CARF Accreditation Report

for

Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard

Three-Year Accreditation

Contents

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 a 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

Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard
945 Washington Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Organizational Leadership

Shannon V. Hagy, LSW, Director of Client Services

Survey Number

138238

Survey Date(s)

February 22, 2021–February 23, 2021

Surveyor(s)

Samantha Handley, DESS Administrative
Katrina Coffman, DESS Program

Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Community Housing
Services Coordination

Accreditation Decision

Three-Year Accreditation
Expiration: February 29, 2024

carf INTERNATIONAL

Executive Summary

This report contains the findings of CARF's site survey of Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard conducted February 22, 2021–February 23, 2021. 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, Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards. The organization is clearly dedicated to continuous quality improvement and has developed many systems and workflows to maintain a high level of conformance to the standards. Veterans Place is clearly a person-centered organization that values input from the veterans served, employees, funders, and referral sources. There are a few areas for improvement noted in this report, including critical incident reporting, the corporate compliance plan, the veterans rights statement, and emergency drills. The leadership is aware of these issues and is clearly dedicated to making these improvements.

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

Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard 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 Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard was conducted by the following CARF surveyor(s):

- Samantha Handley, DESS Administrative
- Katrina Coffman, DESS 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 Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard 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 Employment Services: Employment Supports
- Community Employment Services: Job Development
- Community Housing
- Services Coordination

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 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 Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard demonstrated the following strengths:

- Veterans Place is committed to its mission and its governance role. Board members take obvious pride in the organization and routinely engage with the veterans in the programs. They support the efforts of the organization and are actively engaged in advocating for veterans and their needs in the community.
- Funding and referral sources expressed very high regard for the programs and services offered, and they feel that it is a high-quality organization providing much needed services to veterans who are homeless. They shared that Veterans Place is innovative, persistent, and determined, and the organization truly listens to the veterans and to its community partners and funders. They shared that Veterans Place did not miss a beat with

COVID-19. It adapted quickly and neither veterans nor referral sources experienced appreciable delays in treatment or a reduction in the quality of care. Several times stakeholders stated that the organization was "saving lives."

- The leadership team is clearly dedicated and enthusiastic about its mission, its services, and the veterans. A veteran-centered perspective is deeply ingrained in the staff members, both clinical and administrative, and it is clear that leadership puts veterans first in all of its decision making. Furthermore, the fact that the current executive director has experience as a homeless veteran not only ensures that a veteran-centered focus will continue but also stands as a testament to the whole community that veterans who go through this program can and do lead successful and fulfilling lives.

- The organization has a Veterans Council made up of individuals receiving services. They meet to discuss programming in general and to provide feedback on programs, policies, and procedures. This kind of peer involvement is unique and highly valuable.

- The strategic plan is comprehensive and includes input from employees, veterans, stakeholders, and board members. The team routinely refers back to the strategic plan and tracks progress toward its goals.

- Veterans hold the organization and staff members in high regard and feel that the organization has made positive changes in their lives. Staff members are knowledgeable regarding the needs and goals of the veterans served.

- The physical environment of the facilities is reflective of the organization's overall concern for the health and safety of each veteran, and the organization demonstrates ongoing attention to safe practices.

- The organization has highly competent, caring, and respected staff members who demonstrate a strong commitment to enhancing the veteran's quality of life. The organization has a veteran-centered philosophy that is evident in its systems, approaches, and decision making.

- The veterans are well informed regarding their services. The veterans' case records are well organized, and the veterans' goals and objectives are clear.

- The organization's mission and core values are expressed clearly and serve as guiding principles for its direction in day-to-day operations.

- The successful manner in which staff members work as teams enhances service delivery and creates a friendly and welcoming environment for the veterans. It is evident that the individualized attention to each veteran served is based on that veteran's unique strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences.

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 and 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

1.A.6.a.(6)(e)
1.A.6.b.(1)
1.A.6.b.(2)(a)
1.A.6.b.(2)(b)
It is recommended that the organization expand its written ethical codes of conduct to include witnessing of legal documents. It is also recommended that the organization include written procedures to deal with allegations of violations of ethical codes, including a no-reprisal approach and timeframes that are adequate for prompt consideration and result in timely decisions. This information is laid out in the organization's grievance policy, but it is not specific to reported ethical violations. The organization might consider using similar wording to what is in the grievance policy for the code of ethics related to how it deals with allegations of violations of ethical codes.

