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PRESS RELEASE

Tribunal Award for man denied opportunity to apply for job because of age

An Antrim man who was told that, at 63, he was too old to apply for a post as a store person/van driver, has been awarded £3,000 by an Industrial Tribunal on grounds of age discrimination.

In February 2018 Patrick Matier had called at the premises of Spring and Airbrake Ireland Limited at Nutts Corner after learning of a vacancy from the Social Security Office in Antrim. His evidence, which the Tribunal has accepted, is that when he was giving his details to a man at the firm's premises, he was asked to state his age. When he replied that he was 63 he was told "I was looking for a younger person who I could train and move upstairs". When Mr. Matier asked if there was any point in continuing the conversation he was told "No, not really".

"I had been keen to get this job," Patrick Matier said, "and to be told I was too old to even apply for it really shook me. I had been off work for a while and I was trying to get back in to work. It was disheartening and it made me angry that my application could be dismissed in this way just because of my age."

In its finding, the Tribunal acknowledged that the incident "had the effect of significantly discouraging the claimant. This had been caused entirely by the behaviour of the respondent and this behaviour was motivated by age discrimination."

"This case is an important reminder to all employers not to make generalised assumptions about people on grounds, such as age, which are protected by anti-discrimination law," Mary Kitson, Senior Legal officer at the Equality Commission said. "It is unlawful under the Employment Equality Age Regulations of 2006 for any employer to discriminate on grounds of age in the arrangements they make when offering employment."

"The Tribunal, in its finding, said, "he was, in effect, given no opportunity on the grounds of his age." That goes to heart of the case and it quite rightly caused Mr. Matier major disappointment at a time when he was attempting to re-enter the workplace in very trying circumstances," Ms. Kitson said. "No employer should be making assumptions about a person's ability, or suitability for training and promotion, because of their age."

“The Equality Commission produces detailed guidance and provides advice and training for employers on how to avoid age discrimination.”

- [Link to Industrial Tribunal Decision: Patrick Matier -v- Spring & Airbrake Ireland Ltd](#)