

**CARF Accreditation Report
for
RRAF
Three-Year Accreditation**



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About CARF

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services, enhancing the lives of persons served worldwide.

The accreditation process applies CARF's internationally recognized standards during an on-site survey conducted by peer surveyors. Accreditation, however, is an ongoing process that distinguishes a provider's service delivery and signals to the public that the provider is committed to continuous performance improvement, responsive to feedback, and accountable to the community and its other stakeholders.

CARF accreditation promotes providers' demonstration of value and Quality Across the Lifespan® of millions of persons served through application of rigorous organizational and program standards organized around the ASPIRE to Excellence® continuous quality improvement framework. CARF accreditation has been the recognized benchmark of quality health and human services for more than 50 years.

For more information or to contact CARF, please visit www.carf.org/contact-us.

Organization

RRAF
613 South Main Street
Lombard, IL 60148

Organizational Leadership

Marilyn J. Flanagan, M.B.A., QIDP, Executive Director, Senior Vice President
Sally F. Mullan, President and Board Member

Survey Date(s)

October 22, 2018–October 24, 2018

Surveyor(s)

Ruth C. Jackson, M.R.A., CRC, Administrative and Program

Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

Community Integration

Previous Survey

Three-Year Accreditation
January 20, 2016–January 22, 2016

Accreditation Decision**Three-Year Accreditation**

Expiration: December 31, 2021

Executive Summary

This report contains the findings of CARF's on-site survey of RRAF conducted October 22, 2018–October 24, 2018. This report includes the following information:

- Documentation of the accreditation decision and the basis for the decision as determined by CARF's consideration of the survey findings.
- Identification of the specific program(s)/service(s) and location(s) to which this accreditation decision applies.
- Identification of the CARF surveyor(s) who conducted the survey and an overview of the CARF survey process and how conformance to the standards was determined.
- Feedback on the organization's strengths and recognition of any areas where the organization demonstrated exemplary conformance to the standards.
- Documentation of the specific sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey.
- Recommendations for improvement in any areas where the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance to the standards.
- Any consultative suggestions documented by the surveyor(s) to help the organization improve its program(s)/service(s) and business operations.

Accreditation Decision

On balance, RRAF demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards. RRAF is a stable organization that has provided a valuable service to Lombard, Illinois, for a long period of time. It has a board of directors and executive director who are dedicated to person-centered planning and to the health and safety of the people they serve. Two direct care staff members do everything in their power to create an environment that keeps the peers with severe disabilities calm and free of negative behaviors. The staff members involve the persons served in activities such as shredding paper, using rubber stamps, doing art projects, and going grocery shopping for meal preparation activities. The individual plans are excellent, with goals and measurable objectives that are tracked regularly. The parents express appreciation for the organization and the calm, quiet environment that is appropriate for their family member. Without this program, the family member would be sitting at home with no outside social interaction. The areas for improvement include implementing a staffing pattern that meets its performance expectations, including being able to provide more peer outings in the community, and individualized service plans should more consistently identify community integration activities as desired by the peers. The organization shows the intent to correct this situation and all recommendations in this report. It is willing to advocate to improve the situations currently out of its control. There is every confidence that the organization will continue to apply the CARF standards to its continuous quality improvement efforts. RRAF is dedicated to positive outcomes for people who face very challenging disabilities. The parents, residential providers, and funding sources all praise the good work done at RRAF.

RRAF appears likely to maintain and/or improve its current method of operation and demonstrates a commitment to ongoing quality improvement. RRAF is required to submit a post-survey Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to CARF that addresses all recommendations identified in this report.

RRAF has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The leadership team and staff are complimented and congratulated for this achievement. In order to maintain this accreditation, throughout the term of accreditation, the organization is required to:

- Submit annual reporting documents and other required information to CARF, as detailed in the Accreditation Policies and Procedures section in the standards manual.

- Maintain ongoing conformance to CARF’s standards, satisfy all accreditation conditions, and comply with all accreditation policies and procedures, as they are published and made effective by CARF.

Survey Details

Survey Participants

The survey of RRAF was conducted by the following CARF surveyor(s):

- Ruth C. Jackson, M.R.A., CRC, Administrative and Program

CARF considers the involvement of persons served to be vital to the survey process. As part of the accreditation survey for all organizations, CARF surveyors interact with and conduct direct, confidential interviews with consenting current and former persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation. In addition, as applicable and available, interviews may be conducted with family members and/or representatives of the persons served such as guardians, advocates, or members of their support system.