1.A.7.a.
1.A.7.b.
1.A.7.c.(1)
1.A.7.d.(1)
1.A.7.d.(2)
1.A.7.e.

Although it is clear that the organization engages in corporate compliance activities, there was no formal corporate compliance policy. The organization is urged to implement a policy on corporate compliance that has been adopted by the organization's leadership. It is also recommended that corporate compliance be demonstrated through the implementation of written procedures that address exclusion of individuals and entities from federally funded healthcare programs; documented designation of a staff member to serve as the organization's compliance officer; training of personnel on corporate compliance, including the role of the compliance officer and the procedures for allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and other wrongdoing; and internal auditing activities.

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

1.G.1.a.(1)
1.G.1.a.(2)
1.G.1.a.(3)
1.G.1.a.(4)
1.G.1.a.(5)
1.G.1.a.(6)
1.G.1.a.(7)
1.G.1.b.(1)
1.G.1.b.(2)
Although the organization has a risk management plan, it did not include specific goals, priorities, persons responsible, or timeframes. It is recommended that the organization implement a risk management plan that includes identification of loss exposures, analysis of loss exposures, identification of how to rectify identified exposures, implementation of actions to reduce risk, monitoring of actions to reduce risk, reporting results of actions taken to reduce risks, and inclusion of risk reduction in performance improvement activities. The plan should be reviewed at least annually for relevance and updated as needed.

1.G.3.a.
Veterans Place is urged to implement written procedures regarding communications that address media relations.

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

1.H.7.a.(1)
1.H.7.a.(2)
1.H.7.b.
1.H.7.c.(1)
1.H.7.c.(2)
1.H.7.c.(3)
1.H.7.c.(4)
1.H.7.c.(5)
1.H.7.d.
Although the organization routinely does fire drills, there was no evidence of other emergency drills. It is recommended that the organization conduct unannounced tests of each emergency procedure at least annually on each shift at each location that includes, as relevant to the emergency procedure, a complete actual or simulated physical evacuation drill. The tests should be analyzed for performance that addresses the areas needing

improvement, actions to address the improvements needed, implementation of the actions, necessary education and training of personnel, and whether the actions taken accomplished the intended results. Each test should be evidenced in writing, including the analysis.

1.H.9.c.
Although there were first aid kits available, some of the supplies had expired. It is recommended that the organization ensure that there is ready access to first aid supplies. It might consider developing a system to ensure that first aid kits are kept up to date. A review of first aid kit supplies could be incorporated into the comprehensive health and safety self-inspections.

1.H.10.e.
The organization is urged to expand its written procedures regarding critical incidents to include timely debriefings conducted following critical incidents.

1.H.11.a.
1.H.11.b.(1)
1.H.11.b.(2)
1.H.11.b.(3)
1.H.11.b.(4)
1.H.11.b.(5)
1.H.11.b.(6)
1.H.11.b.(7)
1.H.11.b.(8)
1.H.11.b.(9)
1.H.11.b.(10)
Although the organization does evaluate critical incidents, it has not implemented an annual written analysis of critical incidents. It is recommended that a written analysis of all critical incidents be provided to or conducted by the leadership at least annually that addresses causes, trends, areas needing improvement, actions to address the improvements needed, implementation of the actions, whether the actions taken accomplished the intended results, necessary education and training of personnel, prevention of recurrence, internal reporting requirements, and external reporting requirements.

1.H.13.e.
1.H.13.j.
Based on an inspection of the organization's vehicles, not all vehicles had safety equipment (such as fire extinguishers and roadside assistance kits), and one vehicle had an expired first aid kit. The organization is urged to ensure that all of the organization's vehicles contain adequate safety equipment and up-to-date first aid kits.

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.4.c.(2)
Although the organization does background checks at the time of hire, it does not conduct them throughout employment. It is recommended that the organization implement written procedures that address timeframes for verification of backgrounds, credentials, and fitness for duty throughout employment.

1.I.8.f.
Measurable goals were not consistent in performance appraisals. It is recommended that the organization implement written procedures for performance appraisal that address measurable goals.

