

**Burden of Proof
Special Exception Application
1703 Bunker Hill Rd NE, Washington, DC**

To:
The Office of Zoning
Government of the District of Columbia
Suite 210 South
441 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

From:
Mestawet Dejene
Applicant/Owner
1703 Bunker Hill Rd NE
Washington, DC

Date:
November 13, 2025

Subject:
BZA Application – Special Exception to Expand Child Development Home Capacity
1703 Bunker Hill Rd NE (Square, 4163 , Lot 0003)

I. Summary

I Mestawet Dejene, owner and operator of a licensed home-based child development program located at 1703 Bunker Hill Rd NE, is applying for a **Special Exception** under Subtitle U § 203.1(g) to **increase the number of children served from nine (9) to twelve (12)**.

This expansion will allow the applicant to meet community needs by offering additional high-quality childcare slots while maintaining full compliance with all health, safety, and licensing requirements. The proposed expansion will not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of neighboring properties.

II. Qualification for Special Exception

This application meets the general and specific special exception criteria under **Subtitle X § 901.2** of the D.C. Zoning Regulations.

Subtitle X § 901.2(a)

The use will remain fully residential in character and consistent with the purpose of allowing childcare services within stable neighborhoods. No exterior construction, additions, or structural changes are proposed. The childcare program continues to support District goals of increasing access to early childhood education.

Subtitle X § 901.2(b)

The proposed increase from nine (9) to twelve (12) children will not adversely affect neighboring properties. I have operated my childcare program for several years without complaints. The use remains entirely within the existing home, with no exterior changes requested. Noise will continue to be typical daytime childcare noise. Drop-off and pick-up times will remain staggered, minimizing traffic and parking impacts. Outdoor play will remain in the fully fenced backyard. For these reasons, the increase to twelve children will not create adverse impacts regarding noise, traffic, parking, privacy, or neighborhood character.

Subtitle X § 901.2(c)

The childcare program complies with all OSSE and DC Health licensing requirements, including staff-to-child ratios, safety rules, and inspections. All regulations will continue to be met after expansion.

Subtitle U § 203.1(g)

The program meets the conditions for a Child Development Home: it operates within a residential dwelling, has adequate indoor and outdoor space, includes a safe fenced play area, and complies fully with licensing and safety standards. The increase from 9 to 12 children is modest, reasonable, and compatible with the neighborhood.

The following daytime care uses:

Expanded child development home for ten (10) to twelve (12) individuals fifteen (15) years of age less may be permitted as a special exception by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under Subtitle X and subject to the provisions of Subtitle U 251.6; provided a minimum of thirty-five

square feet (35 sq. ft.) of floor area per individual is provided including the basement but excluding any accessory structure:

A home occupation shall comply with the following conditions and requirement:

- (a) A home occupation shall be clearly secondary to the use of a dwelling unit for residential purposes;
- (b) Except for lodging, and as provided in subtitle U 251.1 (b) and 251.1(f), no more than the larger of two hundred fifty square feet (250 sq. ft.) or twenty-five percent (25%) of the floor area of the dwelling, excluding basement or any accessory structure, shall be utilized for the home occupation;
- (c) All materials or finished product shall be stored within the floor area utilized for home occupation or in a basement or accessory structure;
- (d) Except as provided in Subtitle U 251.1(b), in no case shall more than two (2) persons who are not residents of the subject dwelling unit be permitted as employees of the home occupation except for the home office of a physician or dentist;
- (e) No interior structural alteration shall be permitted if it would make it difficult to return the premises to a use that is exclusively residential;
- (f) No Operations related to the home occupation shall be conducted outside a structure, nor shall any storage or other unsightly condition be permitted outside a structure;
- (g) No equipment or process shall be utilized that creates visual or audible electrical interference in television or radio receivers outside the subject home, or that causes fluctuation in line voltage outside the subject home;
- (h) The use shall produce no noxious odors, vibrations, glare, or fumes that are detectable to normal sensory perception outside the subject home;
- (i) The use shall not produce a level of noise that exceeds the level normally associated with the category of dwelling or the immediate neighborhood;
- (j) No more than two (2) vehicles may be used in the practice of the home occupation;
- (k) Except for child development home and expanded child development homes, vehicular trips to the premises by visitors, customers, and delivery persons shall not exceed eight (8) trips daily on a regular and continuing basis;

