

Zoning in the District of Columbia

Letter of Agent Authorization/Competency Tutorial



Letter of Agent Authorization /Competency (LAAC)

A Letter of Agent Authorization (LAAC) is required when filing a **Form 120 – Application for Variance/Special Exception** or a **Form 125 - Appeal** if the applicant/appellant will be represented by a third party, including the lessor or contract purchaser of the property.



Why is an LAAC Necessary?

According to §3106.1 of Title 11 DCMR:



...Any person or party may be represented by any other person duly authorized in writing to do so. The authorization shall state specifically that the authorization includes the power of the agent or representation to bind the person in the case before the Board.



Why is an LAAC Necessary?



Although the rules of the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) permits any person to represent an applicant, OZ strongly encourages applicants who seek such representation to make certain that the person (whether an attorney, land use professional or architect) is well-versed in the D.C. Zoning Regulations.



Why is an LAAC Necessary?

An applicant should consider asking the potential agent to identify the relevant licenses or credentials they hold and to provide a list of the BZA cases in which they previously worked, the dates of the hearings, and the outcome of each case.



Why is an LAAC Necessary?

Through the use of the **video on demand** features accessible through the DCOZ website (<http://dcoz.dc.gov/services/OnDemandVideo.shtml>), an applicant can watch one or more of the hearings identified and decide whether the potential representative is what they are looking for.



Why is an LAAC Necessary?

Depending on the type of representation being sought, an applicant may want to consult with such professional associations as the District of Columbia Bar Association, the American Institute of Architects, and the American Planning Association for references.



Elements of an LAAC

By way of example an LAAC:

1. States “The undersigned owner hereby authorizes the undersigned agent to act on the owner’s behalf in this matter”;



Elements of an LAAC

2. Is signed by the owner authorizing the representative to act on the owner's behalf with respect to the application; and



Elements of an LAAC

3. Includes a signed statement by the agent indicating that he/she has read the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure (11 DCMR, Chapter 31) and that he/she is able to competently represent the owner.



For more information



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