

To whom it may concern,

I would like to explain to you my background with my previous employer and the events leading up to my dismissal from the Company due to not having the Covid vaccination.

I was living on the [REDACTED] and working as a Childcare Director for a company there for 8 years when I applied for a Director's position with Lady Gowrie Blackall in July 2021. Following my interview via zoom, I was immediately offered the position. Blackall is a city in the outback with 1500 people and finding quality staff is always a hard task, so they were rather elated to be able to recruit someone of my calibre, highly qualified and experienced.

My husband and I moved our whole life to Blackall, and I started my job on 18th August 2021, and everything was well and good up until the mandates were announced. My company requested a covid vaccination certificate or we would not be able to work. I had serious concerns about the vaccine since my sister in Brazil had a major reaction to her first dose, being bedridden for 3 days and with serious issues to her heart. My mother had a heart condition, and I was concerned for my own health. I clearly expressed that to my employer however they dismissed my concerns and said it was a government mandate and I had to take it up with the government. I requested a risk assessment, outlining why I would be more of a risk than my vaccinated colleagues, who could also catch and spread the virus. Again, I was told they didn't need to do one as it was a government directive, but as far as I know, the contract I signed is only between my employer and I and a 3rd party cannot interfere. Furthermore, in my line of work, we carry out risk assessments for everything, so to say a risk assessment for a deadly virus is not required seems completely illogical and absurd.

What I noticed since I was stood down on the 17th December 2021 is that the attitude towards me had changed. On a zoom call in January with the CEO and HR manager, I sensed some hostility and disapproval from the CEO. Whilst she had always been pleasant and friendly before, she was cold and rigid on this call and subsequent ones.

I was invited to a show cause meeting to explain why I didn't think I should be terminated on the 12th February 2022. On this meeting, I expressed that I did not wish to be terminated, that I'd been working in Childcare for 20 years and could count on one hand how many times I had sick leave, that I had serious concerns about the vaccination given my mum had a heart condition, my sister had a serious reaction to the vaccine and that I had read that one of the adverse reactions is myocarditis and pericarditis, heart conditions. I inquired about their rush to terminate me and explained that mandates are temporary and would be lifted and given how hard it is to have good staff in the outback that they kept me stood down without pay and once mandates were lifted (which happened 6 months after), then have me back.

The next day, I received an email saying that they listened to my concerns and given I expressed I did not wish to be terminated, I should sign an attached document which was [REDACTED] in which I would resign from my position and not talk about what happened. I declined to sign the document and on the 14th I received my termination letter.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The pain and suffering this whole process has caused me is something I cannot come to terms with. The day I was stood down felt like I had lost a dear member of my family. That's the only way I can describe it. I am still grieving it.

My job was my happy place, my passion, my everything and I dedicated 20 years of my life to give back to the children, treat them like my own, love, care for and protect them. I treated all my workplaces as my own, gave my very best, did a lot of unpaid hours to ensure they were the best they can be. Being told I could no longer enter the workplace was like being stabbed in the heart. It did a lot of damage to my emotional well-being. I thought I was a very strong person, but this really hit me so hard and so painfully.

On a financial level, once I was dismissed, we were forced to sell our house on the Sunshine Coast as we were not sure whether we were going to be able to continue paying the mortgage, so I was hit not only emotionally but also financially.

I would like to thank you for your time reading my story and allowing me to express why I believe I was discriminated against and how this has impacted me. Although I have been negatively affected by this whole process, I am on the road to healing and hope to be able to return to work with children one day as I never saw myself doing anything else. I never imagined that would be taken away from me and it has been extremely hard typing this account and having to relive it once again.