

MEDIA RELEASE

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Punk Jobs ordered to refund \$1150 to unhappy job seeker

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) has ordered Punk Jobs to repay \$1150 to a dissatisfied customer who alleged he was misled and that Punk Jobs failed to deliver promised services. Mr Madhab Giri also argued that Punk Jobs acted unconscionably in its dealings with him in relation to obtaining him an unpaid job placement.

Catriona Lowe, co-CEO of the Consumer Action Law Centre which assisted in the matter, said the case alleged Punk Jobs engaged in misleading and deceptive behaviour by implying that Mr Giri would be given a paid job at the end of his job placement.

'The complaint to VCAT also alleged that Punk Jobs acted unconscionably in getting someone from a non-English speaking culture and with limited experience of Australia's employment market to enter into a contract under which they are required to pay \$2000 for an unpaid work placement,' said Ms Lowe.

Mr Giri's application to VCAT alleged:

- that services provided by Punk Jobs were not provided with due care and skill;
- that the Punk Jobs contract contained unfair terms; and
- that the contract contained ambiguous and unclear language.

Ms Lowe said that Punk Jobs didn't appear at the hearing, but after examining Mr Giri's evidence VCAT ordered that the contract be rescinded and a significant refund was due.

'This shows what can be achieved when consumers stand up for themselves', said Ms Lowe. 'Mr Giri came from a non-English speaking background and had a limited experience of Australia's workplace culture which made him susceptible to unfair business practices. But he had the good sense to seek advice when something didn't feel right'.

'We're pleased that Mr Giri contacted our service and that we were able to help him obtain this favourable order from VCAT. I'd encourage others Victorian consumers who feel they've been treated unfairly or haven't got what they paid for from a goods or services provider to call our free legal service and seek advice.

'We offer legal advice to Victorian consumers but, beyond helping individuals, consumers' calls also help us identify systemic problems which we can then bring to the attention of lawmakers and regulators,' said Ms Lowe.

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