

# UNDERSTANDING POVERTY & PRACTICING COMPASSIONATE CUSTOMER SERVICE

“WHAT WOULD YOU DO?”

## Key Principles

### Empowerment:

- Create processes and an environment that encourages independence, self-direction, and confidence
- Set clear expectations and boundaries
- Always stay positive and communicate what you can do
- Use every opportunity to connect, engage, and encourage

### Empathy:

- Acknowledge and validate a person's feelings
- Ask how you can be of assistance without assuming you know how to meet a person's needs
- Seek to understand- be patient, sensitive, and respectful and make the time to listen

### Agility:

- Seek to understand a person's need and respond with an openness to solutions
- Remember to always remain calm and judgment free when meeting people where they are regardless of your perception
- Be flexible and willing to offer alternatives without breaking organizational boundaries



## Scenario:

A patron stumbles into the agency slurring their words and demands to get their food first.

### Food for Thought:

Remain calm and judgment free. Ask this patron to step outside and clearly communicate the expectations and boundaries of your organization. Advise the patron what you can do for them. Serve them a pre-packed box outside? Let them know they can have a proxy pick up on their behalf?

## What would you do?

1. How can you use empowerment to set clear expectations and boundaries in this situation?
2. Using empathy, in what way can you be patient and sensitive to this patron?
3. With agility in mind, what can you offer this patron to meet them where they are at?