The Cost of Living Index (COLI) measures relative price levels for consumer goods and services in participating areas. The average for all participating places, both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan, equals 100, and each participant's index is read as a percentage of the average for all places. Due to quarterly changes in participants and price inputs, the index does not provide an accurate measure of changes over time. Thus, the information presented is used to demonstrate Tampa COLI's tendency to remain below the national average. The index does not measure inflation.