

# COVID-19 MATTERS

## SUMMARY REPORT | November 2021



Independent  
Review Office

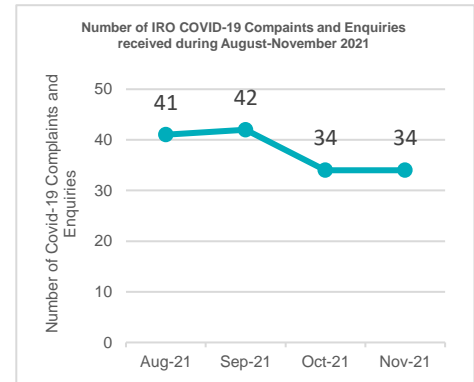
### COVID-19 Complaints and Enquiries received

Matter Type	October 2021	November 2021	1 March 2020 – 30 November 2021
Complaints	4	12	205
Enquiries	30	22	272
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>477</b>

### COVID-19 ILARS Funding Applications received

	November 2021	1 March 2020 - 30 November 2021
Applications for funding - ILARS	<b>46</b>	<b>165</b>

### Trend in COVID-19 Complaints and Enquiries



### COVID-19 Issues, Complaints and Enquiries

COVID-19 Issues Complaints and Enquiries	November 2021	1 March 2020 – 30 November 2021	% COVID-19 matters to date
Issues attending medical treatment/appointment	3	171	36%
Seeking general claims information	6	125	26%
Concerns about suitable duties	3	85	18%
Claiming compensation while in isolation or contracting COVID	3	48	10%
Related to COVID vaccines	19	48	10%

### Case Studies

#### Application for funding – Psychiatric injury related to vaccine mandate exemption

An Approved Lawyer sought a grant of funding for a worker who claimed to have suffered a psychological injury as a result of being put off work because they were not vaccinated. The worker's doctor completed a medical contraindication form seeking an exemption from the vaccine mandate imposed by a Public Health Order, but the employer refused to accept that it satisfied the relevant criteria for an exemption. The insurer issued a notice stating it was reasonably excused from commencing weekly payments on the basis it required additional information, as the evidence available suggested the injury was not work-related. The IRO granted funding for the Approved Lawyer to conduct preliminary inquiries and to provide legal advice.

#### Application for funding – injury while working from home

An Approved Lawyer sought a grant of funding for a worker who claimed to have suffered injuries to her left and right upper extremities and cervical spine as the result of the nature and conditions of their employment. The worker stated they had been working from home from March 2020 pursuant to restrictions imposed as a result of COVID-19, with an increased workload as a result of the pandemic. It was alleged the employer failed to conduct any risk assessments or home work station ergonomic assessments. The insurer had denied liability on the basis any ongoing problems were unrelated to the worker's employment. The IRO granted funding for the Approved Lawyer to provide legal advice and conduct inquiries including obtaining medical evidence to support the claim.

#### Application for funding – disease injury; COVID-19 contracted in workplace

An Approved Lawyer sought a grant of funding on behalf of a worker who claimed to have contracted COVID-19 at work. The employer had allegedly circulated a notice indicating that several workers had contracted COVID-19 in the workplace and directed various workers, including the claimant, to self-isolate. The worker was subsequently diagnosed with COVID-19 and hospitalised, including several weeks in ICU. A claim had been made and the insurer's decision with respect to liability was pending. The IRO granted funding for the Approved Lawyer to conduct preliminary inquiries and to provide legal advice.