**Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review**

Submissions from women and men who have experienced discrimination at work while pregnant, or while on or on return to work after taking parental leave

**Submission Number 237**

**Part C Submission Response**

Challenges during pregnancy:

The company was going through a "restructure" and were making people redundant. Three people from my team were made redundant, a father who came back from 12 months parental leave, a female part- time worker with 2 children and myself, part time and pregnant. We all thought this was a weird choice given the criteria was going to be based on underperformance for redundancy and out of 50 employees, all three of us sat in the top 10 of high performers, but people who were full time and under performing kept their jobs

Prior to this I was being bullied by my line manager for taking a 1 hour unpaid lunch break, apparently it was seen as too long, and he only wanted me to have a 45 min lunch break, I was being performance managed for no reason except because they wanted to, and they asked me and another part-time worker (the lady who was also made redundant with me) to job share, so that we would be sharing a target, work load and any pay rise that would eventuate from it.

Also, while I was made redundant, I applied for maternity leave as the redundancy and bullying was stressing me out, and my line manager was called into a meeting with his manager about this. Later that day I was called into a meeting with my line manager and was questioned over why I had applied, when I gave my reasons, my line manager was in my face about how that’s not a legitimate reason and that I need to withdraw my application right away, and that there was no point of this due to being made redundant.

We were told about our redundancies well in advance (approx 2 months), I was 5 months pregnant, I applied for a role external to my current employer, and was successful for an interview. Interview went very well, but due to my profession being a small community, it got back to the prospective employer that I was pregnant, and then this company came back with an employment offer of half what they advertised. To say I was disappointed is an understatement. This went through a recruitment agency and even they were shocked and disgusted. My recruiter knew I was pregnant but the prospective employer did not.

No one gave me any information about my rights and entitlements while pregnant. With the first company if we wanted to get information we had to search through lengthy online documents that were not organised in an easy manner which you could only access while at work and on your own time. I applied to Fair work Australia to have this heard, and due to my work place agreement I was not entitled to receive any maternity leave payments due to wording in the collective agreement. It made a stressful situation even worse.

It felt like there was nothing I could do and that nobody was interested in my complaints, it felt like this was part of everyday life, you get pregnant, and all of a sudden you are no longer qualified for jobs you were previously qualified to do. You can't argue or discuss with anyone as the only feedback you get about job interviews are "there was someone more suited to the role. Nothing is transparent. WhenI questioned what criteria was used to choose people to make redundant I was told it was based on performance and "other" key areas, which were never listed. When I questioned my managers about my performance, they looked at me blankly and said that’s all we can tell you. They were specific in telling me that there was no recourse I could take to have their decision reviewed. I had to accept their decision. I was not part of the union, so they were unable to help me.