

PREVIEW VERSION

ARE YOU HUNGRY TONIGHT?

An educational
simulation of hunger
in our communities

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Food insecurity and hunger are widespread problems in the United States, and they have become worse in recent years.

The simulation “Are You Hungry Tonight?” brings this complex issue into the realm of personal experience. The simulation helps participants develop greater understanding of the many compounding factors that can make it difficult for a person to achieve economic self-sufficiency and, therefore, food security.

The simulation scenario is “Any Town,” a small town dependent on “The Company” as a primary employer. Each participant has a role either as an employee of The Company or of a business or agency that serves the community. As the simulation begins, they learn that The Company is closing the plant and laying off everyone. In the course of four timed periods representing a calendar year, they must cope with a variety of challenges and find adequate resources for themselves and their families.

All roles are for adults but also can be played by older teens.

Educational objectives

After a “year” in the distressed Any Town, participants will better understand:

- The high rates of hunger and food insecurity that exist in many communities
- How difficult it often is for financially stressed people to improve their situations
- Hunger as a public policy issue
- Painful choices people make when stretching limited resources
- How community organizations can help people work toward financial self-sufficiency

The simulation has been used successfully with:

- Members of faith communities
- Service organizations
- Civic groups
- Youth groups
- Volunteers for food banks and other programs that help limited-resource families
- Policy makers and elected officials
- Staff of social service agencies

What is included in the simulation package

The CD contains 48 full-color print-ready files (Adobe PDF). Files also can be printed in black only, if desired. Materials are in three major folders, as follows.

Facilitator Materials

Facilitator’s Guide — complete instructions on preparing for, conducting, and evaluating the simulation.

Templates for props — food and housing vouchers, “cash,” blank check forms.

Handout masters and sample forms — including evaluation form, room setup, labels for participant name tags.



Sample vouchers and “cash.”



Employee Materials

Employee profiles — Each person playing a laid-off employee of The Company receives a one-page description of his or her situation at the beginning of each segment of the simulation (i.e., at the introduction plus four “calendar quarters”).



Sample employee profiles.

Agency and Business Materials

Subfolders in this folder contain materials for Any Town's bank, café, community food resources office, employment office, grocery store, and social services office. Materials include:

Instructions — descriptions of duties for those roles.

Signs — identifying the business or agency.

Detailed records — including savings accounts, unemployment benefits, employment pay checks, social services eligibility.

HUNGRY Unemployment Eligibility					
Note: Unemployment benefits last a total of 26 weeks (about 6 months)					
	Amount	Period 1 - October 11 weeks	Period 2 - January 11 weeks	Period 3 - April 11 weeks	Period 4 - July 11 weeks
Alexa Anderson	\$1,775				
Al Armstrong	\$1,775				
Col Collins*	Not eligible				
Charles Collins	\$1,775				
D.L. Davidson	\$1,700				
Dave Dam	\$1,775				
Eric Elliot**	Not eligible				
Ellen Evans	\$1,775				
Frank Ferrell*	Not eligible				
Faith Franklin	\$1,775				
Gary Gibson	\$1,775				
Gabe Goodwin	\$1,225				
John Galt (divorced father)	\$1,225				
Jason Jahn	\$1,100				
Terria Jettan***	Not eligible				
Kenya Kims	\$1,350				
Larry Larson	\$1,775				
Lisa Lee	\$1,775				
Laura Lewis	\$1,775				
Luis Lopez	\$1,325				
Mark Madison	\$1,775				
Wendy Meadows	\$775				
Michelle Mitchell	\$1,325				
Nick Nickles****	Did not apply				
Pete Peterson	\$1,775				
Rachel Ramsey	\$1,325				
Tom Taylor	\$1,775				

* Col and Frank are self-employed and have not paid unemployment insurance.
 ** Eric is a temporary hire for the summer and does not qualify for benefits.
 *** Terria has not worked the minimum amount of time required to qualify for benefits.
 **** Nick is an illegal immigrant and did not apply for benefits.