Interviews are also conducted with individuals associated with the organization, as applicable, which may include:

- The organization’s leadership, such as board members, executives, owners, and managers.
- Business unit resources, such as finance and human resources.
- Personnel who serve and directly interact with persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation.
- Other stakeholders, such as referral sources, payers, insurers, and fiscal intermediaries.
- Community constituents and governmental representatives.

Survey Activities

Achieving CARF accreditation involves demonstrating conformance to the applicable CARF standards, evidenced through observable practices, verifiable results over time, and comprehensive supporting documentation. The survey of RRAF and its program(s)/service(s) consisted of the following activities:

- Confidential interviews and direct interactions, as outlined in the previous section.
- Direct observation of the organization’s operations and service delivery practices.
- Observation of the organization’s location(s) where services are delivered.
- Review of organizational documents, which may include policies; plans; written procedures; promotional materials; governing documents, such as articles of incorporation and bylaws; financial statements; and other documents necessary to determine conformance to standards.
- Review of documents related to program/service design, delivery, outcomes, and improvement, such as program descriptions, records of services provided, documentation of reviews of program resources and services conducted, and program evaluations.
- Review of records of current and former persons served.

Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

The survey addressed by this report is specific to the following program(s)/service(s):

- Community Integration

A list of the organization's accredited program(s)/service(s) by location is included at the end of this report.

Representations and Constraints

The accreditation decision and survey findings contained in this report are based on an on-balance consideration of the information obtained by the surveyor(s) during the on-site survey. Any information that was unavailable, not presented, or outside the scope of the survey was not considered and, had it been considered, may have affected the contents of this report. If at any time CARF subsequently learns or has reason to believe that the organization did not participate in the accreditation process in good faith or that any information presented was not accurate, truthful, or complete, CARF may modify the accreditation decision, up to and including revocation of accreditation.

Survey Findings

This report provides a summary of the organization's strengths and identifies the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey and the findings in each area. In conjunction with its evaluation of conformance to the specific program/service standards, CARF assessed conformance to its business practice standards, referred to as Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence, which are designed to support the delivery of the program(s)/service(s) within a sound business operating framework to promote long-term success.

The specific standards applied from each section vary based on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, the scope(s) of the program(s)/service(s), population(s) served, location(s), methods of service delivery, and survey type. Information about the specific standards applied on each survey is included in the standards manual and other instructions that may be provided by CARF.

Areas of Strength

CARF found that RRAF demonstrated the following strengths:

- RRAF has a strong board of directors that works closely with the executive director, who has been in the position for 28 years. Together they provide a strong foundation for the organization.
- The organization is small, and succession planning is critical to its ongoing success. The executive director and board of directors have approved a succession plan that provides checklists and timelines for all activities that will be needed to ensure a smooth transition to new leadership in the future.
- The staff members are skilled at working with people with severe disabilities and stated that, although the work is hard, it is rewarding.
- The local community supports the organization with fundraising. A group of volunteers assisted with new flooring and painting of the interior of the facility.
- RRAF has an annex that it plans to utilize as a resale store that could also provide an opportunity for involvement of the peers.

- The organization sends a newsletter to all family members and other stakeholders such as people and companies that have made donations. The newsletter is also available on the RRAF website.
- The organization consistently does long-range planning, and it is fully aware of the challenges it faces and proactively seeks to achieve the organizational goals in spite of personnel challenges.
- The organization is financially stable in spite of a shrinking census and inadequate funding.
- The facility is clean and an adequate size for the services that are being provided.
- The job descriptions are thorough and give the employee a clear expectation of his/her job duties. The annual reviews specifically identify what he/she did well during the year and what is expected for the next review.
- The peers served are unlikely to be accepted in many other types of programs, and they appear content with the services they receive.
- The board members and parents express extreme satisfaction with the management of the organization.
- Behaviors are addressed by maintaining a calm environment with activities matched to each peer's capabilities. Although staff members push the peers to grow toward independence, the staff members let the peers learn at their own pace and do not create stress by demanding more than they are capable of achieving.
- The individual plans are created so learning takes place as soon as the peer enters the program, whether or not the funding agency has provided RRAF with direction. When the funding agency provides the umbrella plan, then RRAF adjusts the plan for the person served.
- For the most part, the objectives in the individual plans are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-limited. When an objective is mastered, a new objective with higher expectations is created.
- The individual plans are customized to each peer, taking into consideration the peer's functioning level and the input of his/her parents or guardians.
- A residential provider said there have been no issues since the persons started with the program. They said that communication is clear and accurate and that communication is the key to a successful working relationship.
- The severity of disability of the persons served precludes them from taking public transportation. Therefore, the organization provides transportation for the persons served without reimbursement from a funding agency.
- The staff members create an environment where the peers are empowered to improve their own behavior and function better with others. The peers are well aware of the antecedents to their behaviors and work to de-escalate behaviors before they become disruptive.
- As a community integration program, RRAF gets the peers out in the community individually or in small groups as much as it can given the staffing situation. It keeps track of how often each person has an opportunity to be out in the community.

