On the principle of using the most up-to-date and most local publications and data, these notes include the sources of the publications and data referred in the 2015 Living Wage Study. All percentage increases/decreases marked in parenthesis indicate the change from the same numbers used or obtained in the 2013 Living Wage Study and other previous studies for comparative purposes.

1. Rent

$943.00/month one-bedroom x 12 months = $11,316/year (+12.80%)

Other options

Efficiency = $769 (+12.76%)

2 bedroom = $1,130 (+12.89%)

3 bedroom = $1,565 (+12.83%)

4 bedroom = $1,571 (+12.86%)

Sources


2. Food

$225.65/month x 12 months = $2,707.80/year (+3.27%)

Low-cost Official USDA Food Plan: Average of male and female ages 19-50

Monthly cost of food on low-cost plan

Men 19-50 years: $241.50 (+3.21%)

Women 19-50 years: $209.80 (+3.35%)

Average of men and women: $225.65 (+3.27%)

Sources

Official USDA Food Plans: Cost of Food at Home at Four Levels, U.S. Average, June 2014 (June statistics are used to represent the annual average), http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/usda_food_plans_cost_of_food/CostofFoodJun2014.pdf

3. Transportation

$172.47 + $16.64 + $2.66 + $0.18 + $0 = $191.95/month x 12 months = $2,303.40/year (+1.56%)
Population of Tompkins County: 103,617 (US Census Bureau 2013)
Drive alone 57%, carpool 11%, public transportation 7%, bike, 2%, walk 16%, work at home 7%

Drive alone = $3,631/12 x 0.57 = $172.47/month
Cost of driving alone, according to BLS Customer Expenditure Survey 2013 (second 20% Mean) = $1,850 (gasoline/motor oil down 6.61%) + $1,781 (other expenses, including insurance, maintenance and repairs, vehicle finance charges, licenses, up 11.38%) = $3,631/year

Carpool = $1,815.5/12 x 0.11 = $16.64/month
Share the cost of driving alone – divide by 2 = $3,631/2 = $1,815.5.

Public transportation = $456/12 x 0.07 = $2.66/month
Cost of public transportation (annual bus pass on TCAT) = $450 (Zone 1) or $600 (Zone 2)
Per TCAT, 95.9% buy Zone 1, 4.1% Zone 2.
Average cost of TCAT bus pass = ($450 x 95.9%) + ($600 x 4.1%) = $431.55 + $24.60 = $456.15

Bike = $105.50/12 x 0.02 = $0.18/month
Cost of a bike $60 ($300 over 5 years) + $45.50 annual maintenance = $105.50
Annual maintenance such as tuning, changing of tires, brakes and tubes.
Cost of maintenance of existing bicycle based on Living Wage Study 2000 (obtained from Claritas Consumer Spending Patterns data) = $33/year, adjusted for inflation = $45.50/year
Cost of bike based on: mid-range quality bikes cost $300 to $1000 (costhelper.com) Average sales price at chain sports stores = $240 (statista.com)

Walking 16% + Work at home 7%
These categories are collectively assumed to have none or very little cost.

Sources
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (ITCTC) - Statistics - Easy To Read Mode-to-Work Charts For Tompkins County:
Inflation calculation – United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor

References

4. Communication
($35.74 + $33)/month = $68.74/month. $68.74/month x 12 months = $824.88/year (+8.70%)

Internet
The access to the Internet is a critical necessity to almost every individual. Based on the service availability throughout Tompkins County, below Internet plans have been selected from Verizon and Time Warner Cable to calculate the average cost of internet. taxes and fees are assumed to be 10% of cost before tax.

