

My name is Scott Morrison, no not the former PM, however I have been employed as an Australian Public Servant since 2000. In my career I have worked with the Child Support Agency, Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS) Australia, Centrelink, Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), and have recently joined the National Disability Insurance Agency. During the Covid 19 pandemic, I was employed as a Service Officer with the AEC in the [REDACTED] regional town of [REDACTED].

The purpose of this submission is to share my experience in a hope that responses, implemented by organisations and all levels of government, to any future event/s of a similar nature consider an individual's right to choose the medical treatment they undertake. Furthermore, that individuals are not coerced into medical treatments under threat of punitive action against their income and/or employment. Especially when credible data, published by the federal and state government bodies (such as the Therapeutic Goods Administration, Australia Bureau of Statistics, Health Australia and NSW Health) includes potentially significant adverse reaction, including death, to mandated treatments.

The federal government strongly encouraged though never mandated vaccinations. However, it allowed federal government agencies, such as the Australian Electoral Commission, to implement mandatory vaccination policies under the guise of work, health and safety. I participated in the 'consultation' process, applied for an exemption under the interim policy that was adopted (which was declined), was ordered to take leave, and when I was allowed back to work, subject to stringent additional hygiene measures (well beyond the repeal of the interim policy), and after the pandemic was declared finished, I was subjected to a code of conduct investigation.

It was determined I had breached the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct and sanctioned by fine (2% of my annual salary). The AEC delegates blatantly dismissed that I have been influenced by the religious beliefs of my paternal grandparents (Jehovah's Witnesses) and made defamatory remarks regarding my submissions being irrelevant, illogical and inferred I was untrustworthy. They also showed ignored factual data and information published by the Australian and NSW governments that contradicted the hysterical frenzy created by mainstream media and specified the numerous severe medical risks associated with the various covid vaccinations available.

Upon appeal to the Merit Protection Commissioner (MPC), my sanction was reduced to 1% of my annual salary. However due to significant delays with the AEC making the sanction decision, the MPC refused to review the initial breach determination. When I questioned by MPC delegate as to why any sanction remained in place, considering I had extensively demonstrated the significant financial hardship the sanction was causing my young family, they indicated I should feel lucky – that many others had lost their jobs. Considering the sustained mental anguish and financial stress I have incurred as a direct result of a knee-jerk, ill-informed, and contrived interim mandatory vaccination policy, there were many times I wished the AEC had terminated my employment.

I sought assistance from my local federal MP, [REDACTED], who escalated to the [REDACTED] Minister [REDACTED] Senator [REDACTED], who ultimately declined to intervene, as the AEC felt the matter had been satisfactory dealt with under established policies and procedures. He indicated I had the right to seek legal advice on the matter. Honestly, how can I afford to take the significant risk of a David and Goliath court battle – jeopardising my home, everything I have worked so diligently for, and the financial security of my family – when I have already demonstrated I am struggling to make ends meet.

Fortunately, I have been able to secure a fresh opportunity with the NDIA (an agency that did not introduce a mandatory vaccination policy). Though the emotional and fiscal trauma imposed on me could have been avoided if the federal government had implemented measures to prevent not only federal agencies but a myriad of other employers (many of which did not considered within the definition of Tier 1 or 2 Work employers published by the Fair Work Ombudsman). I also question how it is reasonable for an employer to direct an employee, under an interim WH&S policy, to take a vaccine that the TGA acknowledges has killed 14 Australians and caused significant adverse reactions in almost 140,000 others. As adverse reaction reporting was not mandatory, this data is likely to be understated.

Undoubtedly, the covid-19 pandemic was a testing experience for everyone and I completely respect any person who freely chose to be vaccinated for their own health or even under a misguided belief they were protecting others. However, the federal government's failure to manage the draconian policies implemented by businesses, organisations and government agencies caused untold hardship and distress on millions of Australian workers, including myself. My sanction is not just and is unfair, I would like it remitted. The federal government needs to ensure the civil liberty of Australians and the rights of employees are protected so such travesties are not repeated.