

Submission
No 53

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 28 June 2022

Partially
Confidential

Thank you for allowing me to make a submission to this inquiry.

My wife, [REDACTED], is a primary school teacher with 25 years experience. She loved her job and had a permanent position with the NSW Department of Education (DOE).

When the vaccine mandates for teachers were announced in August 2021 she had many questions she directed to the DOE with regards to the safety, effectiveness and necessity of the Covid-19 vaccines. She was also asked to attest by way of an online submission form her Covid-19 vaccination status. She also had concerns with the privacy of her personal medical data in relation to providing this information. She also put these concerns to the DOE.

None of her concerns were directly addressed by the DOE during the period of time she was seeking answers to her legitimate questions. This is despite the requirement of the DOE to consult with their staff in relation to the gravity of their demands according to the Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act 2011).

We believe that the DOE is in breach of Section 48 of the WHS Act 2011 and were in fact negligent in their duty of care to their staff by forcing them to undertake a medical procedure to retain employment. Procedures such as this had never been a requirement of employment in the past.

In an email sent on 23rd December, 2021 she offered to go on leave without pay to help mitigate the situation but received no response by the DOE to her offer.

She subsequently lost her job due to 3 alleged misconducts in January 2022.

She is aware of many other teachers who did not attest their vaccine status that did NOT lose their jobs and in fact had their investigations placed on hold.

She is trying to understand why she was singled out to lose her job when others in exactly the same situation of not attesting their vaccination status did NOT lose their jobs and in fact had their 'investigations' paused and with the recent announcements by the DOE regarding dropping of the vaccine mandates are seemingly able to return to their jobs.

Despite the heavy handed approach by the DOE especially in a time of teacher shortages why the DOE would make such a drastic and an UNFAIR decision of sacking a committed teacher that had legitimate concerns about being forced to undertake a medical procedure to retain her job.

Yours faithfully,