

Sonoma County

THE REAL COST MEASURE IN CALIFORNIA 2025



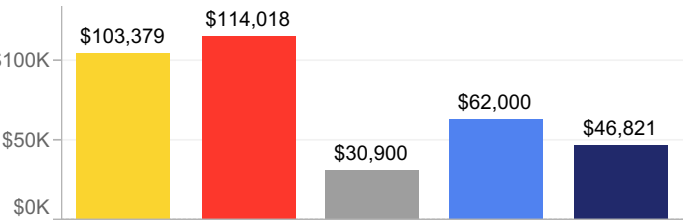
The Real Cost Measure (RCM) estimates the minimum amount of income required to meet basic needs including the costs of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and taxes. Unlike the official poverty measure which is primarily calculated based on the cost of food adjusted for inflation annually, the Real Cost Measure takes into account geographical differences in the cost of living throughout California.

If any results show blank values, that indicates the sample size is too small to illustrate Real Cost Measure results. Per our methodology, estimates with a cell size of greater than 5,000 are assumed to be accurate within +/-1% based on design factor analysis. Cell sizes less than 5,000 are suppressed.

# of Households below Real Cost Measure	% of Households below Real Cost Measure	% of Households below Real Cost Measure with at least 1 Working Adult
43,505	27%	98%

Annual Income Comparison

Based on a Household of 2 Adults, 1 Pre-Schooler, 1 School-Aged Child



*based on \$15.50 per hour, 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

- Median Household Income
- Real Cost Measure Budget
- Official Poverty Measure
- 2 Minimum Wage Jobs*
- Supplemental Poverty Measure

Household Budgets

	1 Adult	2 Adults	2 Adults, 1 Pre-Schooler, 1 School-Aged Child
Housing	\$18,300	\$20,532	\$27,024
Food	\$5,124	\$9,384	\$14,448
Health Care	\$2,964	\$5,928	\$11,868
Child Care	\$0	\$0	\$19,752
Transportation	\$7,212	\$14,436	\$14,436
Miscellaneous	\$3,360	\$5,028	\$8,748
Taxes/Credits	\$7,281	\$9,424	\$17,742
FINAL BUDGET	\$44,241	\$64,732	\$114,018

Households of Color

- Across the county, African Americans and Latinos have a disproportionate number of households with incomes below the Standard. In this area, of the 43,505 households below the Real Cost Measure, 16,708 are Latino.

Households with Young Children

- 51% of households with children under six struggle, a rate much greater than that of the rest of the county.
- Single mothers are most likely to struggle. 73% in the county are below the Real Cost Measure.

Working Households

- 98% of households below RCM have at least one working adult.
- 82% of heads of household who work are employed full time and year round.
- A family of four (2 adults, 1 infant, 1 school-aged child) would need to hold more than 3 full time, minimum-wage jobs to achieve economic security.**

Housing Burden

- 38% of all households in the county spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Education

	# Below RCM	% Below RCM
Less than High School	6,929	58%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	11,572	42%
Some College, Assoc. or Voc.	14,923	29%
Bachelor's degree or higher	10,081	15%

Ethnicity

	# Below RCM	% Below RCM
Latino	16,708	50%
African American		
Asian American / Pacific Islander		
White	22,678	20%
Native American/Alaska Native		

Household Type

	# Below RCM	% Below RCM
Single Mothers	8,168	73%
Seniors	8,396	19%
Married Couples	13,679	23%
Informal Families	9,549	27%

Citizenship/Nativity

	# Below RCM	% Below RCM
Foreign Born, Non-Citizen	7,810	58%
Foreign Born, Naturalized	6,350	42%
Born a US Citizen	29,345	22%

**Minimum waged jobs based on \$15.50 per hour, 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year. Median household earnings control for elder-led households and household led by person with disabilities consistent with the Real Cost Measure.