

My name is Heather Kell. I'm a native Oregonian, born at St. Vincent's hospital, graduated from Portland State University in 2000 with a Bachelor's degree in Finance. I have 20 years of corporate accounting & finance experience. I have worked for a variety of companies ranging from small Portland startups, to large, multinational corporations.

In 2012, I was in a major motor vehicle accident where I sustained injuries leaving me with chronic pain to this day. I went through months of rehab with little relief. It wasn't until I started using medical marijuana that I was able to find relief and finally get my life back. I am an avid runner who fell in love with the sport in college. I grew up hiking throughout the many state parks, forests, and wilderness areas. I biked all over Beaverton when I was a kid. My point is, I have always enjoyed an active lifestyle. Medical marijuana allows me to pursue the activities I rely on for stress relief and good physical fitness while managing my pain and makes me a healthier person and employee in the long run.

It is my desire to find long term gainful employment in Oregon that brings me here today. In December 2016, I was working with a recruiting agency as part of my search for corporate accounting and finance jobs. A headhunter contacted me about a contract position with a manufacturing firm. I had a successful phone interview. The headhunter asked me if I would be willing to submit to a background check and pre-employment drug screen. I told her I objected to the drug screen due to a medical condition which prescribed treatment might be an issue. Even though it is legal, I always feel so awkward discussing my personal, medical condition in an employment setting. She assured me it would not be a problem, and then asked if I could obtain a doctor's note. I agreed to get a doctor's note feeling very confused as to why my legitimate Oregon medical marijuana patient card was insufficient.

The next day, I received an email with instructions for the pre-employment drug screen. I forwarded the email to the headhunter asking for clarification of what medical information I needed from my doctor to be considered for the position. After once again receiving her assurance, I proceeded to the pre-employment drug screen facility and submitted a urine sample for testing. After a delay, I received the dreaded call from the headhunter stating the obvious, I had not cleared the drug screen. She went on to say I would not be placed on the contract assignment and the recruiting agency would no longer consider me for future placement. How is it possible my authorized medical marijuana usage to treat chronic pain could get in the way of future employment? This was not the intent of our medical marijuana laws.

I had no idea that submitting a urine sample would preclude me from future employment through one of the nation's biggest recruiting companies. I'm very frustrated and stressed over the entire situation. Since 2012, I have worked for small to large, private and publicly traded companies. I have processed hundreds of thousands of dollars in payroll checks, and managed a \$56 million dollar operating budget. I have held positions of varying levels of responsibility while showing up to work on time with a positive attitude. I am ready, educated, experienced, and qualified for the work I seek.

I am only one of thousands of working Oregonians who medicate with cannabis. We should not be in fear of losing our jobs or being shut out of getting work because we use medical marijuana products.

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