Verizon high speed internet enhanced (no annual contract) = $29.99 + taxes and fees= $32.99/month
HSI enhanced (provisioned at 1.1-3 Mbps, 3.1- 7 Mbps or 7.1-15 Mbps based on VZ line qualification requirements.)
Time Warner Cable standard internet = $34.99 + taxes and fees = $38.49/month
Average = ($32.99 + $38.49)/2 = $35.74/month

Telephone
As the popularity of cell phone usage rises, fewer households maintain the use of a landline phone. According to US Census Bureau 2013 American Community Survey, the household internet connection through mobile broadband is 33.1%. People need Internet access through their PCs as well as smartphones. The calculations below are based on the assumption that an individual can purchase a basic prepaid cell phone without a contract and a moderate extra monthly spending on Internet browsing. Taxes and fees are assumed to be 10% of cost before tax.

Prepaid cell phone (AT&T) = $25 + $5 + taxes and fees = $33/month
Includes 250 nationwide minutes. Minutes over 250 are charged at $0.10/minute.
Includes unlimited nationwide text, picture, and video messages. 50M for additional
$5 is available with the $25 monthly plan for smartphones and quick messaging/feature phones
Sources

Reference

5. Healthcare
With employer-provided health insurance: $122.98 + $79.00 = $201.98/month x 12 = $2423.76/year (+7.07%)

5a. Health insurance (from Alternatives)
This calculation is based on the 2015 staff per-payroll contribution under the full time - more than two years category, employee only. Calculation based on the percentage of staff using the co-pay plan and two high deductible plans then averaging the results. Alternatives pays 75% of individual health insurance premiums as soon as insurance starts for full-time staff. 50% of staff have the Co-Pay Plan and contribute $68.91/pay period (There are 26 pay periods.) 50% have either the Silver, High Deductible or Bronze, Highest Deductible plans. Calculated as 25% and 25% each. 25% pay $50.59 to a high deductible plan, and 25% pay $38.61 to the highest deductible plan. ($68.91 x 50% = $34.46) + ($50.59 x 25% = $12.65) + ($38.61 x 25% = $9.65) = $56.76 per payroll x 26 payrolls = $1475.76/12 months = $122.98 per month

Out of pocket expenses based on Consumer Expenditure Survey. Mid-year tables, 7/30/2013 to 6/30/2014, Quintiles of Income before taxes, Table 1101, second 20% quintile. (bls.gov/cex/#midyear)
Medical services = $426
Drugs = $420
Medical supplies = $106
Total: $952.00/12 = $79.00/month
5b. Health Insurance (from NYS Health Insurance Exchange/Marketplace)

For those employers who do not offer employer sponsored Health Insurance, an individual can purchase federally subsidized health insurance on the NYS Health Insurance Exchange/Marketplace. The monthly cost of the Excellus Silver Plan (2015) on the Exchange would be $202.81 or $2,433.72 for the year. This is after a federal subsidy of $294.41/month (the subsidy is based on the gross income of a single person in Tompkins County paid a living wage). The subsidized cost of the Silver Plan amounts to $1.17/hour for a 40 hour work week ($2,433.72 divided by 2080 hours = $1.17). Substituting this figure for the cost to the employees of Alternatives for their employer sponsored HI and adjusting for taxes results in a Tompkins County living wage figure of $14.34/hour or $29,822.42 for the year. This is higher than the Alternatives calculation of a living wage ($13.77) because the average cost of its employer-sponsored HI is less than the cost of the Silver Plan on the NYS Health Exchange.

Sources
Alternatives Federal Credit Union 2015 Health Insurance Rates, internal document
Consumer Expenditures Survey Mid-year tables, 7/30/2013 to 6/30/2014,
Quintiles of Income before taxes, Table 1101, second 20% quintile.
(bls.gov/cex/#midyear)

6. Recreation

$110.06/month x 12 months = $1,320.72/year (+2.86%)

Recreation activities are important to a healthy work/life style. Based on prior studies, minimum $100 spending to drive work-life balance has been increased by inflation. $100 in 2009 has the same buying power as $110.06 in 2014. Increased $107.00 (2012) by 2.86% inflation rate for 2014 buying power.

Sources

7. Savings

$65.83/month x 12 months = $789.96/year (+2.86%)

As a Credit Union, we think a savings habit is an important component of any budget.

