



The Basic Economic Security Tables™ Index (BEST)

RPC commissioned BEST Index for each parish in the State and they can be found online here: BasicEconomicSecurity.org

The Basic Economic Security Tables™ Index (BEST) is a measure of the basic needs and assets workers require for economic security throughout a lifetime and across generations.

The BEST follows on a long history of research defining families' spending and income needs, but reflects a modern economy and contemporary understanding of how families achieve financial stability. The BEST captures the local variance in prices which determines how well incomes allow families to make ends meet. The BEST Index is a starting point for workers who want to achieve financial stability, and for the policymakers, advocates, researchers and service providers who help workers build security in their states, counties and local communities.

Applications and Uses for BEST:

- **Policy Formation and Analysis**
 - Benchmarking wages, worker welfare and local economic stability
 - Identifying jobs and careers that provide the economic security wages that support stable communities
 - Identifying who is and is not participating fully in local economies
- **Decision Making**
 - Evaluating economic development and economic development opportunities
 - Evaluating education and training needs
 - Evaluating and improving the efficacy of publicly funded programs
- **Advocacy**
 - Changing the public's understanding of economic security
 - Helping those working on policy issues across the life course, from early childhood to aging, find common ground and a common language
- **Grant Writing**
- **Direct Counseling**
 - Improving workers' and students' financial planning
 - Promoting the savings that create essential short-and long-term asset building and economic stability

Basic Economic Security Tables for workers with Employment-Based Benefits – for a 1 Worker Household (Living Alone), Monthly Budget

	Louisiana (Statewide Ave.)	Jefferson	Orleans	St Bernard	St Tammany	Plaquemines	Tangipahoa	St John	St Charles
Housing	\$498	\$673	\$643	\$648	\$668	\$648	\$413	\$648	\$648
Utilities	\$124	137	167	162	142	162	88	162	162
Food	\$254	252	252	252	252	252	256	252	252
Transportation	\$538	534	534	534	534	534	556	534	534
Child Care	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Personal & Household Items	\$227	275	275	275	275	275	196	275	275
Health Care	\$161	161	161	161	161	161	161	161	161
Emergency Savings	\$79	90	91	91	91	90	73	91	90
Retirement Savings	\$74	74	90	87	79	73	73	80	72
Taxes	\$343	419	422	421	420	418	300	420	418
Tax Credits	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monthly Total	\$2,298	2,615	2,635	2,631	2,622	2,613	2,116	2,623	2,612
Annual Total	\$27,576	31,380	31,620	31,572	31,464	31,356	25,392	31,476	31,344
Hourly Wage	\$13.06	14.86	14.97	14.95	14.90	14.85	12.02	14.90	14.84
Additional Asset Building Savings									
Home ownership	\$51	87	82	61	91	62	51	71	75

Source: Wider Opportunities for Women BEST, Note: "Benefits" include unemployment insurance and employment-based health insurance and retirement plans.

More info on the BEST can be found here: http://www.norpc.org/comprehensive_economic_development_strategy.html