

Submission
No 232

**INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 31 July 2022

Partially
Confidential

I am a teacher with NSW DET.

I was on approved sick leave for an extended period of time late last year up until 19th February

On 19th January I received an allegation from PES from the department, putting me under investigation for misconduct. This is despite me being on a period of approved sick leave.

On 18th January I contracted COVID and so became an exempted person from having a vaccine and subsequently acquired an exemption for a period of 6 months.

This exemption was approved by the Health and Well-being section of the Department of Education.

None of my emails to the PES directorate from that point we're answered. I asked when I was going to be able to return to work, and I had no reply.

My union representative wrote letters on my behalf, which at first received no reply, and finally was told that they would not reply to that union.

I then sent letters on my own behalf to PES stating as I have above that I was an exempted person and should have had no investigation.

I heard no reply and was unable to return to work despite my following all the Department guidelines for vaccinations.

This series of events caused me a great deal of stress and what followed was a depressive state and I have since been diagnosed with PTSD.

I have been forced to take LWOP and I have been unable to work.

While the Department has been floundering with a severe shortage, I have been sitting at home and able to work, despite having an approved Medical Exemption. I have been treated like a criminal by the Department - under investigation for misconduct as if I were a criminal.

To add salt to the wound, I have now received a letter 'directing' me to return to work and issued a 'remedial warning' when I in fact did absolutely nothing wrong. I should have been working when the department desperately needed teachers.

PES blatantly ignored department procedures and as a result directly contributed to the already dire teacher situation.

Files to verify above information available on request