

I just learned that I could give testimony and I am very pleased. I know I am not alone and I know that what has happened to the people of Oregon is disgusting and utterly wrong.

I spent much of 2019 unemployed due to being fired for health issues. I had just applied for federal protective leave and they fired me that day it was turned in. So in October of 2019, I accepted a position, without checking with Vocational rehabilitation first. I was promised no need to lift, flexible, and I would be teaching life skills. The employer not only lied about lifting, but this position was also from the start a nightmare. I was severely injured on several occasions, one occasion faulty equipment caused an extensive injury. In pain and unable to handle the daily exposure to MRSA without protective equipment, my Vocational Rehab job coach began working with me to get a different position, one which I would not be expected to put my health and safety at risk. I am a high risk for any medical issues such as MRSA due to liver failure.

My job coach and I found the perfect position for me in mid-December. I quit the other one and applied for partial unemployment for the two weeks around Christmas that I would be unable to do more than train for 10 hours a week. One the first week of January came, my hours ramped up to 30-35 a week and I stopped claiming. I never went back on the site, nor followed up with the Unemployment office. Since I never got anything in the mail, I figured at somepoint I would get a check.

Fast forward to end of March. I went to work one day and was told we were done effective immediately. I helped clean for two more days and that was it. I filed unemployment immediately and discovered that I was denied unemployment, and was penalized until I met a certain amount over my weekly benefits because I quit full time to take a part-time job. I NEVER RECEIVED ANYTHING IN THE MAIL OR VIA EMAIL.

I immediately faxed my last paycheck to Unemployment office as it stated I had to prove 5x my usual amount. I then began calling the office. Like most others, I spent 8 hours a day Monday-Friday trying to get a hold of the Unemployment Office. I would start as early as 6:30am and not hang up the phone until after 5pm each night. I would sit on the edge of my bed and cry when I was on hold finally able to get through, only to be hung up on 2-6 hours on hold. I literally would try up to 1200 times a day to get through. My phone does not have auto redial. MY WHOLE DAYS were spent trying to get someone to tell me that I would even be eligible for unemployment. With the denial on the claim, I was scared to death.

14 weeks. That is how long I was INCOMELESS. I didn't have anything but food stamps. No gas money, no car payment, no insurance for the car, no food for my dog, NOTHING! Even toilet paper was a commodity I couldn't afford to buy even if I could find it. Food boxes and food stamps were my only hope. I now have HIGH interest payments on my car from skipping payments, my student loans. Skipping them only put me further in the hole.

Then you add the stress, depression, fear, anxiety to my body and my already severe health issues compounded. I developed osteoarthritis in my dominant right hand in early April. I did a

video conference with my doctor who said we cant do anything but give you pain meds. I watched my hand deteriorate over the next two months, bit by bit. I can now only handle about 5 lbs with my right hand. My writing is no where near the same. I can't type without constant errors, because my right hand is unresponsive and misses letters. I also had a TIA, because of stress, in late April.

Have you ever been to an ER for something very serious and been told that normally we would give you an MRI and put you in the hospital...but because this isn't COVID serious... Literally a TIA and I was sent home and told to take aspirin.

June I was finally able to see my PCP and an arthritis specialist. My hand is permanently damaged. Stress has killed me. Systemic swelling, inflammation, caused by STRESS. I was STILL not paid at that time, but finally the \$1200 stimulus came. That was a light at the end of a tunnel, until it was gone...as quickly as it came.

Still unable to get through to the office, My VOC rehab counselor finally was able to go back to remote work and told me to try to file against the denial from December. I filled all the paperwork out, tried to talk to anyone at that office with no luck, and waited. I did get a letter from that office stating that I had a call. I was on the call, very happy to finally get something in the mail from somewhere. Only to have my hopes dashed. The timely filing was not met, so they would not reverse the decision. I told them that I never got Anything. I have never received a weekly piece of paper to even show a denial. At the same time my son, who shares my address, got a piece of paper every week.

I had NO communication from Unemployment. Just checked my account one day in between phone calls and boom, a check was deposited. I wasn't able to get a hold of anyone. Then one day out of the blue, I got through was finally on hold...only to play the hang up game again at 5pm.

So by mid-June I stopped trying to contact more than once or twice a day, because at that point I would always be on hold, most of the day only to be hung up on. I did finally get through. Staff member told me sorry and pretty much verified my eligibility but stated I would not get the waiting week. At that point my question was my claim ended...will it be renewed.

The answer was yes, but at a much lower amount per week, and by then the \$600 extra had ended. So here i am, still unable to do drop in childcare, thanks to Governor Browns dictatorship. I am looking for work with Vocational Rehabilitation support, but with my new limitation with lifting, fat chance I will find much of anything or anyone willing to hire me with a lifting limitation of 5lbs. I can never go back to typing on a computer. I can't use either of my degrees anymore, I can't work medical due to too high a risk for anything.

You try finding two or more appropriate jobs to apply to each week! Try even finding one a week! My job coach and I meet weekly, we go over about every possible job that I can do. We've discussed disability, but I have been denied 2 times now because I am only 48 yrs

old. So here I am, still unemployed, no chance in hell of drop-in childcare opening again any time soon, and not much else out there. I find myself at \$110 a week right now. That pays my car and insurance...leaving NOTHING else. How is ANYONE supposed to live on that?

I am effectively homeless, living with a friend who is okay right now with me cleaning and doing dishes as well as cooking and me. Yes its crude, no its not ideal, but what else can be expected? Time to slap the governor across the head, tell her to stop blaming others for HER SCREW UPS, and get help to the people who need it.

Stress KILLS PEOPLE. It is killing me. The loss of income, self sufficiency, and support is crippling myself and others. Buck up and deal with the mistakes made. **STOP SENDING MONEY THAT WAS MEANT FOR ALL OREGONIANS to BLACK ONLY BUSINESS and FAMILIES.** That is **WRONG!** Throughout this, I have had to watch local groups in Bend raise money for Illegal families to help them...all while watching my life piss down the drain, my whole savings, which was meant to help me buy a trailer or something to live in, so I would not be homeless ever again. What a **SLAP** in the face that was! Helping everyone but hard-working Oregonians who want nothing more than to live our lives.

Priorities need to shift. So many people are newly homeless because of this callous, ridiculous, and utterly illegal mandate that our Governor chose to make without any thought of infrastructure, the ability of Oregonians to survive.

Time to **HELP** all of us who are STILL unable to work, who lost everything, who need help desperately. You OWE us communication and financial help.

Elizabeth Batterson
emartin1971@outlook.com
541-977-2086

I would LOVE to testify in person. SO that people can see what has happened to real live Oregonians due to the haphazard decisions that were made.