

OCB Flexible Fund Grant: *Readiness Assessment*

The Retirement Research Foundation (RRF) supports the efforts of Chicago-area nonprofit organizations to make long-term improvements in management and governance. RRF recognizes that nonprofit organizations sometimes need to engage in preliminary planning to maximize success in organizational development endeavors.

Through RRF's OCB Flexible Fund, organizations may apply for a Readiness Assessment to identify and prioritize organizational capacity building opportunities. Funds are available to engage an organizational development consultant to conduct the assessment. The process will include interviews with an organization's paid and unpaid leadership; production of a report summarizing key findings and recommendations; and identification of priorities and suggested action steps.

These funds are available to nonprofit organizations (located in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, or McHenry County, Illinois) that provide services to the elderly and intentionally give a high priority to this population. The length of time for an OCB Readiness Assessment generally ranges from three to six months; the maximum grant amount is \$5,000.

Guiding Principles

The following characteristics are guiding principles of the assessment process:

- *Organizational capacity building is an ongoing process.* This assessment is just one step in an organization's development.
- *There is no right or wrong answer during an assessment.* The information gathered is intended to present a realistic snapshot of where the organization is now, and what steps it might consider to build its capacity in the future.
- *Change is a process that happens over time and may be uncomfortable at times.* Individuals engaging in the process should be open to reflecting upon and receiving feedback about the organization's strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth.
- *The Readiness Assessment process, in and of itself, should provide value to the organization.* The assessment will help an organization better understand its current strengths and opportunities for its future capacity building efforts.