Opportunities for Quality Improvement

The CARF survey process identifies opportunities for continuous improvement, a core concept of “aspiring to excellence.” This section of the report lists the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey, including a description of the business practice area and/or the specific program(s)/service(s) surveyed and a summary of the key areas addressed in that section of the standards.

In this section of the report, a recommendation identifies any standard for which CARF determined that the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance. All recommendations must be addressed in a QIP submitted to CARF.

In addition, consultation may be provided for areas of or specific standards where the surveyor(s) documented suggestions that the organization may consider to improve its business or service delivery practices. Note that consultation may be offered for areas of specific standards that do not have any recommendations. Such consultation does not indicate nonconformance to the standards; it is intended to offer ideas that the organization might find helpful in its ongoing quality improvement efforts. The organization is not required to address consultation.

When CARF surveyors visit an organization, their role is that of independent peer reviewers, and their goal is not only to gather an assess information to determine conformance to the standards, but also to engage in relevant and meaningful consultative dialogue. Not all consultation or suggestions discussed during the survey are noted in this report. The organization is encouraged to review any notes made during the survey and consider the consultation or suggestions that were discussed.

During the process of preparing for a CARF accreditation survey, an organization may conduct a detailed self-assessment and engage in deliberations and discussions within the organization as well as with external stakeholders as it considers ways to implement and use the standards to guide its quality improvement efforts. The organization is encouraged to review these discussions and deliberations as it considers ways to implement innovative changes and further advance its business and service delivery practices.

Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence®

1.A. Leadership

Description

CARF-accredited organizations identify leadership that embraces the values of accountability and responsibility to the individual organization's stated mission. The leadership demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

Key Areas Addressed

- Leadership structure and responsibilities
- Person-centered philosophy
- Organizational guidance
- Leadership accessibility
- Cultural competency and diversity
- Corporate responsibility
- Organizational fundraising, if applicable

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.C. Strategic Planning

Description

CARF-accredited organizations establish a foundation for success through strategic planning focused on taking advantage of strengths and opportunities and addressing weaknesses and threats.

Key Areas Addressed

- Environmental considerations
- Strategic plan development, implementation, and periodic review

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders

Description

CARF-accredited organizations continually focus on the expectations of the persons served and other stakeholders. The standards in this subsection direct the organization's focus to soliciting, collecting, analyzing, and using input from all stakeholders to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of the persons served, the community, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Collection of input
- Integration of input into business practices and planning

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.E. Legal Requirements

Description

CARF-accredited organizations comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with obligations
- Response to legal action
- Confidentiality and security of records

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.F. Financial Planning and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and performance objectives. Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long-term solvency.

Key Areas Addressed

- Budgets
- Review of financial results and relevant factors
- Fiscal policies and procedures
- Reviews of bills for services and fee structures, if applicable
- Safeguarding funds of persons served, if applicable
- Review/audit of financial statements

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.G. Risk Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations engage in a coordinated set of activities designed to control threats to their people, property, income, goodwill, and ability to accomplish goals.

Key Areas Addressed

- Risk management plan implementation and periodic review
- Adequate insurance coverage
- Media relations and social media procedures
- Reviews of contract services

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.H. Health and Safety

Description

CARF-accredited organizations maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Competency-based training on safety procedures and practices
- Emergency procedures
- Access to first aid and emergency information
- Critical incidents
- Infection control
- Health and safety inspections

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.I. Workforce Development and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources and focus on aligning and linking human resources processes, procedures, and initiatives with the strategic objectives of the organization.

Organizational effectiveness depends on the organization's ability to develop and manage the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behavioral expectations of its workforce. The organization describes its workforce, which is often composed of a diverse blend of human resources. Effective workforce development and management promote engagement and organizational sustainability and foster an environment that promotes the provision of services that center on enhancing the lives of persons served.

