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14/10/13

Legal Section
Australian Human Rights Commission
G.P.O. Box 5218
Sydney NSW 2001

Reference BSWAT Employment

Response Team Circular Letter (No Date)

My son Robert Pearce is currently working as an employee of the House With No Steps Belrose and has worked at the Work Shop Packing Unit for over 30 years.

This has provided meaningful employment which has assisted his ability to apply certain skills and be \*occupied during the day (\*MOST IMPORTANT).

Robert qualifies for the Disability Pension, however his Wages Earnings do result in a “lower pension” amount paid by the government.

His employer has to tender for packing contracts from private sector in order to maintain an adequate work load for employees.

Any “Add on Cost” as a result of higher employee wages will have an adverse effect on their tender process.

The employer is currently struggling to secure enough work to occupy the employees which is due to decline in private sector sales + consequent flow on demand.

They have recently closed one packing unit down and several employees lost their employment.

The equation is fairly simple – disability employees are entitled to:

* The full pension amount of not employed
* External earnings such as wages reduce that entitlement from the government.

It is very doubtful employees such as those supporting Disability Employees can afford to maintain a viable workforce.

It would necessitate the government subsidising employees on the various contract tenders.

Many thousands of people such as my son who is aged 52 years will become unemployed and find it extremely difficult to secure alternative employment. What assistance will be forthcoming to enable such people to obtain ongoing employment? There is also the uncertainty of maintain a private sector position and losing the benefits associated with the pension.

I believe the people with a disability should make the decision:

* Maintain the “status quo” on current wage rate;

OR

* Seek alternative higher paid employment if the employer can’t afford to pay the higher scale.

Yours sincerely,

John Pearce
Parent + Carer