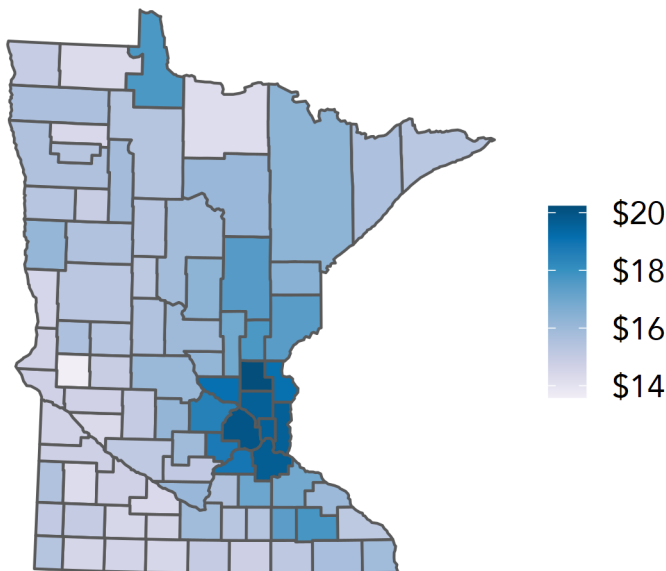


Wages can go further in Greater Minnesota

Data analysis of cost of living and wages

Hourly wage needed to meet cost of living, 2019



Data: MN DEED Cost of living calculator

Cost of living varies significantly

The range in the estimated cost of living around the state can be surprising. For our hypothetical household, the adults would need to average nearly \$20 per hour to meet the cost of living around the Twin Cities seven-county metro, but only about \$14 per hour in southwest Minnesota. In north central and northeastern Minnesota, the hourly wage needed is a bit higher, between \$16 and \$18 per hour.

Primary drivers of differences

The primary drivers behind the lower cost of living in rural Minnesota compared to the Twin Cities metro (Figure 2) are:

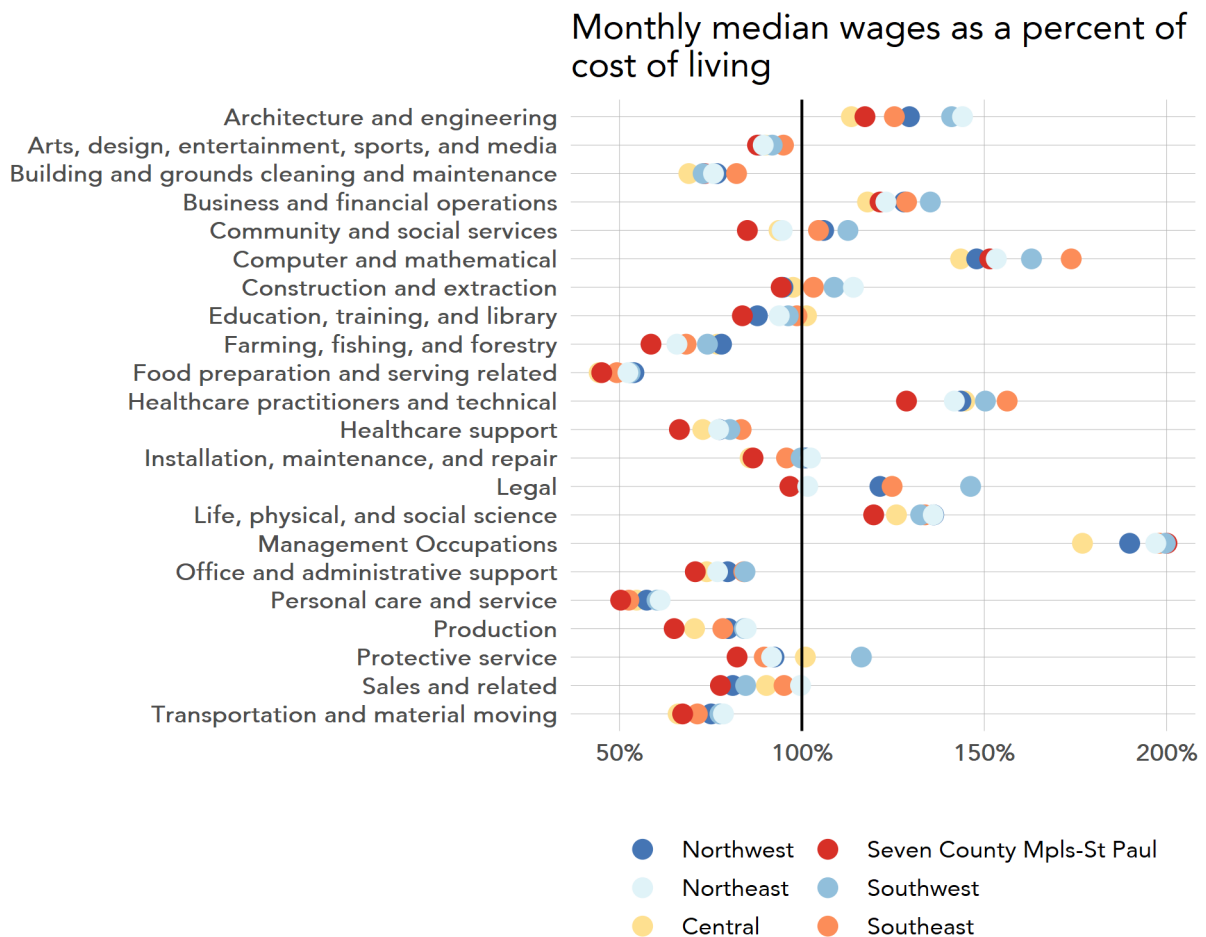
- **Childcare:** nearly \$700/month in metro compared to around \$300 for Greater MN.
- **Housing:** nearly \$1,200/month in metro compared to around \$800 for Greater MN.
- **Taxes:** nearly \$660/month in metro compared to around \$400 for Greater MN.

Regions in Greater Minnesota typically have higher costs associated with **transportation** and **health care**.

To read the full report, visit our website at ruralmn.org.

Wages can go farther in Greater Minnesota

Analysis of cost of living and wages



Data: MN DEED Cost of Living Calculator & Occupational Employment Statistics

It's no secret that wages across nearly all occupations are lower in Greater Minnesota compared to the seven-county metro. However, if we factor in the cost of living, Greater Minnesota's lower wages can go significantly farther there than the higher wages do in the seven-county metro. Figure 4 provides the monthly wage for each occupation as a percent of the monthly cost of living—the further right a region is on the chart, the larger percentage of cost of living that wage covers.

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