1.J. Technology

Description

Guided by leadership and a shared vision, CARF-accredited organizations are committed to exploring and, within their resources, acquiring and implementing technology systems and solutions that will support and enhance:

■ Business processes and practices.
■ Privacy and security of protected information.
■ Service delivery.
■ Performance management and improvement.
■ Satisfaction of persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Ongoing assessment of technology and data use
■ Technology and system plan implementation and periodic review
■ Technology policies and procedures
■ 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

1.J.4.c.
Although a test of the organization's procedures for business continuity/disaster recovery was completed, it was not evidenced in writing. It is recommended that this annual test be evidenced in writing, including the analysis.

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

1.K.1.b.
1.K.1.c.(1)
1.K.1.c.(2)
1.K.1.c.(3)
1.K.1.c.(4)
1.K.1.c.(5)
Although it is clear that Veterans Place respects the right of the veterans served, the veterans rights statement was missing several key elements. The organization is urged to expand its policies promoting the rights of the veterans served to include privacy and freedom from abuse, financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation, and neglect.

1.K.2.a.(3)
For the veterans who receive services for more than a year, it is recommended that the organization communicate the rights of the veterans served on an annual basis.

Consultation

- It is suggested that the organization create signage for the rights of the veterans served that can be displayed in all waiting areas and veteran gathering areas.

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 demonstrate a culture of accountability by developing and implementing performance measurement and management plans that produce information an organization can act on to improve results for the persons served, other stakeholders, and the organization itself.

The foundation for successful performance measurement and management includes:

■ Leadership accountability and support.
■ Mission-driven measurement.
■ A focus on results achieved for the persons served.
■ Meaningful engagement of stakeholders.
■ An understanding of extenuating and influencing factors that may impact performance.
■ A workforce that is knowledgeable about and engaged in performance measurement and management.
■ An investment in resources to implement performance measurement and management.
■ Measurement and management of business functions to sustain and enhance the organization.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Leadership accountability for performance measurement and management
■ Identification of gaps and opportunities related to performance measurement and management
■ Input from stakeholders
■ Performance measurement and management plan
■ Identification of objectives and performance indicators for service delivery
■ Identification of objectives and performance indicators for priority business functions
■ Personnel training on performance measurement and management

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

1.N. Performance Improvement

Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate a culture of performance improvement through their commitment to proactive and ongoing review, analysis, reflection on their results in both service delivery and business functions, and transparency. The results of performance analysis are used to identify and implement data-driven actions to improve the quality of programs and services and to inform decision making. Performance information that is accurate and understandable to the target audience is shared with persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders in accordance with their interests and needs.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Analysis of service delivery performance
■ Analysis of business function performance
■ Identification of areas needing performance improvement
■ Implementation of action plans
■ Use of performance information to improve program/service quality and make decisions
■ 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

2.A.12.c.
Releases of confidential information that are in ongoing veteran's files do not currently have a time limitation; however, the organization has added time limitations to the current releases of confidential information. It is recommended that all releases of confidential information have time limitations. This might be accomplished by including a statement that the release will expire one year from the date it was signed.

Consultation

- The organization receives all referrals from the VA, so it does not have its own wait list. It is suggested that the organization develop a wait list policy in case there should ever be a need for one in the future.

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 the person's 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.

2.D. Employment Services Principle Standards

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment services provides individualized services and supports to achieve identified employment outcomes. The array of services and supports may include:

■ Identification of employment opportunities and resources in the local job market.
■ Development of viable work skills that match workforce needs within the geographic area.
■ Development of realistic employment goals.
■ Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes.
■ Identification of resources and supports to achieve and maintain employment.
■ Coordination of and referral to employment-related services and supports.

The organization maintains its strategic positioning in the employment sector of the community by designing and continually improving its services based on input from the persons served and from employers in the local job market, and managing results of the organization's outcomes management system. The provision of quality employment services requires a continuous focus on the persons served and the personnel needs of employers in the organization's local job market.

Some examples of the quality results desired by the different stakeholders of these services and supports include:

■ Individualized, appropriate accommodations.
■ A flexible, interactive process that involves the person.
■ Increased independence.
■ Increased employment options.
■ Timely services and reports.
■ Persons served obtain and maintain employment consistent with their preferences, strengths, and needs.
■ Person served obtains a job at minimum wage or higher and maintains appropriate benefits.
■ Person served maintains the job.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Goals of the persons served
■ Community resources available
■ Personnel needs of local employers
■ Economic trends in the local employment sector

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

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

There are no recommendations in this area.

