



Wages and the Cost of Living in Johnson County

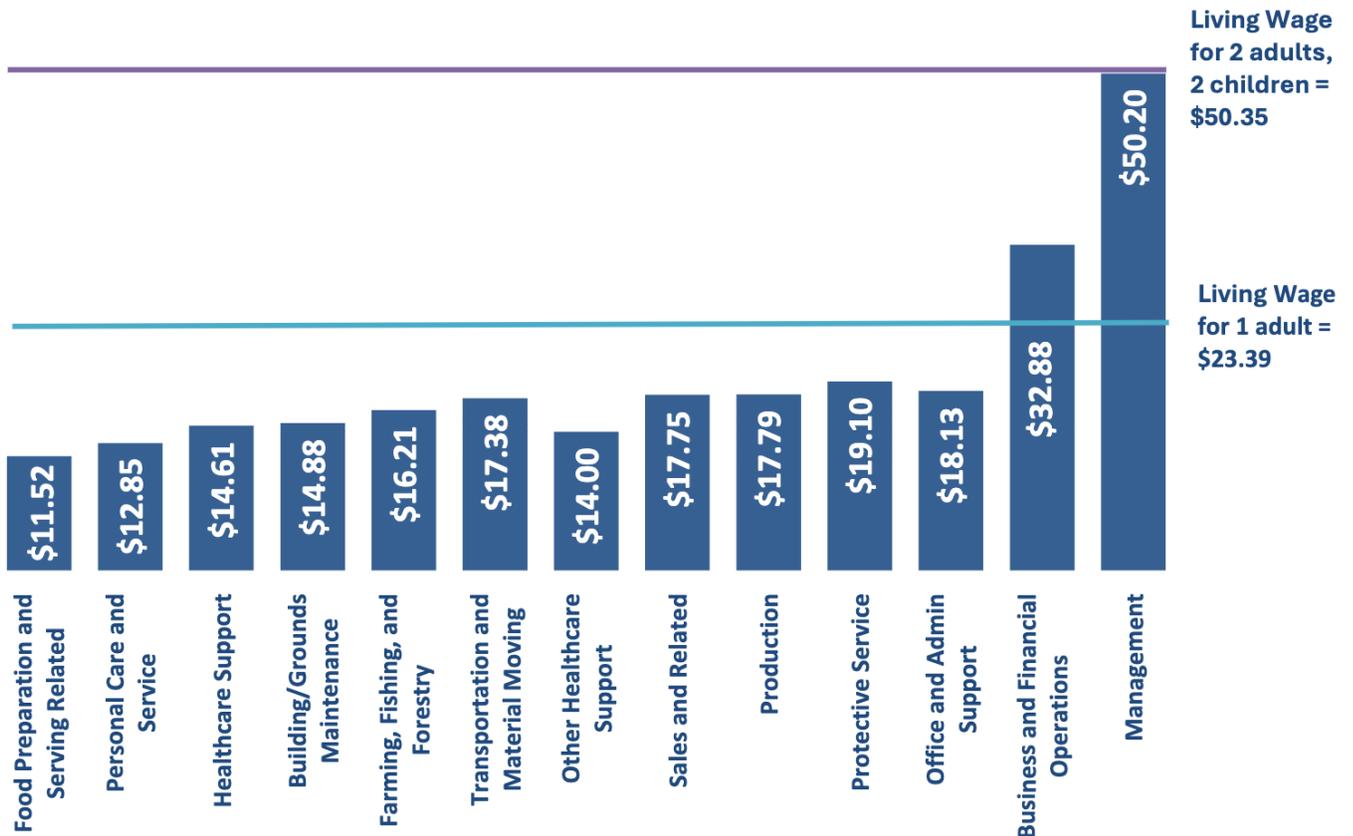
United Community Services is committed to advocating for public policies that promote economic stability. This includes policies that advance wage, housing, employment, taxation, health, and business retention and growth policies that support citizens' ability to improve economic stability and move toward self-sufficiency.

According to the U.S. Census, median household income in Johnson County in 2022 was \$98,523, well above the median household income in neighboring counties, Wyandotte County (\$59,362) and Jackson County (\$62,422). In Johnson County, 71.3% of residents over the age of 16 are in the labor force. The most recent data from the Kansas Department of Labor shows that the unemployment rate for Johnson County is 3%.

Living Wage

A living wage is the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and other essential expenses required to live a modest but adequate life in a specific geographic area. Unlike the minimum wage, which is often set by law and may not always align with actual living costs, a living wage is typically calculated based on the cost of living in a particular location, taking into account factors like housing prices, transportation costs, food expenses, and healthcare costs.

