

State of U.S. Dental Costs 2026: Real Prices by State, City & Procedure

In 2026, a complete single dental implant averages **\$4,507** in the U.S. — but the same procedure runs **52% higher in California (\$5,733) than in Alabama (\$3,759)**. This report tracks real prices for 12 procedures across all 50 states, DC and 206 cities, as open data.

Key findings: 6 numbers that define dental costs in 2026

- \$4,507** — the real national average for a complete single dental implant in 2026 (full range: \$3,155–\$6,310). The "\$3,000–\$5,000" figure still quoted across the web dates back to 2023 sources.
- +52%** — what the same single implant costs in California (\$5,733) versus Alabama (\$3,759), the priciest and cheapest state markets.
- 13x** — the spread on a full set of dentures (both arches): from \$547 at the low end to \$7,289 at the high end nationally (average \$2,734).
- +83%** — the city-level gap: an implant averages \$3,000 in Flint, Michigan and \$5,500 in New York City, across the 206 cities we track.
- 21.9%** — the share of Nevada dentists who accept Medicaid, the lowest in the nation — in a state where adult Medicaid dental coverage is emergency-only *and* prices run above the national median. Arizona (24.0%) and Florida (25.6%) share the same double burden.
- 10/100** — the 2026 affordability score of California, the District of Columbia and Hawaii, once local dental prices are weighed against the local cost of living. West Virginia and Iowa score 73.

Every figure above is computed from our open datasets (CC BY 4.0, permanent DOIs) — download and cite them at realdentalcosts.com/en/cite-this-data/.

What America really pays: national averages for 12 procedures

U.S. national price ranges, 12 common dental procedures (2026). Low–high range across all state markets; center column = national average.

Procedure	Low	Average	High
Exam, cleaning & X-rays	\$46	\$185	\$319
Composite filling (1 tooth)	\$82	\$206	\$410
Deep cleaning (SRP, per quadrant)	\$154	\$220	\$320
Tooth extraction	\$69	\$273	\$729

Procedure	Low	Average	High
Professional teeth whitening	\$273	\$592	\$911
Root canal	\$456	\$1,002	\$1,367
Porcelain veneer (per tooth)	\$845	\$1,127	\$1,803
Dental crown	\$456	\$1,185	\$1,822
Full set of dentures (both arches)	\$547	\$2,734	\$7,289
Braces (traditional, full case)	\$2,885	\$3,606	\$4,868
Single dental implant (complete)	\$3,155	\$4,507	\$6,310
All-on-4 (per arch)	\$10,606	\$13,828	\$25,057

Preventive care remains affordable almost everywhere — an exam with cleaning and X-rays averages **\$185**. Costs escalate sharply with restorative work: a root canal averages **\$1,002**, a crown **\$1,185**, and full-mouth solutions reach four to five figures: **\$2,734** for a complete set of dentures, **\$4,507** for a single implant, and **\$13,828 per arch** for All-on-4 — with high-end quotes up to **\$25,057**.

For procedure-by-procedure detail, see the full U.S. procedure price list: realdentalcosts.com/en/dental-procedure-cost-list/

Dental costs by state: the full 51-market index

The index compresses a consistent story: the **South and Midwest are 15–25% cheaper** than the national average, while the **West Coast, Northeast corridor, Alaska and Hawaii run 10–16% above** it.

Full 51-market state index, ranked cheapest to priciest. Cost index: 100 = national average. Affordability: 100 = most affordable relative to local cost of living.

Rank	State	Single implant (avg)	Cost index	Affordability /100
1	Alabama	\$3,759	76	50
2	Arkansas	\$3,833	77	62
3	Mississippi	\$3,885	79	54
4	Kentucky	\$3,948	80	71
5	West Virginia	\$3,969	80	73
6	Iowa	\$3,990	81	73
7	Kansas	\$4,032	82	59
8	Oklahoma	\$4,053	82	60
9	Indiana	\$4,095	83	56
10	South Dakota	\$4,095	83	64
11	Louisiana	\$4,137	84	54
12	Nebraska	\$4,158	84	68
13	South Carolina	\$4,158	84	54