Section 3. Employment Services

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment 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 self-direction, self-determination, and self-reliance.
- Self-esteem.
- Community citizenship.
- Increased independence.
- Meaningful activities.
- Increased employment options.
- Employment obtained and maintained.
- Competitive employment.
- Employment at or above minimum wage.
- Economic self-sufficiency.
- Employment with benefits.
- Career advancement.

3.G. Community Employment Services (CES)

Description

Community employment services assist persons to obtain successful community employment opportunities that are responsive to their choices and preferences. Through a strengths-based approach, the program provides person-directed services/supports to individuals to choose, achieve, and maintain employment in integrated community employment settings.

Work is a fundamental part of adult life. Individually tailored job development, training, and support recognize each person's employability and potential contribution to the labor market. Persons are supported as needed through an individualized person-centered model of services to choose and obtain a successful employment opportunity consistent with their preferences, keep the employment, and find new employment if necessary or for purposes of career advancement.

Such services may be described as individualized competitive employment, individual placements, contracted temporary personnel services, competitive employment, supported employment, transitional employment, mobile work crews, contracted work groups in the community, community-based SourceAmerica® contracts, and other business-based work groups in community-integrated designs. In Canada, employment in the form of bona fide volunteer placements is possible.

Individuals may be paid by community employers or by the organization. Employment is in the community.

The following service categories are available under Community Employment Services (please refer to the program descriptions and applicable standards):

■ Job Development (CES:JD)
■ Employment Supports (CES:ES)

If an organization provides only Job Development or Employment Supports, then it may be accredited for only that service. If it is providing both Job Development and Employment Supports, then it must seek accreditation for both. If any clarification is needed, please contact your CARF resource specialist. There is no charge for consultation.

Depending on the scope of the services provided, some examples of the quality outcomes desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

■ Persons obtain community employment.
■ Persons obtain individualized competitive employment.
■ Employment matches interests and desires of persons.
■ Wages, benefits, and hours of employment achieved as desired.
■ Average number of hours worked per week increases.
■ Average number of hours worked per week meets the desires of the person served.
■ Full-time employment with benefits.
■ Transition-age youth move directly from their educational environment into community employment.
■ Potential for upward mobility.
■ Self-sufficiency.
■ Integration.
■ Responsive services.
■ Safe working conditions.
■ Cost-effective for placement achieved.
■ Performance level achieved meets requirements of job or position.
■ Increase in skills.
■ Increase in productivity.
■ Increase in hours worked.
■ Increase in pay.
■ Employment retention.
■ Increase in natural supports from coworkers.
■ Persons served treated with respect.
■ Minimize length of time for supports.
■ Type and amount of staff interaction meets needs.
■ Employer satisfaction.
■ Responsiveness to customers.

Job Development (CES:JD): Successful job development concurrently uses assessment information about the strengths and interests of the person seeking employment to target the types of jobs available from potential employers in the local labor market. Typical job development activities include reviewing local employment opportunities and developing potential employers/customers through direct and indirect promotional strategies. Job

development may include facilitating a hiring agreement between an employer and a person seeking employment. Some persons seeking employment may want assistance at only a basic, informational level, such as support for a self-directed job search.

Employment Supports (CES:ES): Employment support services promote successful training of a person to a new job, job adjustment, retention, and advancement. These services are based on the individual employee with a focus on achieving long-term retention of the person in the job. The level of employment support services is individualized to each employee and the complexity of the job.

Often supports are intensive for the initial orientation and training of an employee with the intent of leading to natural supports and/or reduced external job coaching. However, some persons may not require any employment supports at the job site; others may require intensive initial training with a quick decrease in supports, while some will be most successful when long-term supports are provided.

Supports can include assisting the employee with understanding the job culture, industry practices, and work behaviors expected by the employer. It may also include helping the employer and coworkers to understand the support strategies and accommodations needed by the worker.

