Participant Information Statement and Consent Form
Interviews

HREC Project Number:	115507	
Full Name of Project:	No Jab, No Job: the COVID-19 vaccine mandate legacy	
Principal Researcher:	Dr Jessica Kaufman	
Version Number:	3.0	**Version Date:** 12 February 2025

We would like to invite you to take part in an interview for the *No Jab, No Job* study. Thank you for considering participating in the study, and for taking the time to read this Participant Information Statement.

What is an Information Statement?
These pages tell you about the research study. They explain to you clearly and openly all the steps of the study. The information is to help you decide whether or not you would like to take part in the research. Please read this Information Statement carefully, and you may keep it for your records.

Before you decide if you would like to take part or not, you can ask us any questions you have about the project. You may want to talk about the project with your family and friends.

Important things you need to know:

- It is your choice whether or not you take part in the research. You do not have to agree if you do not want to.
- If you decide that you do not want to take part, it will not affect your relationship with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), nor any other organisations involved in the study.

1. What is the research project about?

In 2021, Australian states and territory governments mandated 'full' COVID-19 vaccination for certain frontline workers to be able to return to the workplace. Faced with the ultimatum of "jab" or "job", some individuals chose to resign, were let go, or suspended without pay from their position rather than be vaccinated.

The impacts of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate on frontline workers who left or lost their jobs were direct and significant and are likely to continue to affect people today.

The study aims to:

- Give voice to the personal experiences of workers who faced job loss due to the vaccine mandate
- Explore how and why they made the decision not to take the vaccine.
- Describe the short-term and long-term impacts of the vaccine mandate on their lives.
- Make recommendations to government for future policy decisions.

2. Why am I being asked to take part?

We are inviting you to take part in this study because:

- You were a frontline worker in 2021 or 2022 in Australia, *and*
- Your employment was conditional on being "fully vaccinated" against COVID-19, *and*
- You were not vaccinated against COVID-19, *and*
- You left your job, were let go, or suspended without pay because you were not vaccinated, *and*
- You are 18 years of age or older, *and*
- You can speak English.

3. What does participating involve?

If you give consent, we will ask you to take part in an interview with one of the researchers via Zoom, Microsoft Teams (camera is optional) or telephone – whichever you prefer. The interview will take approximately 1 hour. We will ask you to share your story about your vaccine decision and the impacts it has had on your life, from the time of the decision through to today. We also want to hear any ideas you have about how governments could handle things differently in a future public health emergency.

4. How can I become a participant?

If you would like to take part in the research project, please follow these steps:

1) Complete the online registration form: https://redcap.link/NoJabNoJob.
2) If you meet the criteria to participate, someone from our team will get in touch with you to discuss the project and answer any questions you have. They will send you a link to an online consent form.
3) Please read the information very carefully before signing the online form. By signing the online consent form, you are telling us that you:
    - understand what you have read.
    - had a chance to ask questions and received satisfactory answers.
    - consent to take part in the study.

4) We will schedule a suitable time for you to participate, and email to you a calendar invitation with a link if we're meeting online. We will also send you a copy of the consent form to keep.

5. How will the interview be recorded?

Online interviews will be recorded using the software's recording function, and telephone interviews will be recorded with a digital recorder with encryption. The audio recordings will be stored securely on the MCRI network and databases. The audio recordings will be transcribed and the transcripts will not record identifying information, such as names. We will ask you if you would like to review the transcript of your interview.

6. What will be done to make sure our information is confidential?

In this study, we will collect your name and contact details only for consent and interview scheduling purposes. The information you share with us in the interview will be deidentified, meaning that we will remove your name and other identifying details. All your personal data will be stored securely in password-protected files on the MCRI network and databases. Any information we collect that can identify you will be treated as confidential and will be used only in this project. We can pass on the information only with your permission, except as required by law.

Authorised representatives from the following organizations may review your non-identifiable research data for the purpose of monitoring or managing the conduct of this study:

- The research team involved with this project.
- The Royal Children's Hospital Human Research Ethics Committee.

