



United Way
Alberta Capital Region



Poverty Simulation

Challenge your perceptions and deepen your understanding of the realities faced by people living in poverty

Poverty is a reality for **one in seven people** in the Alberta Capital Region. Imagine for a moment what that must feel like: The shame of struggling to make ends meet. The fear of not being able to provide for your family despite your best efforts. The frustration of being trapped by social and systemic barriers beyond your control.

United Way's **Poverty Simulation** is an interactive and immersive experience that allows participants to feel the emotions and encounter some of the complex barriers faced by those living in poverty. Through this exercise, you will deepen your appreciation of community challenges, build empathy, and inspire action within your organization.



Build Empathy

Discover the challenges created by poverty, from accessing essential services to meeting basic needs. Gain a greater understanding of the struggles faced by many people in our community.



Increase Awareness

Notice a shift in your perspective as you uncover the complexities of poverty and the factors that keep individuals trapped in it. Use this as motivation to drive positive change in the future.



Take Informed Action

Learn how your contributions to United Way can make a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and families. Leverage this knowledge to take meaningful action and engage in community efforts.

HOW IT WORKS

The simulation is a **two- to four-hour experience** in which participants will role-play a month in the life of an individual from one of 26 fictional low-income families. Like Nabia, a single mother of two children who just moved to Canada as a refugee. Nabia works part-time and struggles to make ends meet – at times even having to choose between paying rent or buying groceries.



Each “family’s” goal is to **navigate a month living in poverty** within a simulated “community.” Using a limited income, your family will secure food, shelter, and basic needs from essential resources and services such as banks, schools, and grocery stores.



Interact with trained **volunteers who populate the “community”** as business owners, employers, teachers, police officers, agency workers, service providers, and government employees, which adds realism to the simulation.



The simulation unfolds over four 15-minute “weeks.” As your family moves through each week, you’ll **face a range of life experiences, obstacles, and tough decisions.**



Following the simulation, participants **engage in a group discussion** about their experience to share their learnings with each other.

Learn More

To sign up for this transformative experience, reach out to your United Way representative or email engagementfacilitation@myunitedway.ca.

Let's Change Lives **Together**



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