

WHERE CLEANING PAY IS ACTUALLY WORTH MOST

Cleaner and laundry-worker pay in every US metro area, adjusted for what things cost there, using BEA Regional Price Parities.

Hassam Rafkey · APXXO Data · 15 September 2026

DATA AS AT	LAST CHECKED	MEASURED IN	ROWS
OEWS 2025 · RPP 2024	2026-09-15	US dollars per hour, adjusted for local prices	100

\$21.36

SEATTLE-TACOMA-BELLEVUE, WA PAYS THE MOST, ADJUSTED

\$23.74 an hour at a price level of 111, against a US average of 100.

-50

URBAN HONOLULU, HI MOVES THIS MANY PLACES

35th on pay as published, 85th once local prices are taken into account.

21

OF 100 METROS MOVE MORE THAN 20 PLACES

The ranking a nominal wage table gives you is not the ranking a cleaner experiences.

AT A GLANCE

TOP 12 OF 100

The twelve metros where cleaning pay goes furthest. Where the green bar runs past the black one, local prices are eating the wage.

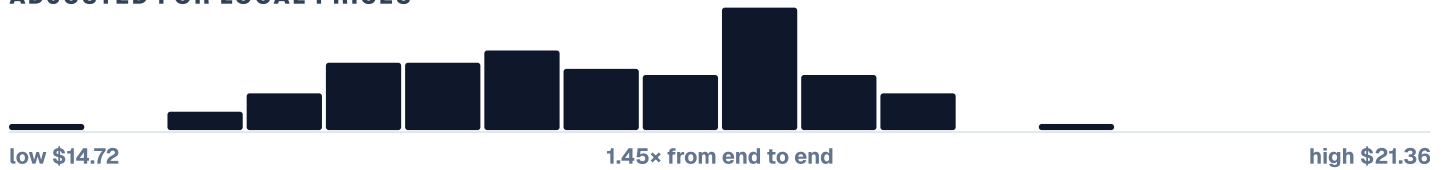
■ ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES (\$/HOUR) ■ PAY AS PUBLISHED (\$/HOUR)



HOW THEY SPREAD OUT

Each bar counts how many of the 100 metros fall in that band. The published wages spread across the wider range; adjusted for local prices the same markets pull together.

ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES



PAY AS PUBLISHED



WHAT THE FIGURES SHOW

The gap between American cities is smaller than the pay table suggests

Across these 100 metro areas, the highest cleaning wage is 1.59 times the lowest when you read the pay straight off the page. Adjust each one for what things actually cost where it is earned, and that spread falls to 1.45 times.

Roughly 24% of the apparent gap between the best-paying and worst-paying markets is not a difference in what people are paid at all. It is a difference in what they have to pay out.

About 24% of the gap between America's best and worst paying cleaning markets is not pay. It is rent, food and everything else.

Where the ranking breaks down

21 of the 100 metros here move more than twenty places between the two rankings, and the movement is not random. The places that fall are the expensive coastal markets: Urban Honolulu, HI drops 50 places, from 35th to 85th, because a price level of 111 takes back everything its higher wage appeared to offer.

The places that rise are inland and unglamorous. McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX pays \$15.94 an hour, which ranks it 91st of 100 and looks unremarkable. At a price level of 86 - the lowest here - that wage is worth \$18.56, and the metro climbs to 50th.

The price levels themselves run from 85.9 in McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX to 115.6 in San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA. That is a spread of about 30 points, and it is doing more work in this table than

any wage negotiation.

Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA is the exception worth noticing

Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA pays the highest cleaning wage in the country at \$23.74 an hour. It also has a price level of 111. Most markets that pay well above average also cost well above average, and the two cancel.

Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA is where they do not quite cancel: at \$21.36 adjusted it still leads. A market that pays enough to outrun its own cost of living is unusual, and it is the one place on this table where a high headline wage means what it appears to mean.

The same pattern holds for laundry operatives, who are paid less throughout: the adjusted figure peaks at \$22.63 in Denver-Aurora-Centennial, CO.

What this is useful for, and what it is not

If you are comparing what a cleaning contract should cost in two different American cities, the published wage will mislead you, and by more than you would guess. A market that looks 25% more expensive on paper may be barely more expensive in the terms that matter to the person doing the work.

What this page does not do is tell you what it costs to employ someone. Payroll taxes, insurance, equipment, supervision and turnover all sit on top of the wage, and none of them scale with local prices in the same way. Nor does a metro-wide price level describe any particular household.

Compare two American markets on published wages and you will overstate the difference, by as much as fifty places in the ranking.

