

WORK CENTRAL AB

Cost of Living Calculator

Tool Overview & Reference Spec

A Career Resource from Work Central AB

Cost of Living Calculator - Tool Overview

The Cost of Living Calculator gives prospective residents a fast, personalized estimate of monthly expenses across Central Alberta communities, and shows how that compares against their income.

1. What It Does

- Estimates monthly costs across rent/housing, groceries, utilities, internet, transportation, insurance, and miscellaneous spending.
- Adjusts estimates based on community, household size, housing type, and vehicle ownership.
- Compares total estimated costs against the user's stated take-home income to show a surplus or shortfall.

2. Inputs

Form Fields

Community: Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, Lacombe, Blackfalds, or Olds

Household size: single, couple, family of 3, family of 4+

Housing type: 1-bedroom apartment, 2-bedroom apartment, or 3-bedroom house

Monthly take-home income (optional, for the comparison result)

Vehicle ownership: yes/no (adjusts transportation and insurance line items)

3. Output

An itemized monthly cost table with a running total, plus a colour-coded summary box: green for an estimated surplus, red for an estimated shortfall, sized against the income entered.

4. Underlying Assumptions

- Base costs are calibrated to Red Deer at 1.00x, with community-specific multipliers applied (e.g., Sylvan Lake +5%, Blackfalds -10%), consistent with figures in the Cost of Living guide.
- Household size scales groceries, utilities, and miscellaneous spending using simple multipliers rather than linear per-person scaling, reflecting shared-cost efficiencies.
- Figures should be labelled as estimates only - the tool includes a visible disclaimer noting this.

5. Where This Fits on the Site

This tool is referenced throughout the Moving to Central Alberta and Financial Resources guide series as the companion calculator for community and budget comparisons - ensure the live tool is linked from those guides once embedded.

Cost of Living Calculator Checklist

- ✓ Verified community multipliers against current guide figures
 - ✓ Confirmed the surplus/shortfall logic displays correctly for edge cases (zero income, high costs)
 - ✓ Linked the live tool from relevant Moving to Central Alberta and Financial Resources guides
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Try the Live Tool

Open [Cost-of-Living-Calculator-WorkCentralAB.html](#) directly in any browser to test the live, interactive version.