



What is a Poverty Simulation?

A Community Action Poverty Simulation is an experiential exercise that provides participants with the opportunity to assume the role of a low-income family member living on a limited budget. The experience is divided into four 15-minute sessions, each of which represents one 'week' over the course of a 'month' in which the participant must provide for their family and maintain their home. The purpose of the simulation is to help participants better understand the decisions low-income families make every day and the fears and frustrations they feel. The simulation is **not** a game and the intent is **not** to put low-income individuals on display. It is an experiential exercise that uses role play and props to create deeper awareness for those who may interact with low-income families (which is everyone either knowingly or unknowingly).

The Community Action Poverty Simulation was created by Missouri Association for Community Action and is conducted across the nation. The event operates the same universally; however, the focus can be tailored to your specific audience. For example: church groups who participate often like to focus on the scriptural basis for aiding the poor; human service providers often focus on the empathy and customer service aspects; teen groups focus on compassion and potential community service projects and elected officials focus on the legislative and advocacy aspects.

This simulation is **free** for audiences from non-profit and faith-based organizations, open to the public unless otherwise specified and an easy way for volunteers to acquire community service hours. Light refreshments are often provided by the host organization. When an exact participant head count is not known, registration is requested to help with the set-up and kit preparation. Attached to this memo you'll find notes for potential hosts, a diagram of the room set-up, the event flier and links to identical simulations our sister agencies have hosted are below. Please call 843-724-6760 ext. 235 or e-mail choward@palmettocap.org if you need more information.

For more information on poverty simulations, please visit these sites:

What is a poverty simulation?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fX6pVJwXKWY>

How are participants affected?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsKW2v7BlIM&feature=related>

Footage from a Palmetto CAP simulation for teens:

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10100431177633487>