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HUNGRY Monthly Payments Period One - October			
	Amount	Unit	Unit
Frank Ferrell			
Mortgage, property tax, insurance	\$450	\$	
Utilities	250	\$	
Household expense	250	\$	
Personal expense	50	\$	
Business expense	1,500	\$	
Care expense	200	\$	
Subtotal			
Health insurance (self-employed)	2,500	\$	
Self 350		\$	
Self & spouse 700		\$	
TOTAL		\$	
Faith Franklin			
Rent	\$700	\$	
Utilities	125	\$	
Household expense	200	\$	
Personal expense	200	\$	
Credit card payment	350	\$	
Student loan	200	\$	
Care expense	900	\$	
Subtotal			
COBRA (optional health insurance)	2,875	\$	
Self 150		\$	
TOTAL		\$	

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SPECIAL edition Any Town Gazette-News

The Company plant will close today

Employees and their families were shocked by today's announcement of the immediate closure of The Company's plant in Any Town.

The Company has been a major employer in Any Town, and the closing will have a severe and far-reaching impact on the entire town. At its peak, the Company has employed as many as 300 people.

The ripple effect will reach deeply into the broader community. Retail stores and services will feel the effects of the closure as local residents struggle with the loss of their paychecks.

According to longtime resident and businesswoman Lena S. Moore: "The area has never seen a layoff this extensive. This is a serious blow to our local economy and I'm concerned about how our town will survive. Some of our businesses just won't make it."

About 375 employees are now without jobs. The news stunned those leaving a plant-wide meeting today.

Gary Gibson, human resources manager, said he does not provide families with information on accessing local resources, unemployment benefits, and other social services for which they may be eligible.

Still, the closing will result in hardship for many area residents who will no longer have a steady source of income.

Most of those leaving the plant are today and they didn't know how they were going to make it, financially speaking.

Employees stunned as closure announced

"I can't believe it," "That has got to be a joke!" "What just happened?"

These were some of the comments heard from employees of the Company after CEO Pete Peterson read the announcement to those gathered in the lunchroom during shift changes. Many had hoped their jobs would last a lifetime. Now they face uncertainty.

Those leaving the day shift said they didn't know what they would do or how they could tell their families. Workers arriving for the swing shift went to the line in shock.

Help available for displaced workers

Though the economic outlook for employees at The Company is bleak, help is available. Unemployment benefits, cash assistance for families with children, food stamps, and COBRA health coverage are examples of social services available to individuals and families in need.

Area residents face uncertain future

A single mother of two, a janitor with five children, a manager nearing retirement, and a couple buying their first home and starting a family. That's the cross section of employees of The Company. Today's developments will affect the future of all workers.

"I just figured I had a job at the Company for life," says Jason Jankle, a line worker. "Now I wish I had put some money away."

Nick Nickles, a former line worker with The Company, wonders whether his family will be able to stay in Any Town, now that jobs are so scarce.

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Community Food Resource Office Instructions

Included in this packet

- Name tag
- Pen or pencil
- Food vouchers for \$10, \$25, \$50, and \$100
- Community Food Resource Eligibility List
- Calculator(s)

Timeframe

This simulation is divided into four timed periods:

- Period One - October
- Period Two - January
- Period Three - April
- Period Four - July

Use the appropriate month's eligibility list as your guide when completing transactions with the residents of Any Town.

You have these tasks:

- Refer to the Community Food Resources Eligibility List, which includes the following resources:
 - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program
 - Seniors' and WIC Farmers' Market vouchers
 - Emergency food boxes
 - Free and Reduced Lunch and Breakfast Program

Debriefing

You will be asked to report on your experiences during the debriefing period at the end of the simulation.

2. As residents of Any Town apply for food assistance, give them the amount of food vouchers for all assistance programs for which they are eligible. Initial the list to indicate they received assistance.

3. Please give one not more than 12 emergency food boxes per timed period. One food box is represented by one \$75 food voucher. Pantries sometimes run out of food. No one should be refused an emergency food box unless the supply for the period is exhausted.

Note: The Social Services Office handles Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Housing, Energy Assistance, and Child Support. If you are asked for these, refer the resident to the Social Services table.

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Samples of (clockwise from above left) records and forms, agency/business role instructions, and newspapers available from the Any Town Café.

How to order this simulation

You can order copies of this publication online, at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/> Or, send the complete title and publication number (EM 8892) along with your payment to:

Publication Orders
 Extension & Station Communications
 Oregon State University
 422 Kerr Administration
 Corvallis, OR 97331-2119
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