**Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination against Older Australians and Australians with Disability**

# Submission No 91

**Name** Withheld

**Submission made by**

[x]  Australian with disability looking for work

[x]  Australian with disability who would like to work

# Submission regarding Australians with Disability

### **Your experience**

**Have you (or the person you are submitting on behalf of) experienced employment discrimination?**

[x]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Did you take any action in relation to the employment discrimination you experienced?**

[x]  Yes

[ ]  No

**Please tell us more, for example, what action you took and how effective you felt it was; or why you chose not to take any action.**

I applied for a job with **[state government department]** and was asked to withdraw my application because of my physical disability even though the job was advertised as being suitable for people with disabilities to apply. I wrote to my Local Member of Government and the **[redacted–relevant state]** Minister and there was an apology made and an enquiry into what happened. I then received a couple other job offers from [**state government department]**– which unfortunately were not suitable for other reasons.

**Did your experience of employment discrimination impact on your participation in the workforce? (For example, did you have to stop work, change jobs or take sick leave?)**

[ ] Yes

[x] No

**Please tell us more**

### **Barriers**

**Do you think older Australians/Australians with disability face barriers when they look for work or are in a job?**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**If yes, or not sure, what do you think these barriers might be?**

There are often minor parts of a job that the person with a disability cannot do and employers are often unwilling/unable to change the job to make it manageable.

**Does employment discrimination have an impact on gaining and keeping employment for older Australians/Australians with disability?**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Are there any practices, attitudes or laws which discourage or prevent equal participation in employment of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Please tell us more**

Attitudes – for example, with **[state government department]**, they were unwilling to consider my application because they had a bad experience in the past. They should have made a decision on the merits of each applicant, not on whether or not they had a disability.

**What are the incentives and disincentives for older Australians/Australians with disability to work?**

**Incentives:**

Money to spend – rent, bills, pleasure

Self esteem

Valued member of society

Contact with other members of the community

Opportunity to learn new skills

**Disincentives:**

**(For someone with a physical disability)**

Difficulty using public transport

Difficulty parking

Difficulty accessing workplaces

Lack of accessible amenities

### **Good practice**

**Are there examples of good practice and workplace policies in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability?**

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[x] Not sure

**Please tell us of examples of good practice in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability in work that you are aware of.**

### **Solutions**

**What action should be taken to address employment discrimination against older Australians/Australians with disability?**

Advertise financial incentives given for employing people with a disability or older people.

Educate employers about the financial incentives available.

Educate employers about the benefits of employing older people/people with a disability – loyal, want long term employment, reliable, sense of contribution to society for both parties. Harder for older people/people with a disability to find a job, so they are more likely to stay long term once they find one.

**What should be done to enhance workforce participation of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

A more accepting/favourable environment in which to apply for work and to work.

**What outcomes or recommendations would you like to see from this National Inquiry?**

For employers to purely judge applicants on their merits rather than making an initial decision based on whether they are a person with a disability or an older person.