

At approximately 10am on Monday 16th, November 2020, I attended at Costco Winterburn location to make a purchase as a paid-up member. I was concerned as I had heard that this location was discriminating in a way that would prevent me from shopping at the location. I have already been aggressively refused service due to my disability recently by Indigo chapters in West Edmonton Mall. It left me concerned that this was becoming a challenge that would soon have me without any place to shop. As I have been shopping in Costco without any challenges since the pandemic started, I never expected to be treated so aggressively and so poorly. As nothing has changed in the Provincial Orders or City Bylaw as regards face coverings and exemptions, I was confused as to what was really happening. I hoped this was just some misunderstanding that would be resolved when I got to the store.

As a retired UK Police officer (injured on Duty) I was concerned about this interaction being misrepresented in the current climate so made a request for someone to record the interaction. As such, the whole incident was recorded and available for the investigation and complaint ([link below](#)).

Upon arriving at the store, I collected the normal Costco electric cart. Although I can walk short distances with the aid of a cane, Costco is a massive store. I was intending on picking up some toilet roll, looking around for some Christmas gifts and other items such as bacon. I was also going to make enquiries as to an eye exam (I am overdue one due to the pandemic). As we are currently in a short restriction in place for certain businesses/activities, I worried that soon we may be locked down again. Then I would lose access to critical services I pay for as a Costco Member.

I was truly horrified at what happened next. A manager (Ken) was at the door. This was unusual in and of itself. He jumped in front of my electric cart to the point I almost ran him over. He got very close and refused me access, demanding I put on a mask. I told him I couldn't wear a mask. Suddenly I realised this was not a misunderstanding. Costco's policy and treatment of the disabled had truly changed overnight.

I presented my exemption letter (even though I am not required to) but he ignored it. He then called a second manager (Dave) over. I sat being humiliated and bullied by two managers as I had to try to verbally defend my rights as a disabled person. As a retired police officer with a very strong moral compass, my stand was not only for myself but to advocate for those unable to do so. I had heard prior to my visit to Costco that the store may be forcing plastic face shields on people as an alternate to face masks which again was hard to believe. This is not something that relates to safety; AHS and The City of Edmonton state clearly that face shields are not a replacement for a mask - in any way. In fact, Costco's option for someone to wear a face shield in lieu of a mask is a defacto breach of the Edmonton bylaw. Also, as I explained, I am unable to wear a face shield. Frankly, no one should be forced to wear a device that is not recommended, nor tested for such.

Firstly, the manager blamed the City bylaw, which I explained had exemptions. He then said it was a Costco Policy. I reminded him that Costco cannot change policies that unfairly discriminate against a protected class. He didn't care.

He said I could use 'instacart' instead. Apart from the concerns of using a third-party company who would have access to my private information, I explained that this isn't an equivalent service. I can't get an eye exam or select my own produce with 'instacart' or even the Costco Online service. I also cannot

take advantage of the in-store sales/pricing, product samples etc. As a fully paid member, I was now being discriminated against due to my lung damage and brain injury. I have pulmonary fibrosis, bi-lateral chronic pleural effusions, a frontal lobe brain injury that requires daily medication to prevent seizures and I suffer from visual migraines. All of this, I had to explain on camera, in front of the customers as they passed by, in a desperate attempt to make these managers see reason and that this was unacceptable behaviour.

They continued to refuse. I asked them to call the Police and Bylaw to resolve this. They refused.

I then called the City 311 line to make a complaint. While I was on the phone, another person came into the store without a mask or face shield with the intent of cancelling his membership. I do not know who this person was, but he appeared very upset. He was allowed into the store without a mask or face shield to cancel his membership. However, as this happened, the manager (Dave) came out and accused me and another person of causing the other person to enter the store. Suddenly, he said he was calling the Police. I said I was glad as I had asked for that at the beginning and he had refused. Why was it suddenly important to call the police at this point? He didn't indicate for whom or why he was calling the police and never spoke to me again.

I then watched as another person came into the store to cancel. Again, this member was allowed in without a face shield or mask.

This is blatant discrimination. I fear for people who may not be as resilient as I am (as an ex police officer) and have to endure this discrimination. After leaving the store, I had to go back home and take medication for my blood pressure and pain. This incident seriously impacted my physical and emotional wellbeing.

A full copy of the interaction can be found and downloaded online here.

<https://newtube.app/user/Dksdata/8lvln1w>