Key Areas Addressed

- Composition of workforce
- Ongoing workforce planning
- Verification of background/credentials/fitness for duty
- Workforce engagement and development
- Performance appraisals
- Succession planning

Recommendations

1.I.9.d.

Although there is an adequate workforce to provide a safe environment, it appears to be too limited to meet the performance expectations of the organization. The program's mission is to provide community integration. Some peers have not been on any community outings, and others have only been on a few. The current level of staffing precludes the ability to ensure safety during community outings. If a staff-to-peer ratio of 1:5 could be maintained, then community outings could be increased. Although RRAF has been making all efforts to find additional staff, it is urged to consistently implement a staffing pattern that meets its performance expectations, including being able to provide more peer outings in the community.

Consultation

- Ongoing workforce planning includes recruitment, and RRAF has tried valiantly to fill a staff position and a driver position; however, these unfilled positions impact the ability of this program to fully meet its mission as a community integration program. In addition to filling these positions, the organization is encouraged to consider interns and volunteers to assist in providing safe supervision for community outings and involvement.

1.J. Technology

Description

CARF-accredited organizations plan for the use of technology to support and advance effective and efficient service and business practices.

Key Areas Addressed

- Technology and system plan implementation and periodic review
- Written procedures for the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in service delivery, if applicable
- ICT instruction and training, if applicable
- Access to ICT information and assistance, if applicable
- Maintenance of ICT equipment, if applicable
- Emergency procedures that address unique aspects of service delivery via ICT, if applicable

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- The organization has a thorough assistive technology plan for staff purposes; however, it is suggested that it implement a policy on the benefits of assistive technology for the peers.

1.K. Rights of Persons Served

Description

CARF-accredited organizations protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the persons served.

Key Areas Addressed

- Policies that promote rights of persons served
- Communication of rights to persons served
- Formal complaints by persons served

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.L. Accessibility

Description

CARF-accredited organizations promote accessibility and the removal of barriers for the persons served and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Assessment of accessibility needs and identification of barriers
- Accessibility plan implementation and periodic review
- Requests for reasonable accommodations

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.M. Performance Measurement and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations are committed to continually improving their organizations and service delivery to the persons served. Data are collected and analyzed, and information is used to manage and improve service delivery.

Key Areas Addressed

- Data collection
- Establishment and measurement of performance indicators

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.N. Performance Improvement

Description

The dynamic nature of continuous improvement in a CARF-accredited organization sets it apart from other organizations providing similar services. CARF-accredited organizations share and provide the persons served and other interested stakeholders with ongoing information about their actual performance as a business entity and their ability to achieve optimal outcomes for the persons served through their programs and services.

Key Areas Addressed

- Analysis of performance indicators in relation to performance targets
- Use of performance analysis for quality improvement and organizational decision making
- Communication of performance information

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Section 2. Quality Individualized Services and Supports

Description

For an organization to achieve quality services, the persons served are active participants in the planning, implementation, and ongoing review and revision of the services offered. The organization's commitment to quality and the involvement of the persons served spans the entire time that the persons served are involved with services. The service planning process is individualized, establishing goals and measurable objectives that incorporate the unique strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences of the persons served. Services are responsive to the expectations of persons served and their desired outcomes from services, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

2.A. Program/Service Structure

Description

A fundamental responsibility of the organization is to provide a comprehensive program structure. The staffing is designed to maximize opportunities for the persons served to obtain and participate in the services provided.

Key Areas Addressed

- Services are person-centered and individualized
- Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes
- Documented scope of services shared with stakeholders
- Service delivery based on accepted field practices
- Communication for effective service delivery
- Entrance/exit/transition criteria

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

2.B. Individual-Centered Service Planning, Design, and Delivery

Description

Improvement of the quality of an individual's services/supports requires a focus on the person and/or family served and their identified strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences. The organization's services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the persons served, are responsive to their expectations and desired outcomes from services, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

The person served participates in decision making, directing, and planning that affects his or her life. Efforts to include the person served in the direction or delivery of those services/supports are evident.