Increased $64.00 (2012) by 2.86% inflation rate for 2014 buying power.
8. Miscellaneous

$1458.00/12months = $121.50 per month (+6.81%)

Based on average annual figures from Consumer Expenditures Survey, Mid-year tables

Housekeeping supplies = $460.00

Apparel cost (Average of men and women, ages 16+) = $237
  Apparel cost (Men, ages 16+) = $167
  Apparel cost (Women, ages 16+) = $307

Footwear = $244

Other apparel products and services = $116

Personal care and services = $401

Sources

Consumer Expenditures Survey Mid-year tables, 7/30/2013 to 6/30/2014, Quintiles of Income before taxes, Table 1101, second 20% quintile. (bls.gov/cex/#midyear)

9. Taxes

Payroll (SS) tax rates remained at 7.65% equaling $2190.76 for the year or $182.56/mo. (+9.10%)

Federal tax computation $2296.86/year = $191.41/mo. (+15.37%)

NY State taxes would be $1005.26/year = $83.77/mo. (+14.02%)

10. Addendum

Childcare: Although this data is not included in the determination of a living wage for a single-household individual, it is provided here for reference.

Infant: $1130.58/month x 12 months = $13,566.97/year (+6.49%)

Toddler: $1138.00/month x 12 months = $13,656.00/year (+7.12%)

Pre-school: $1013.61/month x 12 months = $12,163.30/year (+6.56%)

Monthly (four weeks) tuition rates are based on published rate schedules of registered local childcare centers and service providers. As close as possible, the data is selected for registered day care centers providing full day services for five days a week.
Infant
Drop-in Children’s Center (full day) = $1120
Bright Horizons/Cornell University Child Care Center (full day) = $1625
NYS Self-Sufficiency Report 2010 (adjusted for inflation) = $793.33
NYS Office of Children and Family Services Survey 2014 = $984
Average = $1130.58/month

Toddler
Drop-in Children’s Center (full day) = $1080
Bright Horizons/Cornell University Child Care Center (full day) = $1410
NYS Self-Sufficiency Report 2010 (adjusted for inflation): not reported
NYS Office of Children and Family Services Survey 2014 = $924
Average: $1138.00/month

Pre-school
Drop-in Children’s Center (full day) = $1000
Bright Horizons/Cornell University Child Care Center (full day) = $1287
NYS Self-sufficiency report 2010 (adjusted for inflation) = $907.43
NYS Office of Children and Family Services survey 2014 = $860
Average: $1013.61/month

Sources

Monthly Tuition Schedule, Cornell University Child Care Center, eff date 8/2014 https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/c4_rates.pdf

Drop-in Children’s Center, (http://www.dicc.org/), rate sheet eff 9/2014
Child Care Costs and Financial Assistance, Child Development Council, http://www.childdevelopmentcouncil.org/content/viewfinancial-assistance.html
Tompkins County Childcare Centers listing, http://childcarecenter.us/county/tompkins_ny#.UO7z7ORX3ng


This study released on June 26, 2015 at Alternatives Federal Credit Union.
Welcome

Alternatives Federal Credit Union
Living Wage Study 2015

Thank you for attending Alternatives 2015 Living Wage Study Press Conference

Today our Panelists include:

**Tristram Coffin**
Alternatives Federal Credit Union
Chief Executive Officer

**Karl Graham**
Alternatives Federal Credit Union
Director of Community Relations and Development
Alternatives Federal Credit Union provided oversight of the study

**Leslyn McBean-Clairborne**
Tompkins County Legislator, District 1, City of Ithaca and Director of the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC)

**Mandi Meidlinger**
Owner of Jillian’s Drawers - A store for parents and their young children located on the Ithaca Commons.
Jillian’s Drawers is a Certified Living Wage Employer

**Pete Meyers**
Coordinator and one of the founders of the Tompkins County Workers’ Center
The Workers Center certifies Living Wage employers.