These groups may need to inspect and/or copy our research records for data analysis. They may also want to check that study procedures are followed correctly. We will keep your information at least 7 years. After this period, we will destroy your information.

Twelve months following completion of this study, we might share the de-identified data from this study with other researchers to conduct further analyses if they request it. Any other researcher using this study data will be unable to identify you. The data analysis will need to be approved by a research ethics committee before it is shared.

At the end of the research project, we may present the results at conferences. We may also publish the results in medical journals. We will do this in a way that protects the privacy of every participant. Aggregated de-identified participant data may be made available upon formal request to future ethically approved research projects.

7. What are the possible risks, side effects, discomforts and/or inconveniences?

This study involves discussing your experiences related to job loss and other impacts of the COVID-19 vaccine mandates. We understand that these topics may be sensitive and potentially distressing for some participants. If you think that discussing this topic might be too upsetting, please consider whether participating is right for you. Your well-being is our top priority. To reduce any potential risks, the following measures will be in place:

- Experienced researchers: The interviews will be conducted by trained researchers who are experienced in handling sensitive topics and providing a supportive environment for participants.
- Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You can skip any questions that make you uncomfortable or stop the interview at any time without consequence.
- Counselling resources: You might experience distress during or after the interview. We recommend that you speak with your trusted primary healthcare provider (e.g., your GP). You can also contact any of these national services:
    - Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36 or online chat https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/talk-to-a-counsellor/chat
    - 13 YARN: 13 92 76 to talk with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter
    - Lifeline: 13 11 14
    - National Immunisation Information Line: 1800 671 811

  Your interview confirmation email will also list these services, and the interviewer will remind you of these resources at the end of the interview.
- Breaks and pauses: During the interview, you will be encouraged to take breaks or pause the discussion if you feel overwhelmed or need a moment to collect your thoughts.

While there may be no direct benefits to you as a participant, your contribution to this study will help advance our understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 vaccine mandates on frontline workers. Your voice and experiences will be valued and may help shape policies that affect frontline workers in the future.

8. Who is running the project?

This project is led by Dr Jessica Kaufman who is a senior research fellow at MCRI. She leads the Vaccine Social Science team, which explores how people think and feel about vaccines and vaccination policies.

9. Who is funding this research project?

This research project is being funded by the Australian Government through a Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) grant.

10. Do I need to take part in this research project?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not want to.

11. Can I withdraw from the project?

If you give your consent and later change your mind, that's ok. You can stop taking part in the interview at any time, or afterwards up until the interview transcript is finalised. We will ask if you would like to review the transcript of your interview. The transcript will be considered finalised if you don't respond, decline to review, or agree to review and approve the transcript.

If you decide to stop participating in the study, we would like to ask you for your general reason for doing so, however, you do not have to share this information if you do not want to. If you leave the project, we will use any information already collected unless you tell us not to. If the information already collected has been deidentified, we will not be able to remove this information from our study.

12. Will I be reimbursed for my time or expenses?
You will receive a digital $50 gift card for participating in the interview.

13. Will I be informed of the results when the research project is finished?
At the end of the project, we will send a summary of the study findings to your email address. We will also share a summary of the study findings on the study website. The summary will be about the whole group of participants who took part in the project. We will not send you individual results.

14. Who should I contact for more information?
If you have any questions about the project, you can contact Dr Sophia Vasiliadis, who is the Senior Research Officer coordinating the study on (03) 9936 6035 or email sophia.vasiliadis@mcri.edu.au.

Approval to conduct this research has been provided by **RCH Research Ethics & Governance** in accordance with its ethics review and approval procedures [**HREC 115507**]. Any person considering participation in this research project, or agreeing to participate, may raise any questions or issues with the researchers at any time. You can contact the Director of Research Ethics & Governance at The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne if you:

- have any concerns or complaints about the project
- are worried about your rights as a research participant
- would like to speak to someone independent of the project.

The Director can be contacted by telephone on (03) 9345 5044.