HOW WE WORKED THIS OUT

Nominal pay is the hourly mean wage for 37-2011, janitors and cleaners, from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, 2025, by metropolitan area.

It is divided by that metro's Regional Price Parity from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis for 2024, an index where 100 is the national price level. A metro at 120 is 20% more expensive than the US average, so a dollar earned there buys what 83 cents buys nationally.

Regional Price Parities are used rather than a local Consumer Price Index deliberately. A CPI measures change over time within one area and each area has its own base period, so CPI cannot compare price levels between cities. Using it here would look rigorous and give the wrong answer.

The two statistics are published on different schedules, so 2025 wages are adjusted by 2024 price levels - the most recent of each. Price parities move slowly, but the mismatch is real and is stated rather than hidden.

The rank column is the point of the page: how far a metro moves between the nominal ranking and the real one. Urban Honolulu, HI falls 50 places once local prices are taken into account; McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX rises 41.

BEA publishes a price parity for 387 metro areas. This page shows the 100 with the most cleaning jobs - every metro here employs at least 3,520 cleaners - so the table stays readable on a phone. The ranks are calculated across these 100.

These are gross wages paid to employees, not the cost of employing someone, and not a contract rate. Price parities cover a whole metro area and say nothing about an individual household.

THE NUMBERS

100 ROWS · AS AT OEWS 2025 · RPP 2024

REGION	US DOLLARS PER HOUR, ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES	AS PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	PRICE LEVEL (US=100)	PLACES MOVED	LAUNDRY, ADJUSTED (\$/HR)	LAUNDRY, PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	CLEANING JOBS
Seattle-Tacoma- Bellevue, WA	\$21.36	\$23.74	▲ 111.1	no change	\$18.62	\$20.69	26,820
Spokane-Spokane Valley, WA	\$20.62	\$20.69	100.3	▲ +12	\$18.43	\$18.49	4,090
Syracuse, NY	\$20.53	\$19.66	▼ 95.7	▲ +23	\$17.92	\$17.16	6,010
Bakersfield-Delano, CA	\$20.51	\$20.69	100.9	▲ +11	\$17.71	\$17.87	4,060
San Jose- Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	\$20.42	\$22.55	▲ 110.4	▼ -2	\$19.72	\$21.78	15,780
Boston-Cambridge- Newton, MA-NH	\$20.38	\$22.07	▲ 108.3	▼ -2	\$17.19	\$18.61	43,160
San Francisco- Oakland-Fremont, CA	\$20.26	\$23.42	▲ 115.6	▼ -5	\$18.45	\$21.33	29,930
Worcester, MA	\$20.16	\$20.67	▲ 102.5	▲ +8	\$17.43	\$17.87	4,610

REGION	US DOLLARS PER HOUR, ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES	AS PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	PRICE LEVEL (US=100)	PLACES MOVED	LAUNDRY, ADJUSTED (\$/HR)	LAUNDRY, PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	CLEANING JOBS
Portland-South Portland, ME	\$20.15	\$20.52	▲ 101.9	▲ +8	\$18.49	\$18.83	3,820
Madison, WI	\$20.13	\$19.58	▼ 97.3	▲ +17	\$18.09	\$17.60	6,780
Portland- Vancouver- Hillsboro, OR-WA	\$20.08	\$21.17	▲ 105.4	▼ -1	\$18.82	\$19.84	14,620
Sacramento- Roseville-Folsom, CA	\$20.04	\$21.38	▲ 106.7	▼ -5	\$17.62	\$18.80	14,020
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	\$19.98	\$21.27	▲ 106.4	▼ -4	\$17.12	\$18.22	19,520
Bridgeport- Stamford-Danbury, CT Metropolitan Statistical Area	\$19.98	\$21.35	▲ 106.9	▼ -6	\$17.41	\$18.61	6,220
Stockton-Lodi, CA	\$19.96	\$20.98	▲ 105.1	▼ -3	\$17.51	\$18.40	3,830
Buffalo- Cheektowaga, NY	\$19.74	\$18.92	▼ 95.8	▲ +20	\$18.24	\$17.48	9,290
Kansas City, MO-KS	\$19.71	\$18.24	▼ 92.5	▲ +29	\$17.73	\$16.41	12,950
New Haven, CT	\$19.61	\$20.50	▲ 104.6	no change	\$17.29	\$18.08	6,210
St. Louis, MO-IL	\$19.58	\$18.62	▼ 95.1	▲ +22	\$17.88	\$17.00	19,680
Fresno, CA	\$19.57	\$19.99	▲ 102.2	▲ +3	\$17.63	\$18.01	5,770
Santa Rosa- Petaluma, CA	\$19.54	\$21.06	▲ 107.8	▼ -10	\$18.54	\$19.98	3,620
Columbus, OH	\$19.52	\$18.64	▼ 95.5	▲ +18	\$16.48	\$15.73	14,130
Providence- Warwick, RI-MA	\$19.47	\$19.82	▲ 101.8	▲ +2	\$17.45	\$17.76	9,660
Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, CA	\$19.47	\$21.52	▲ 110.5	▼ -18	\$16.67	\$18.43	3,690
Albany- Schenectady-Troy, NY	\$19.46	\$19.38	99.6	▲ +6	\$17.53	\$17.45	8,880
Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT	\$19.46	\$19.99	▲ 102.7	▼ -4	\$17.30	\$17.78	8,980
Omaha, NE-IA	\$19.45	\$17.88	▼ 91.9	▲ +26	\$18.71	\$17.20	6,690

