

To the Covid Response Enquiry Panel members

Thank you for the opportunity to express my personal experience to you in this forum.

First a brief background into our family's situation.

Both my wife and I were working in our roles as teachers. My work was in the Trade sector hers at a high school for disengaged youth. We both highly enjoyed our roles and felt we played an integral part in our respective schools success. With positive feedback from our employers we had both received promotions and pay rises. Not forgetting to mention the positive feedback we also received from our students themselves both directly and in many instances from their parent or guardian.

It came as a great shock and disappointment that we were forced to have to leave our much appreciated jobs due to the Covid Vaccination mandated cut-off dates. This was very distressing as we knew our employers felt they had no option but to enforce this position as directed by the government at the time.

Our personal family circumstances made this a very difficult time financially as we were now both out of work for half a year but there was no pause on our expenses during that time. With 6 dependents living at home and negotiating our way as a newly blended family, this was a very trying time on the coherence of the family unit. Some of the older children were torn as they didn't fully understand our position in terms of vaccine choice and it caused unnecessary division in the home.

We both were able to eventually find new places of employment still within teaching however we both were forced to accept a much lower pay rate than previous similar roles. Despite the lower pay rates we were very grateful to be re-employed and working again.

The ongoing damage caused is not outwardly evident to many but it affected us in our marriage as financial strain often does for couples. It has certainly affected us mentally and emotionally with high anxiety over the job security of the future and a very high distrust of government and the way the whole Covid Pandemic was handled.

We are aware that the damage some families were facing was more challenging than ours with close loved ones suffering with severe adverse reactions and worse, however I believe our personal suffering was a Human Rights issue for us due to our perceived non-compliance due to our unwillingness to receive the mandated vaccines which we feared were unproven in efficacy and unconfirmed with regards to their safety.

We felt like we were left and forgotten on a scrap heap and punished for asking the questions and receiving no reliable answers.

Our claim for you to consider is that our human rights were violated when they should always be protected and our position vilified in the form of a financial compensation.

Sincerely

