

age for the lawyer or doctor whose general health is adequate to the demands of his practice. Chronological age may have "side effects", as when long experience in a declining occupation plus lack of recent training combine to impair the job prospects of an individual who becomes unemployed at the age of 40 or 45.

In this report, the term "older worker" refers to the age group of 45 and over, and the term "aged" is applied to individuals aged 65 and over. However, in its operations the State Employment Service recognizes the broad range of age-connected problems which affect employment and defines an older worker as "a person who is encountering, or may be expected to encounter, difficulty in getting or keeping a job principally because of his age." (California State Employment Service Operations Manual, Section 5302.) In the placement policy of the Employment Service, it is possible for a person under age 45 to receive special older worker services.

B. EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS OF OLDER WORKERS

1. The Problem Can Start Early and Last Long

The competition for jobs in a complex and rapidly changing labor market may be grueling, even for a man in his 30's. A man ten years older may find himself with handicaps related to age, even though his physical and mental capacities may be at their peak. He may have had less formal and less recent education than the younger man, and his job training may be outdated in terms of current job requirements. He may be in a declining occupation or industry which formerly offered good prospects for a lifelong career. The locomotive engineer, the blacksmith, and the elevator operator are well-known examples of occupations fast disappearing from the scene. While these occupations may involve relatively few people, technological changes in production processes affect thousands of individuals with limited skills, who may be thrown into a labor market where their skills are no longer in demand.

The employed older worker has some advantage in keeping his job, because of experience, seniority, and dependability. When he becomes unemployed, he is apt to remain out of work longer than a young person and he may find it much harder to get another job. Even if he has skills needed in the labor market, the age barrier of prejudice may be raised against him. He may be stamped as "too old" at age 40 or 60, regardless of his real capacity to perform on the job.

The costs of pension plans and insurance are often cited as reasons for refusing to hire workers in the older age brackets, even though the actual costs may not be fully understood. Compulsory retirement ages written into some pension plans