Rank	State	Single implant (avg)	Cost index	Affordability /100
14	Georgia	\$4,179	84	50
15	Missouri	\$4,179	84	55
16	Tennessee	\$4,179	84	70
17	North Dakota	\$4,200	85	68
18	Ohio	\$4,200	85	69
19	North Carolina	\$4,242	86	64
20	Michigan	\$4,305	87	67
21	New Mexico	\$4,305	87	66
22	Wisconsin	\$4,326	87	66
23	Utah	\$4,347	88	38
24	Idaho	\$4,368	88	65
25	Minnesota	\$4,410	89	60
26	Texas	\$4,410	89	40
27	Wyoming	\$4,452	90	51
28	Arizona	\$4,490	91	37
29	Florida	\$4,515	91	34
30	Montana	\$4,515	91	63
31	Colorado	\$4,538	92	56
32	Virginia	\$4,578	93	33
33	Illinois	\$4,589	93	59
34	Maine	\$4,620	93	54
35	Pennsylvania	\$4,620	93	58
36	Connecticut	\$4,683	95	48
37	Oregon	\$4,725	96	44
38	Vermont	\$4,788	97	49
39	Delaware	\$4,820	97	41
40	Nevada	\$4,830	98	41
41	Rhode Island	\$4,830	98	48
42	Maryland	\$4,935	100	38
43	Washington	\$4,935	100	43
44	New Hampshire	\$4,998	101	48
45	New Jersey	\$5,040	102	43
46	Massachusetts	\$5,145	104	23

Rank	State	Single implant (avg)	Cost index	Affordability /100
47	District of Columbia	\$5,250	106	10
48	Alaska	\$5,450	110	27
49	Hawaii	\$5,460	110	10
50	New York	\$5,565	112	25
51	California	\$5,733	116	10

Compare any two states side by side at realdentalcosts.com/en/states/, or explore the underlying dataset at realdentalcosts.com/en/us-dental-cost-index/.

City level: where the same implant costs \$3,000 — or \$5,500

State averages hide even wider local spreads. Across the **206 U.S. cities** in our city dataset:

- **Cheapest markets:** Flint, MI; Hattiesburg, MS; Macon, GA; Tuscaloosa, AL — a single implant averages **\$3,000**, braces about \$4,000.
- **Priciest markets:** New York City (\$5,500), Fairbanks and Juneau, AK, Maui and Honolulu, HI, San Francisco (\$5,200–\$5,500).
- That is an **83% gap for the same procedure** — often larger than the difference between having and not having dental insurance.

The pattern is consistent: mid-size cities in low-cost states beat the national average by 25–35%, which is why dental travel *within* the U.S. (before considering dental tourism abroad — realdentalcosts.com/en/dental-tourism/) can be worth a 2-hour drive.

The Medicaid double burden

Cross-referencing prices with insurance access reveals the report's starkest finding: **the states where Medicaid covers the least are often the states where care costs more than the median.**

- **Nevada:** only **21.9%** of dentists accept Medicaid, adult coverage is **emergency-only**, and the state's cost index (98) sits well above the national median (89).
- **Arizona (24.0%)** and **Florida (25.6%)** repeat the pattern — emergency-only adult benefits, bottom-three Medicaid acceptance, above-median prices.
- At the other extreme, **Iowa** combines the country's best composite access score — **75.7%** of dentists accepting Medicaid and an *extensive* adult benefit — with a cost index of just 81. **Delaware** posts the single highest acceptance rate (76.2%).
- **Alabama** is the one state with **no adult Medicaid dental benefit at all** — cheap care (index 76) that low-income adults must still pay for entirely out of pocket.

Medicaid double-burden snapshot: low acceptance / restrictive benefit vs. above-median cost, plus the best-access states for comparison.

State	% dentists accepting Medicaid	Adult benefit level	Cost index
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State	% dentists accepting Medicaid	Adult benefit level	Cost index
Nevada	21.9%	Emergency-only	98
Arizona	24.0%	Emergency-only	91
Florida	25.6%	Emergency-only	91
Texas	52.7%	Emergency-only	89
Alabama	58.7%	None	76
Iowa	75.7%	Extensive	81
Delaware	76.2%	Limited	97

For state-by-state options when coverage falls short, see free dental care programs by state (realdentalcosts.com/en/free-dental-care-by-state/) and our guide to free dental care for seniors on Medicare (realdentalcosts.com/en/free-dental-for-seniors-on-medicare/).