Supports are a critical element of the long-term effectiveness of community employment. Support services address issues such as assistance in training a person to complete new tasks, changes in work schedule or work promotion, a decrease in productivity of the person served, adjusting to new supervisors, and managing changes in nonwork environments or other critical life activities that may affect work performance. Routine follow-up with the employer and the employee is crucial to continued job success.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Integrated employment choice
■ Integrated employment obtainment
■ Employment provided in regular business settings
■ Integrated employment retention
■ Provides career advancement resources

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- The organization offers many services to veterans to enhance their quality of life, social skills, and work skills. It is suggested that the organization take advantage of free training that can be offered to veterans through many different Goodwill organizations across the United States. One Goodwill organization offers several hundred free trainings that can enhance the veterans' skills (**goodwillnorthtexas.org**). Goodwill organizations do not receive money for individuals participating in these trainings; it is free training offered to the public.

- The organization has sufficient staff to cover any absences or tardiness; however, it is suggested that the organization have a formal policy or process that it will follow so that contingency plans are known by all employees.

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.H. Community Housing (CH)

Description

Community housing addresses the desires, goals, strengths, abilities, needs, health, safety, and life span issues of the persons served, regardless of the home in which they live and/or the scope, duration, and intensity of the services they receive. The residences in which services/supports are provided are typically owned, rented, leased, or operated directly by the organization, or may be owned, rented, or leased by a third party, such as a governmental entity. Providers exercise control over these sites in terms of having direct or indirect responsibility for the physical conditions of the facility.

Community housing is provided in partnership with individuals. These services/supports are designed to assist the persons served to achieve success in and satisfaction with community living. They may be temporary or long-term in nature. The services/supports are focused on home and community integration and engagement in productive activities. Community housing enhances the independence, dignity, personal choice, and privacy of the persons served. For persons in alcohol and other drug programs, these services/supports are focused on providing sober living environments to increase the likelihood of sobriety and abstinence and to decrease the potential for relapse.

Community housing programs may be referred to as group homes, halfway houses, three-quarter way houses, recovery residences, sober housing, domestic violence or homeless shelters, and safe houses. These programs may be located in rural or urban settings and in houses, apartments, townhouses, or other residential settings owned, rented, leased, or operated by the organization. They may include congregate living facilities and clustered

homes/apartments in multiple-unit settings. These residences are often physically integrated into the community, and every effort is made to ensure that they approximate other homes in their neighborhoods in terms of size and number of individuals.

Community housing may include either or both of the following:

■ Transitional living that provides interim supports and services for persons who are at risk of institutional placement, persons transitioning from institutional settings, or persons who are homeless. Transitional living is typically provided for six to twelve months and can be offered in congregate settings that may be larger than residences typically found in the community.
■ Long-term housing that provides stable, supported community living or assists the persons served to obtain and maintain safe, affordable, accessible, and stable housing.

The residences in which community housing services are provided must be identified in the survey application. These sites will be visited during the survey process and identified in the survey report and accreditation decision as a site at which the organization provides a community housing program.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Safe, secure, private location
■ Support to persons as they explore alternatives
■ In-home safety needs
■ Access as desired to community activities
■ Options to make changes in living arrangements
■ System for on-call availability of personnel

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

4.J. Services Coordination (SC)

Description

Services coordination programs provide goal-oriented and individualized supports focusing on improved self-sufficiency for the persons served through assessment, planning, linkage, advocacy, coordination, and monitoring activities. Successful services coordination results in community opportunities and increased independence for the persons served. Programs may provide occasional supportive counseling and crisis intervention services, when allowed by regulatory or funding authorities.

Services coordination may be provided by an organization as part of its individual service planning and delivery, by a department or division within the organization that works with individuals who are internal and/or external to the organization, or by an organization with the sole purpose of providing community services coordination. Such programs are typically provided by qualified services coordinators or by case management teams.

Organizations performing services coordination as a routine function of other services or programs are not required to apply these standards unless they are specifically seeking accreditation for this program.

Some examples of the quality results desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

■ Access to a variety of services/supports.
■ Access to choices of services.
■ Individualized services to meet needs.

- Persons achieving goals.
- Persons achieving independence.
- Access to vocational training.
- Persons achieving employment.
- Access to career development.

Key Areas Addressed

- Goal-oriented and systematic process of advocacy
- Formation of linkages with community resources and services
- Coordination of services

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Program(s)/Service(s) by Location

Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard

945 Washington Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Community Housing
Services Coordination