

My name is Lisa Bean, I am an Adjudicator in the Beaverton office. I have been with the agency for 18 years, all in unemployment in multiple roles, office specialist, claims, adjudicator, lead worker, PSR/Claims/Adjudication trainer in rotations as an Operations Policy Analyst 2, including working in "Special Ops" which was a small, go-to team that meticulously looked over multiple claims to determine how claimants were erroneously paid on extensions and issued necessary decisions.

Although I am able to work I currently am not and have not since Fri, 5/8/20. OED will not allow me to telework; I have been denied teleworking by DAS twice.

Shortly before COVID19 really started impacting Oregon I was informed of some pregnancy complications (but I was still able to work), that was on 3/3/20. Also around that time one of our childcare providers happened to be vacationing in Hawaii and upon their return had to quarantine. All of our childcare is provided by grandparents & step grandparents (all older in age in high risk categories including medical conditions). Arrangements were made with the other grandparents to cover their vacation and then extended due to their quarantine.

As soon as the governor issued an executive order which directed employers to allow employees to telecommute if possible (which multiple employees have prior to COVID & during), I requested to and eventually was denied.

I have to say this is stressful, exhausting, and overwhelming to rehash all of this and why I have procrastinated until 11:50 PM on Mon, 5/25 night when everyone is asleep and the house is quiet to write this but as much as I'd rather throw my hands up in defeat, I know it is the right thing to do.

I requested to telecommute to keep myself and the baby growing inside me safe. Pregnancy is already stressful but in addition to having complications and trying to mentally keep it together over that, it made the most sense to work from home to not have to stress about being in an environment where I could be exposed to COVID19 and then expose my husband, toddler, all the grandparents who watch him and anyone who they come in contact with (one of which whose wife works at a senior facility that also happens to house their 90 & 96 year old parents). The inability to telecommute when it is possible has left me torn at what the right decision is, breaking down and crying at work, after work, before going into my home (pregnancy probably didn't help, I am not a big crier). Do I continue to work when so many people have filed for unemployment to get as many people paid as quick as possible at the risk of myself and family? Especially when we have the ability to telecommute. I felt forced to take leave when I wanted to work (along with multiple coworkers that I have personally talked to) despite voicing concerns to management, HR, DAS, and the governor that we want to work just safely.

On 4/6, after being informed of a second employee who sat near me that was potentially exposed to COVID19 (a coworker who was at work telling me in person that their adult child that they hadn't seen for around 10 days had tested positive for COVID19), I don't

know if I got up the courage, was on the verge of a breakdown and had to get it out or what but I composed and sent an email to HR and submitted info electronically through the governor's website under both COVID19 and the Employment Department regarding my concerns about COVID19 and not allowing as many staff as possible to work from home and the potential effect it could have on Oregonians if one of us contracted it there, at one of only two unemployment contact centers.

In addition I followed up with my doctor and what to do - I wasn't sure if I had COVID19 symptoms, I had shortness of breath and a little cough but I'm pregnant and have seasonal allergies, so which is causing that? But after a video appointment and breaking down and explaining my position, the essential work I do especially right now, not being allowed to work from home and the potential domino effect it could have on our office and the public, she put in an order to test me for COVID19 and at that point I was to be off until I got my negative results which could take 24 - 48 hrs. It was a bit of a relief to be heard and know if I had it and was potentially exposing anyone else.

On 4/7 after seeing I had missed a third call from my doctor and a message to call asap, I became worried again. On 4/7 my doctor informed me I had tested positive for COVID19 and there was no chance at a false positive as she stated my specificity was 100, she gave me time to process what she said, I again broke down, she apologized and said she had not had to inform anyone of that and didn't think she would have to inform me either yet here we were. She said she would contact other departments and be in contact as she wasn't sure on how to handle being I was pregnant and had complications. She said there wasn't much info but didn't believe COVID19 could be transmitted through the placenta, that was not much reassurance.

So, in addition to being off since 5/8, I was off from 4/6 - 4/22. I did return to work after, without another test. We were instructed by the Multnomah County Health Department that my husband and son were to quarantine an additional 2 weeks after the end of my 2 week quarantine, so he was home to watch our son. Following their quarantine, all grandparents were not comfortable watching our son after I contracted COVID19 when I was only going to and from work and as of that point I had to stay home due to lack of childcare if I had to continue to report in office to work.

I am thankful that for the most part despite my positive test I had mild to no symptoms, however, until I give birth to my first daughter and I can hold her, see her, and hear her I am terrified of how COVID19 could affect her. Let's be real, no one really knows. I have no doubt I contracted it at work and I am beyond frustrated that this could've been prevented by allowing employees to telework.

In addition another way this will impact my family, is that by not being allowed to work from home I am on FMLA/OFLA so God willing when my daughter gets here that will cut into my time I could be bonding and recovering with her (with my last child, I worked up until my water broke at work where I was doing BTQ/federal reviews in Salem and had him at Salem Hospital, I live in N Portland).

Prior to my positive test, two coworkers that sat near me had been out; one who is high

risk feared contracting COVID19 and has and is still out since end of March - this is another experienced staff member that hasn't been there to help with the backlog of work. After I tested positive there were 5+ experienced employees that were instructed by their doctors to quarantine. Once I returned the office was pretty bare as people are scared they're going to contract it. Although there have been steps to try to comply with social distancing, how is that possible in a large office/call center type setting, we have low cubicle walls, we are on the phone - talking loudly, people are walking by each other breathing, talking and this can be spread with micro droplets drifting in the air. I had started wearing a mask at work on 4/6 but it was impossible to keep on the entire time when trying to talk and explain info to claimants.

The best way to keep everyone safe is to have as many people as possible work from home.

Please make teleworking a priority, value employees as we value the work we do for the public.

Thank you for your time.

Lisa MH Bean