Affordability: where dental care hurts most

Raw prices are only half the story — what matters is prices *relative to local incomes and living costs*. Our affordability score (100 = most affordable) weighs the 2026 cost index against each state's cost-of-living index:

- **Least affordable (score 10/100): California, District of Columbia, Hawaii.** High dental prices stack on top of the country's highest living costs.
- **Most affordable (score 71–73): West Virginia, Iowa, Kentucky.** Below-average prices in below-average-cost economies.
- Across all 51 markets, implant prices track the local cost of living at **Pearson $r = 0.836$** — cost of living alone explains roughly 70% of the variance in what dentists charge.

Why nobody else publishes this data

There is a structural reason this report exists as independent open data:

- The **American Dental Association** discontinued its Survey of Dental Fees in **2023** and states it is "*forbidden by federal law to set or recommend fees*" — antitrust safe-harbor rules prevent the professional association from publishing price data at all.
- **Insurers** (e.g. Delta Dental's cost estimator) hold real claims-based prices but keep them behind member logins, unpublished and non-citable.
- **Government sources** (CMS, MEPS) publish national *spending aggregates* — \$189 billion in 2024 — but no procedure-level prices, and with a ~2-year lag.

Independent market research is the only remaining path to public, citable dental price data — which is why every dataset behind this report is published open-access with a permanent DOI.

Methodology & sources

Prices are compiled from published fee schedules, dental office price lists and market surveys across all 50 states, DC and 206 cities, normalized per procedure and cross-checked against cost-of-living data. Medicaid acceptance and benefit levels are compiled from state program documentation. The full write-up — collection, normalization, limitations — is on our methodology page (realdentalcosts.com/en/methodology/); the methodology report is also archived on HAL ([hal-05682406, hal.science/hal-05682406](https://hal-05682406.hal.science/hal-05682406)).

This is pricing and market research, **not medical advice**. Figures are market averages for budgeting and comparison — your quote will depend on your case, provider and location.

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Resource	Format	Link
Full report (print version)	PDF	realdentalcosts.com/reports/state-of-us-dental-costs-2026.pdf
US Dental Cost Index by State 2026	CSV + DOI	realdentalcosts.com/data/us-dental-cost-index-2026.csv doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20531729
US Dental Insurance Acceptance by State 2026	CSV + DOI	realdentalcosts.com/data/us-dental-insurance-acceptance-by-state-2026.csv doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20666358
US Dental Cost by City / Metro 2026	CSV + DOI	realdentalcosts.com/data/us-dental-cost-by-city-2026.csv doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20819439

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Frequently asked questions

How much does dental care cost in the U.S. in 2026?

A routine exam with cleaning and X-rays averages \$185 nationally, a composite filling \$206, a root canal \$1,002, a dental crown \$1,185, and a complete single implant \$4,507. Every figure varies strongly by state: the same implant averages \$3,759 in Alabama and \$5,733 in California.

Which state has the cheapest dental care in 2026?

Alabama is the cheapest dental market in 2026 (cost index 76 vs. a U.S. average of 100), followed by Arkansas, Mississippi, Kentucky and West Virginia. California is the most expensive (index 116), behind New York, Hawaii and Alaska.

Why doesn't the ADA publish dental fee data?

The American Dental Association discontinued its Survey of Dental Fees in 2023 and states that it is forbidden by federal antitrust law to set, recommend or quote fees. That legal constraint applies to the professional association — not to independent market research, which is how the data in this report is collected.

Why do dental costs vary so much between states?

Local cost of living is the dominant driver: across all 50 states and DC, average implant prices correlate with the state cost-of-living index at Pearson $r = 0.836$. Rent, staff wages, insurance mix and the local supply of dentists explain most of the remaining spread.

Can I reuse the data in this report?

Yes. All underlying datasets are published under CC BY 4.0 with permanent Zenodo DOIs — free to reuse, redistribute and cite with attribution. Ready-to-copy APA and BibTeX citations and CSV downloads are on our cite-this-data page.

Cite this report

Report URL:

<https://realdentalcosts.com/en/state-of-us-dental-costs-2026/>

Permanent dataset DOIs (CC BY 4.0):

- <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20531729> — US Dental Cost Index by State 2026
- <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20666358> — US Dental Insurance Acceptance by State 2026
- <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20819439> — US Dental Cost by City / Metro 2026

APA:

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