Key Areas Addressed

- Services are person-centered and individualized
- Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- RRAF depends on direction from external independent service coordinators. The information they provide to RRAF is used to guide the creation of the individualized plans; however, these plans sometimes lack an outcome, or the requested outcome is vague or inappropriate for the peer. It is suggested that RRAF's board and leadership continue to advocate timely, accurate, and complete information from the external service coordinator so the individual plans can be implemented quickly and efficiently.
- It is suggested that assistive technology be more consistently considered when writing the individual plan. There are communication devices and primary games that could likely be of benefit to most peers in this organization.
- If assistive technology evaluations and equipment are not readily available, it is suggested that a request be made through the funding agency, that fundraising efforts be directed toward more assistive technology, or that the organization seek out programs that loan assistive technology items for a trial period.

2.E. Community Services Principle Standards

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of community services assists the persons and/or families served in obtaining access to the resources and services of their choice. The persons and/or families served are included in their communities to the degree they desire. This may be accomplished by direct service provision or linkages to existing opportunities and natural supports in the community.

The organization obtains information from the persons and/or families served regarding resources and services they want or require that will meet their identified needs, and offers an array of services it arranges for or provides. The organization provides the persons and/or families served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions.

The services and supports are changed as necessary to meet the identified needs of the persons and/or families served and other stakeholders. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural needs.

Expected results from these services may include:

- Increased or maintained inclusion in meaningful community activities.
- Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Increased self-direction, self-determination, and self-reliance.
- Increased self-esteem.

Key Areas Addressed

- Access to community resources and services
- Enhanced quality of life
- Community inclusion
- Community participation

Recommendations

2.E.2.

Although some individualized service plans identify community inclusion activities as desired by the peer, not all do. It is recommended that individualized service plans more consistently identify community integration activities as desired by the peers.

Section 4. Community Services

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of community services assists the persons served through an individualized person-centered process to obtain access to the services, supports, and resources of their choice to achieve their desired outcomes. This may be accomplished by direct service provision, linkages to existing generic opportunities and natural supports in the community, or any combination of these. The persons served are included in their communities to the degree they desire.

The organization provides the persons served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions. Although we use the phrase person served, this may also include family served, as appropriate to the service and the individual.

The services and supports are arranged and changed as necessary to meet the identified desires of the persons served. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural preferences.

Depending on the program's scope of services, expected results from these services/supports may include:

- Increased inclusion in community activities.
- Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Increased self-direction, self-determination, and self-reliance
- Self-esteem.
- Housing opportunities.
- Community citizenship.
- Increased independence.
- Meaningful activities.
- Increased employment options.

4.G. Community Integration (COI)

Description

Community integration is designed to help persons to optimize their personal, social, and vocational competency to live successfully in the community. Persons served are active partners in determining the activities they desire to participate in. Therefore, the settings can be informal to reduce barriers between staff members and persons served. An activity center, a day program, a clubhouse, and a drop-in center are examples of community integration services. Consumer-run programs are also included.

Community integration provides opportunities for the community participation of the persons served. The organization defines the scope of these services and supports based on the identified needs and desires of the persons served. This may include services for persons who without this option are at risk of receiving services full-time in more restrictive environments with intensive levels of supports such as hospitalization or nursing home care. A person may participate in a variety of community life experiences or interactions that may include, but are not limited to:

- Leisure or recreational activities.
- Communication activities.
- Spiritual activities.
- Cultural activities.
- Pre-vocational experiences.
- Vocational pursuits.
- Volunteerism in the community.
- Educational and training activities.
- Development of living skills.
- Health and wellness promotion.
- Orientation, mobility, and destination training.
- Access and utilization of public transportation.
- Interacting with volunteers from the community in program activities.
- Community collaborations and social connections developed by the program (partnerships with community entities such as senior centers, arts councils, etc.).

Key Areas Addressed

- Opportunities for community participation

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- It is suggested that RRAF continue to pursue additional personnel as well as interns and volunteers so that the persons served are able to have more choice in activities and outings.
- It is suggested that community outings be scheduled for each peer even if, in reality, it may be cancelled due to staffing limitations. The schedule could show the intent of the program to provide these services.
- It is suggested that RRAF contact an assistive technology organization to review how assistive technology could enhance the program and increase activities that the peers can do given the limited staffing. Suggestions include iPad® devices, large screen TVs, and individual communication devices. In addition, it is suggested that some research be done on how to make current tasks easier. An example could be a white line on the black shredder so the entry slot is more easily seen by the person doing shredding.

Program(s)/Service(s) by Location

RRAF

613 South Main Street
Lombard, IL 60148

Community Integration

RRAF Annex

619 South Main Street
Lombard, IL 60148

Community Integration