

Although the request was for information regarding the offers made to accommodate at the time, I do feel that due to the nature of Costco's response, I must add some details. It is disappointing and distressing that Costco has resorted to an extensively researched ad hominem attack. This is irrelevant to the Human Rights complaint and has caused significantly more stress since receiving it. For a company 'caring about its customers', it appears that attempted character assassination of a disabled Police Officer (injured on duty) is their purpose rather than focusing on the actual complaint. This appears to have been a willful attempt to distract and derail the complaint rather than address the concerns within.

I would hate to think of the investment in effort and cost to search many social media platforms, my own LinkedIn profile and extensive peer reviewed and fully referenced research that predates the complaint. None of this has any bearing on or relevance to the complaint. However, they appear not to have even checked my own long standing Costco account to see if the options were even available or reasonable accommodations.

In this response, Costco attacked me because of the transparency of the interaction which was recorded by a local media person. However, that recording provides a full and accurate record of the interaction. I would have thought that in the interest of accuracy and veracity, this is an obvious benefit to all parties, primarily Costco. This recording means that there can be no misinterpretation of the interaction. For better or worse, a social media society is the current world in which we live. You can do nothing nowadays that isn't caught on camera somewhere.

Costco also attack the Government (local and Provincial) suggesting that exemptions are deadly, dangerous and should not be allowed as *"Given the serious, and potentially fatal, threat to health and safety that COVID-19 poses, permitting any exceptions to Costco's face covering policy would constitute undue hardship."*

At the same time, Costco claim they that follow the government research and guidance, which clearly provides and provided direction that exemptions are not only allowed but expected, even for those not in a protected class.

This response from Costco was frankly horrifying in the detailed ad hominem attack and misleading presentations.

Whilst pondering why Costco would do this, I discovered some articles that suggest there may be more to the personal attack than Costco would want people to believe. Note that all the below articles post date my incident and were unknown to me until I drafted this response. These articles were first accessed online by me on February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

- <https://www.rebelnews.com/costco-pharmacy-client-kicked-out-medical-mask-exemption-not-good-enough-for-staff>
- <https://www.vicnews.com/news/covid-19-costco-to-require-face-shields-for-those-medically-exempt-from-wearing-masks/>
- <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/costco-slammed-ridiculous-face-mask-19534981>
- <https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/us-retail-giant-faces-legal-action-over-new-face-covering-rule/>

After shopping at Costco for over 30 years, being a member for over 25 years, and having family memberships since Costco first started in Canada, Costco is more than a place for me to pick up produce. It is an experience all in of its own. Never have I gone to Costco and just bought what I intended when I set out. This experience is something that cannot be replicated without going into the store itself. Note that in the response, Costco have confirmed that they have and will continue to refuse me access to the store, despite the obvious human rights infraction, until such time as their policy is changed. This could be never and has already been many months - with no end in sight.

Apart from the ad hominem attack, Costco has relied on a defence of naming some services that it could provide in a way that is NOT equivalent or a reasonable accomodation, and completely excludes many challenges mentioned in the complaint and in the interaction with their managers.

- a) *online purchases through Costco.ca;*
- b) *grocery delivery and pick-up services through Instacart, a third-party delivery service. Costco members can shop Costco Same-Day Delivery on Costco's website to have items picked up and delivered by Instacart shoppers, with a minimum order of \$35 before taxes. 34 Shoppers can conveniently schedule the delivery of their order in a 1-hour delivery window, with delivery options available in as little as two hours;*
- c) *curb-side pick-up for prescriptions; and*
- d) *allowing immediate family members who can wear a face covering to use a member's membership card to shop on their behalf.*

During the interaction, I was offered only two of the above options, Costco Grocery and Instacart. As will be seen below, I had no choice but to refuse these options based on many reasons Costco are fully aware of.

At the time of the interaction, I also mentioned Costco.ca to pre-empt the discussion; I have used this many times for products not available in the stores. As with Instacart and Costco Grocery, this option does NOT provide the same goods or services available in store and adds other unfair impediments in time, availability, and cost. This is something that Costco openly admit.

Considering the extensive worldwide search that Costco did online to try and assassinate my character, it would have been equally prudent for them to have done some basic research on my Costco profile before responding.



