

Despite the increase in the minimum wage in July 2008 to \$6.55 per hour, the monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the lowest-cost metro area in each state ranges from 39 percent of the minimum wage (based on full-time employment) in Illinois to over 100 percent in the District of Columbia and Hawaii.

This means minimum-wage earners would have to spend every cent they earned on rent and still not be able to afford an apartment in these jurisdictions.

Fair Market Rent vs. Minimum Wage: 2008

	Monthly Fair Market Rent	Minimum Wage		FMR as percent of minimum wage
		Hourly	Monthly	
Alabama	\$481	\$6.55	\$1,135	42.4%
Alaska	879	7.15	1,239	70.9
Arizona	723	6.90	1,196	60.5
Arkansas	514	6.55	1,135	45.3
California	612	8.00	1,387	44.1
Colorado	608	7.02	1,217	50.0
Connecticut	863	7.65	1,326	65.1
Delaware	743	7.15	1,239	60.0
District of Columbia	1,324	7.55	1,309	101.1
Florida	555	6.79	1,177	47.2
Georgia	518	6.55	1,135	45.6
Hawaii	1,630	7.25	1,257	129.7
Idaho	574	6.55	1,135	50.6
Illinois	528	7.75	1,343	39.3
Indiana	555	6.55	1,135	48.9
Iowa	527	7.25	1,257	41.9
Kansas	525	6.55	1,135	46.3
Kentucky	550	6.55	1,135	48.5
Louisiana	490	6.55	1,135	43.2
Maine	623	7.00	1,213	51.4
Maryland	555	6.55	1,135	48.9
Massachusetts	764	8.00	1,387	55.1
Michigan	578	7.40	1,283	45.1
Minnesota	572	6.55	1,135	50.4
Mississippi	504	6.55	1,135	44.4
Missouri	501	6.65	1,153	43.5
Montana	581	6.55	1,135	51.2
Nebraska	527	6.55	1,135	46.4
Nevada	823	6.85	1,187	69.3
New Hampshire	982	6.55	1,135	86.5
New Jersey	895	7.15	1,239	72.2
New Mexico	527	6.55	1,135	46.4
New York	674	7.15	1,239	54.4
North Carolina	555	6.55	1,135	48.9
North Dakota	532	6.55	1,135	46.9
Ohio	555	7.00	1,213	45.8
Oklahoma	525	6.55	1,135	46.3
Oregon	635	7.95	1,378	46.1
Pennsylvania	546	7.15	1,239	44.1
Rhode Island	965	7.40	1,283	75.2
South Carolina	543	6.55	1,135	47.8
South Dakota	523	6.55	1,135	46.1
Tennessee	501	6.55	1,135	44.1
Texas	550	6.55	1,135	48.5
Utah	613	6.55	1,135	54.0
Vermont	1,013	7.68	1,331	76.1
Virginia	535	6.55	1,135	47.1
Washington	599	8.07	1,399	42.8
West Virginia	515	7.25	1,257	41.0
Wisconsin	555	6.55	1,135	48.9
Wyoming	555	6.55	1,135	48.9

Sources: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2008 Fair Market Rents, at <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/fmr/fmr2008/fy2008_fmrs.xls>; and U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, at <<http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/america.htm>>. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.