REGION	US DOLLARS PER HOUR, ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES	AS PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	PRICE LEVEL (US=100)	PLACES MOVED	LAUNDRY, ADJUSTED (\$/HR)	LAUNDRY, PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	CLEANING JOBS
Cleveland, OH	\$19.44	\$18.26	▼ 93.9	▲ +16	\$16.65	\$15.64	13,380
New York-Newark- Jersey City, NY-NJ	\$19.44	\$21.88	▲ 112.6	▼ -24	\$16.20	\$18.24	183,030
Dayton-Kettering- Beavercreek, OH	\$19.43	\$18.01	▼ 92.7	▲ +22	\$17.37	\$16.10	5,040
Rochester, NY	\$19.43	\$18.85	▼ 97.0	▲ +7	\$17.48	\$16.96	9,520
Akron, OH	\$19.41	\$18.12	▼ 93.4	▲ +18	\$16.44	\$15.35	4,140
Peoria, IL	\$19.39	\$17.69	▼ 91.2	▲ +27	\$18.23	\$16.63	3,620
Las Vegas- Henderson-North Las Vegas, NV	\$19.39	\$19.43	100.2	▼ -6	\$18.04	\$18.08	26,480
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	\$19.34	\$20.27	▲ 104.8	▼ -16	\$18.38	\$19.27	26,790
Toledo, OH	\$19.29	\$17.64	▼ 91.5	▲ +26	\$16.37	\$14.97	4,220
Chicago-Naperville- Elgin, IL-IN	\$19.21	\$19.90	▲ 103.6	▼ -13	\$16.77	\$17.37	70,000
Pittsburgh, PA	\$19.19	\$18.17	▼ 94.7	▲ +10	\$16.59	\$15.71	16,140
Denver-Aurora- Centennial, CO	\$19.15	\$20.26	▲ 105.8	▼ -19	\$22.63	\$23.94	19,460
Milwaukee- Waukesha, WI	\$19.15	\$18.56	▼ 96.9	▲ +2	\$17.73	\$17.19	14,380
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	\$19.06	\$18.18	▼ 95.4	▲ +6	\$16.64	\$15.87	13,560
Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA	\$19.02	\$17.44	▼ 91.7	▲ +23	\$17.92	\$16.43	5,720
Colorado Springs, CO	\$19.02	\$19.15	100.7	▼ -11	\$17.17	\$17.29	3,530
Allentown- Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ	\$18.92	\$18.91	100.0	▼ -7	\$16.70	\$16.69	6,500
Trenton-Princeton, NJ	\$18.80	\$19.40	▲ 103.2	▼ -15	\$16.69	\$17.22	3,840
Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN	\$18.71	\$17.41	▼ 93.1	▲ +20	\$16.12	\$15.00	9,220
Indianapolis- Carmel-Greenwood, IN	\$18.62	\$17.82	▼ 95.7	▲ +9	\$15.98	\$15.29	17,240

