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TheFairPayApp.com Integrates MIT Living Wage Calculator Data to Enhance Judicial Compliance with Ability-to-Pay Hearings

Hammond, La - TheFairPayApp.com, a national award-winning judicial compliance tool developed to help judges determine an individual's ability to pay court fines and fees, announced Monday that it will incorporate data from MIT's Living Wage Calculator through a data use agreement (DUA) with the Living Wage Institute (LWI), a benefit corporation that maintains and operates the MIT calculator.

The integration strengthens TheFairPayApp.com's commitment to data-driven fairness in the judicial system by leveraging LWI's rigorously developed county- and parish-specific living wage data as a benchmark for calculating what individuals can realistically afford to pay in court fines and fees.

"TheFairPayApp.com helps judges determine a defendant's ability to pay court fines," said Dr. Tony Licciardi, creator of TheFairPayApp.com. Licciardi is the court administrator at the City Court of Hammond, La., and serves as a faculty research associate at the University of New Orleans. "The MIT Living Wage Calculator data gives us a credible, consistent, and objective foundation for determining the ability to pay based on an individual's income."

TheFairPayApp.com's formula factors in annual household income and the number of dependents, with LWI's data serving as a baseline to determine whether someone earns at or below a fair, self-sustaining wage. The ability-to-pay decision remains with the judge, ensuring judicial discretion is preserved. Beyond the objective calculations, judges may consider extraordinary situations, such as unusually high medical expenses or substantial financial assets of low-income individuals.

The addition of the Living Wage Institute data increases the scalability of TheFairPayApp.com for courts nationwide, offering a standardized, research-based framework for judges when required by law to consider a person's financial circumstances before imposing or enforcing fines. As a judicial compliance tool, TheFairPayApp.com assists courts in meeting statutory and constitutional obligations to hold meaningful ability-to-pay hearings.

TheFairPayApp.com was recently honored with the IJS Court Integration Excellence Award, presented by the National Center for State Courts and the National Association for Court Management at the 2025 NACM Annual Conference in Omaha, Neb.

For more information, visit TheFairPayApp.com

To learn more about the Living Wage Institute, visit livingwage.institute

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