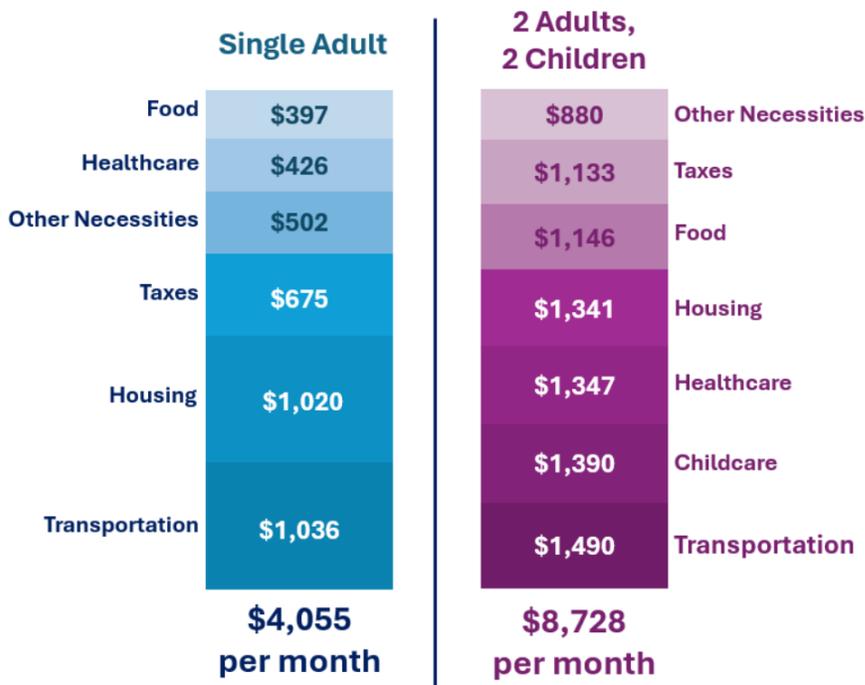
MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE FOR JOHNSON COUNTY OCCUPATIONS



The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) *Family Budget Calculator* measures the income households need to maintain an adequate standard of living. EPI analysis shows that a single adult would need to earn at least \$23.39 per hour (or \$48,664 for full-time year-round work) to cover the cost of living in Johnson County, which includes costs of housing, transportation, food, healthcare, taxes, and other necessities.

For two adults with two children, the living wage would need to be more than \$50.35 per hour, or \$100,734 annually. This includes costs such as childcare expenses which average approximately \$1,390 per month per child or \$16,680 per year. In Johnson County, nearly 189,270 jobs (or 55.2 percent) pay median wages below \$23.29 per hour.

MONTHLY COST OF LIVING JOHNSON COUNTY 2023



Source: Economic Policy Institute Family Budget Calculator

How Does the Economic Policy Institute Calculate Cost of Living?

Below are descriptions of how the Economic Policy Institute calculates the cost of living for each state, metro area, or county. To learn more, visit <https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/>



Housing costs are based on the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s fair market rents, which represent rental costs (shelter rent plus utilities) at the 40th percentile in each area for privately owned, structurally safe, and sanitary rental housing of a modest nature with suitable amenities. Studio apartments were used for one-adult families, one-bedroom apartments for two-adult families, two-bedroom apartments for families with one or two children, and three-bedroom apartments for families with three or four children.



Food costs are based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s national “low-cost” food plan and adjusted to each area using multipliers from Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap data. The USDA food plans represent the amount families need to spend to achieve nutritionally adequate diets.



Childcare expenses are based on costs of center-based childcare and family-based care for 4-year-olds and school-age children, as reported by the Child Care Aware of America. For one-child families, EPI assumes the child is 4 years old. For families with more than one child, EPI assumes the additional children are ages 8, 12, and 16, respectively.



Transportation expenses are a combination of the costs of auto ownership, auto use, and transit use.



Health care expenses include insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs, and assume families purchase the lowest cost bronze plans on the health insurance exchange established under the Affordable Care Act.



Taxes are calculated from the National Bureau of Economic Research’s Internet TAXSIM, an online tool that calculates information on federal personal income taxes, state income taxes, and federal Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes.



Other necessities include apparel, personal care, household supplies (which include items ranging from furnishings to cleaning supplies to phone service), reading materials, and school supplies.

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Sources: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2022; Economic Policy Institute 2024; KS Dept. of Labor Wage Survey 2022