REGION	US DOLLARS PER HOUR, ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES	AS PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	PRICE LEVEL (US=100)	PLACES MOVED	LAUNDRY, ADJUSTED (\$/HR)	LAUNDRY, PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	CLEANING JOBS
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	\$18.57	\$19.04	▲ 102.6	▼ -14	\$16.65	\$17.08	40,790
Boise City, ID	\$18.56	\$18.26	▼ 98.4	▼ -4	\$17.52	\$17.24	5,260
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX	\$18.56	\$15.94	▼ 85.9	▲ +41	\$14.48	\$12.44	4,090
Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin, TN	\$18.53	\$17.85	▼ 96.3	▲ +4	\$17.12	\$16.49	9,940
Grand Rapids-Wyoming-Kentwood, MI	\$18.48	\$17.66	▼ 95.5	▲ +9	\$18.86	\$18.02	11,490
Wichita, KS	\$18.45	\$16.41	▼ 88.9	▲ +30	\$16.62	\$14.78	3,650
Tucson, AZ	\$18.35	\$17.78	▼ 96.9	▲ +4	\$17.14	\$16.61	5,370
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	\$18.23	\$20.70	▲ 113.6	▼ -42	\$16.62	\$18.87	83,160
Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos, TX	\$18.17	\$17.82	▼ 98.1	▲ +1	\$16.21	\$15.90	15,470
Albuquerque, NM	\$18.17	\$17.36	▼ 95.5	▲ +11	\$16.39	\$15.66	7,070
Tulsa, OK	\$18.12	\$16.17	▼ 89.2	▲ +29	\$16.62	\$14.83	5,140
Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	\$18.11	\$18.16	100.3	▼ -10	\$17.19	\$17.24	26,810
Harrisburg-Carlisle, PA	\$18.10	\$17.86	98.7	▼ -6	\$16.06	\$15.84	4,240
San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA	\$18.04	\$20.18	▲ 111.9	▼ -40	\$17.12	\$19.15	21,700
Lancaster, PA	\$18.01	\$17.70	▼ 98.3	▼ -3	\$16.56	\$16.27	3,680
Memphis, TN-MS-AR	\$17.89	\$16.49	▼ 92.2	▲ +18	\$16.91	\$15.59	8,070
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	\$17.87	\$18.67	▲ 104.5	▼ -25	\$15.96	\$16.68	19,050
Reno, NV	\$17.85	\$18.03	101.0	▼ -14	\$17.31	\$17.49	4,410
Birmingham, AL	\$17.79	\$16.30	▼ 91.6	▲ +18	\$14.91	\$13.66	5,760
Kiryas Joel-Poughkeepsie-Newburgh, NY	\$17.75	\$19.42	▲ 109.4	▼ -38	\$16.19	\$17.71	5,270

REGION	US DOLLARS PER HOUR, ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES	AS PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	PRICE LEVEL (US=100)	PLACES MOVED	LAUNDRY, ADJUSTED (\$/HR)	LAUNDRY, PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	CLEANING JOBS
Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ	\$17.74	\$18.33	▲ 103.3	▼ -25	\$17.15	\$17.72	26,990
Chattanooga, TN-GA	\$17.67	\$16.16	▼ 91.5	▲ +19	\$16.03	\$14.66	4,140
Jacksonville, FL	\$17.53	\$17.44	99.5	▼ -6	\$15.86	\$15.78	8,450
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	\$17.51	\$19.07	▲ 108.9	▼ -38	\$16.06	\$17.49	59,090
Greensboro-High Point, NC	\$17.48	\$16.23	▼ 92.9	▲ +13	\$18.03	\$16.74	4,380
Knoxville, TN	\$17.45	\$16.15	▼ 92.6	▲ +16	\$16.58	\$15.35	7,150
Oklahoma City, OK	\$17.43	\$15.76	▼ 90.4	▲ +20	\$16.09	\$14.55	8,020
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	\$17.38	\$15.88	▼ 91.4	▲ +18	\$16.10	\$14.71	4,200
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	\$17.38	\$16.46	▼ 94.7	▲ +6	\$15.67	\$14.84	15,420
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	\$17.35	\$17.36	100.1	▼ -10	\$15.31	\$15.32	30,900
Richmond, VA	\$17.30	\$16.93	▼ 97.9	▼ -7	\$15.93	\$15.59	9,270
Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	\$17.24	\$16.78	▼ 97.3	▼ -3	\$15.97	\$15.55	13,760
North Port-Bradenton-Sarasota, FL	\$17.20	\$17.62	▲ 102.4	▼ -17	\$16.06	\$16.45	3,940
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	\$17.19	\$15.36	▼ 89.4	▲ +17	\$15.99	\$14.29	4,990
Raleigh-Cary, NC	\$17.11	\$16.79	▼ 98.2	▼ -7	\$15.74	\$15.45	7,310
Columbia, SC	\$17.10	\$16.02	▼ 93.7	▲ +7	\$15.87	\$14.86	5,320
Virginia Beach-Chesapeake-Norfolk, VA-NC	\$17.08	\$16.73	▼ 97.9	▼ -7	\$15.36	\$15.04	11,840
Urban Honolulu, HI	\$17.06	\$18.93	▲ 111.0	▼ -50	\$16.17	\$17.94	8,090
Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL	\$17.04	\$16.55	▼ 97.1	▼ -6	\$15.68	\$15.23	3,520