- (l) Except for child development home and expanded child development home the practitioner shall have no more than eight (8) clients or customer on the premises in any one (1) hour period;
- (m) If more than one (1) home occupation is practiced in a dwelling unit, the cumulative impact of all such home occupations shall not exceed any of the standards set forth in this chapter; and
- (n) The dwelling unit owner and the practitioner shall maintain the residential character and appearance of the dwelling unit and lot.

A home occupation that is neither permitted nor prohibited in this chapter may be permitted as a special exception by Board of Zoning Adjustment under Subtitle X, subject to the following conditions: -

- (a) An applicant for a home occupation that is permitted by subtitle U 251.1 may request the Board of Zoning Adjustment to modify no more than two (2) of the conditions enumerated in Subtitle U 251.3 and 251.;
- (b) In no case shall more than two (2) persons who are not residents of the subject home be permitted as employees of the home occupation, and those persons shall not be co-practitioners of the professions;
- (c) Any request to modify more than two (2) of the requirements found in Subtitle U 251.3 and 251.4 shall be deemed a request for variance; and
- (d) In considering any request for approval under this section, the Board of Zoning Adjustment shall determine that the request is consistent with the general purposes and intent of this chapter and may impose conditions relating to operating condition of the home occupation, parking screening or other requirements as it deems necessary to protect adjacent and nearby properties consistent with the general purpose and intent of this chapter.

(a) The use shall be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.

Subtitle U § 251 – Child Development Homes and Centers

1. Compatibility with the neighborhood.

The childcare program operates in a residential setting similar to others in the area. Activities are kept within the property, and the increase from 9 to 12 children will not change the quiet residential nature of the neighborhood.

2. Parking and traffic considerations.

There is adequate on-street parking available for brief drop-offs and pick-ups. Parents are instructed to arrive at scheduled times to prevent congestion. The small increase in enrollment will have minimal impact on neighborhood traffic.

3. Health, safety, and welfare.

The home meets all DC Health and OSSE requirements for safety, sanitation, and emergency preparedness. Indoor and outdoor areas are child-safe and well-maintained.

4. Outdoor play area and space adequacy.

The property includes a fenced backyard for outdoor play that meets the required square footage per child. Playtime is structured and supervised to maintain safety and minimize noise.

5. Impact on neighboring properties.

The program has been operating successfully with 9 children and has maintained a positive relationship with neighbors. Expanding to 12 children will not create any negative effects on nearby homes in terms of noise, traffic, or parking.

6. Public good and zoning intent.

This expansion supports the public good by increasing access to licensed, high-quality childcare in the neighborhood. The program contributes to family stability, early

childhood development, and community well-being, consistent with the goals of the District's zoning regulations.

(c) Parking, traffic, and loading considerations.

The site is accessible from public streets and has adequate space in front of the property for short-term drop-off and pick-up. The slight increase in capacity will not create adverse parking or traffic impacts on the neighborhood. Parents will continue to use the existing designated area for safe child drop-off and pick-up.

(d) The facility will comply with all applicable licensing and safety regulations.

The applicant will maintain full compliance with **DC Health and OSSE Child Care Licensing** requirements, including staff-to-child ratios, background checks, and fire safety inspections. All health, safety, and sanitation standards will continue to be met.

III. Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully request approval of this Special Exception to expand my home childcare program from 9 to 12 children. This expansion meets all applicable standards under Subtitle X § 901.2 and Subtitle U § 251 and will continue to operate in a manner that supports families while preserving the character of the neighborhood.

With regards



Mestawet Dejene

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