margin for unexpected events, and taxes.

4. WORKING ADULTS
   The methodology assumes one full-time worker plus the likelihood of a second worker in the family to establish the final number of working adults.

5. SUFFICIENT NET WAGE
   Statutory Deductions from pay are calculated using the National Bureau of Economic Research’s TAXSIM to calculate tax liabilities.

6. DIFFERENCES IN CONTEXT
   Benchmarks are available at county level across the US, grouped by commuting zone.

7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST
   No conflicts identified.

8. TRANSPARENCY
   Clear methodological infographic published online.

9. INFLATION ESTIMATION
   Benchmarks calculated annually. When new data are not available, benchmarks are updated for inflation.

What is the Living Wage for US?

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