REGION	US DOLLARS PER HOUR, ADJUSTED FOR LOCAL PRICES	AS PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	PRICE LEVEL (US=100)	PLACES MOVED	LAUNDRY, ADJUSTED (\$/HR)	LAUNDRY, PUBLISHED (\$/HR)	CLEANING JOBS
Cape Coral-Fort Myers, FL	\$16.89	\$17.29	▲ 102.3	▼ -18	\$15.56	\$15.93	3,890
El Paso, TX	\$16.74	\$15.05	▼ 89.9	▲ +11	\$14.46	\$13.00	5,640
Greenville- Anderson-Greer, SC	\$16.74	\$15.61	▼ 93.3	▲ +7	\$16.30	\$15.20	6,250
Salt Lake City- Murray, UT	\$16.73	\$16.88	100.9	▼ -18	\$17.10	\$17.25	10,610
Tampa-St. Petersburg- Clearwater, FL	\$16.68	\$16.83	100.9	▼ -18	\$15.75	\$15.89	18,460
New Orleans- Metairie, LA	\$16.65	\$15.42	▼ 92.6	▲ +5	\$15.97	\$14.79	6,070
Dallas-Fort Worth- Arlington, TX	\$16.55	\$17.06	▲ 103.1	▼ -23	\$15.40	\$15.88	48,360
Orlando-Kissimmee- Sanford, FL	\$16.48	\$16.71	101.4	▼ -16	\$15.92	\$16.15	21,620
Charleston-North Charleston, SC	\$16.42	\$16.58	101.0	▼ -16	\$16.35	\$16.51	5,210
Baton Rouge, LA	\$16.40	\$14.89	▼ 90.8	▲ +4	\$14.84	\$13.47	5,300
Provo-Orem-Lehi, UT	\$16.22	\$15.93	▼ 98.2	▼ -5	\$15.89	\$15.61	4,840
Ogden, UT	\$16.13	\$16.19	100.3	▼ -12	\$17.21	\$17.27	4,240
Houston-Pasadena- The Woodlands, TX	\$15.92	\$15.70	98.6	▼ -4	\$14.72	\$14.52	48,880
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	\$14.72	\$16.80	▲ 114.2	▼ -26	\$14.13	\$16.13	41,890

COLOUR KEY ▲ rises once adjusted ▼ falls once adjusted ▲ dearer than the US average ▼ cheaper than the US average

The arrow carries the same meaning as the colour, so neither is needed on its own.

WHAT TO TAKE AWAY

Nominal wage data ranks American cleaning markets in an order that does not survive contact with local prices — 21 of 100 metros move more than twenty places.

Compare labour costs across US markets on adjusted pay, or you are comparing rents as much as wages.

WHERE IT CAME FROM

US Bureau of Labor Statistics — Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) (<https://www.bls.gov/oes/>)

US federal government — public domain · published annual

US Bureau of Economic Analysis — Regional Price Parities (<https://www.bea.gov/data/prices-inflation/regional-price-parities-state-and-metro-area>)

US federal government — public domain · published annual

WHEN THIS PAGE CHANGES NEXT

This page changes when either source publishes a new vintage: BEA Regional Price Parities for 2025, expected December 2026, or BLS OEWS for 2026, expected spring 2027. The pipeline checks every week and usually finds nothing, which is the expected result.

LAST CHECKED 15 SEPTEMBER 2026

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Hassam Rafkey, "Where cleaning pay is actually worth most", APXXO, 2026.
<https://apxxo.com/en-us/data/cleaning-pay-real-terms/>

MORE DATA FROM APXXO

AS AT 2026-06

What commercial electricity costs, by US state

Updated monthly. Free to download.

[\(/en-us/data/commercial-electricity-cost/\)](/en-us/data/commercial-electricity-cost/)

AS AT 2025 (PROVISIONAL) · BLS 2025 · FX 2026-09-15

What cleaning and laundry staff earn: London vs New York

Two governments, two classifications, one comparison. Free to download.

[\(/en-us/data/cleaning-wages-london-new-york/\)](/en-us/data/cleaning-wages-london-new-york/)

AS AT AUGUST 2026

What cleaning and laundry have actually cost

January 2016 to August 2026. Free to download.

[\(/en-us/data/cleaning-laundry-cost-index/\)](/en-us/data/cleaning-laundry-cost-index/)

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