

My name is Colleen Barker and I have been an employee of OED since 2009. I have always been honored to be a member of a team which provides such excellent service to Oregonians.

I began as a BES and then moved to adjudication and I am currently a lead worker in adjudication.

I am 64 years old with underlying health issues and my doctor wrote a note asking that I be allowed to work from home on March 30,2020. That request was denied and I sent an appeal to DAS.

Prior to the pandemic there were OED employees who regularly worked from home. One lead worker in adjudication would work from home when she was doing Rapid Response. Another adjudicator worked from home doing work on the lists that we get daily. Our supervisors worked from home at least once a week and tax and UIOPs people also worked from home 1-2 days a week using our same systems. Sometime in March a directive came from someone stating that no one could work from home. I have also worked from home as part of an experiment seven years ago and I was successful in doing my job from home.

I am a widow and the sole support for my home. My choices are to return to work against my doctor's advice or stay home and be safe.

Someone in my work group who sits close to me tested positive for Covid. She reported this to management and nothing happened. There was no deep cleaning or change in how business is being conducted. That doesn't make me feel safe!

I don't know who has made the decisions but they have not been made in the interest of employees or the unemployed. I would love to be working from home right now and I have even sent ideas to my supervisor and HR about how I could do that but I have been denied. I was scheduled to work 2pm to 10:30pm even though our mainframe goes down at 7 pm so no information could be provided to claimants after that time and talking to claimants was irresponsible at best because we didn't have their records so for 3-1/2 hours it was work that didn't answer the claimants' questions.

I have heard they have hired new people but my 11years of experience would help prevent future errors that new people might miss.

Thank you for your time. I am speaking as a citizen and an Oregonian and my opinions are mine alone.

Colleen Barker