1. My address (REDACTED) is unavailable for the services suggested by both managers.
2. Just selecting some of the most common items I have purchased from Costco in the last year, Costco would have known that most items are not available online.
3. The very few items I could find online add additional costs on top of price differentials that are not insignificant, even if they could be delivered (which they can't).
  - a) These additional costs are described as "*Costco Grocery Surcharge*" (\$3 per item) for orders of \$75 or less before tax (not the \$35 Costco misrepresented in their response). This difference is based on my location. Costco would have been well aware of at the time of their response.
4. 'Costco Grocery' has that additional "*Costco Grocery Surcharge*" and is "*powered by Instacart*" according to the Costco website, which is not available to my location. Again, Costco would have been aware at the time of their response.
5. 'Costco Grocery' has a general 2-10 day delivery, with the 2 day delivery not available due to a reliance on 'InstaCart'.
6. 'Instacart' in not available at my location.

7. 'Instacart' requires a third party (not Costco) to have my personal and private details outside of any agreement I have with Costco. This is not something that is required with instore purchases. This further encumbrance on my personal details is something I, as an internationally recognised cybersecurity and privacy expert, can neither comply with nor support.

I did the below search on Costco's own website, based on a product I have bought in store (for a lesser price, without delay, without a surcharge and without a minimum purchase total). I can conclude this is not an equivalent service or a reasonable accommodation.

Costco specifically shows the additional costs, restrictions and confirm that the product "May be available In-Warehouse at a lower non-delivered price". Based on my membership (of over 25 years where my address has not changed), Costco would have known this.

How does **CostcoGrocery** work? [LEARN MORE](#)

**Product Details**

### CostcoGrocery

Kirkland Signature 100% Pure Liquid Honey, 750 g, 3-pack  
Item 1149103

**Price** \$17.99

Costco Grocery Surcharge \$3.00

Costco Grocery Surcharge will only apply to orders of \$75 or less before tax (\$75 order minimum applies to Costco Grocery items only, NOT the total order value)

Shipping & Handling: Certain areas may require an additional Shipping and Handling fee per unit. This fee will be quoted at checkout.

May be available In-Warehouse at a lower non-delivered price

Features:

- Unpasteurized
- True Source Certified
- Fat-free
- Gluten-free

**Specifications**

Estimated delivery date if ordered now **Thursday, February 18**  
Delivery Postal Code: **REDACTED**  
[Change](#)

1

[Add to Cart](#)

[Add to List](#)

---

**Same-Day Delivery**  
powered by **instacart**

Same-day Delivery items include an additional service and delivery fee

[Shop Same-Day Now](#)

[Share](#) [Print](#)  
Shipping & Returns

Instacart (used to power 2 day or less delivery) is not even available to my location (**REDACTED**), which Costco would have known when they authored that deliberate and distressing attack response. This makes the response from Costco not only disingenuous but deliberately deceitful in light of the lengths to which they went to attack me personally.


## CostcoGrocery

### Same-day Delivery

---

**Welcome back, DAVID.**

How would you like to get your groceries?



Delivery

←
Delivery Powered By Instacart

Running on a tight schedule? Get your groceries delivered right to your home.  
Sorry, we don't deliver to **REDACTED**. Please try [another shipping option](#) or try another zip code.

Choose from your address book [+ Add New Address](#)

No addresses saved in your address book

Or continue with zip code

Enter Postal code

📍 Enter Postal code

[Start Shopping](#)

Even if 'Instacart' and/or 'Costco Grocery' delivered to our house, it would not be equivalent or a reasonable accommodation for many reasons including but not limited to the fact that they do not provide the same products. Again, a simple review of our purchases, available in the Costco system, would have demonstrated many items not available online that we had recently purchased.

Some examples include (but are not limited to);

- 4 Litres of 2% Milk<sup>1</sup>
- Freybe Canadian Back Bacon<sup>2</sup>
- Specific Cheeses (Balderson and others)<sup>3</sup>
- Eggs<sup>4</sup>
- Glasses, eye tests, cell phones and accessories etc.

I could go on. However, as Costco has all the records of our grocery and other purchases, they are fully aware of the disingenuous and deliberately misleading response they have made here. As this response was authored by their legal team and signed by a lawyer, this could be a matter for follow up by the Law Society.

Allowing family members to use my card was not actually an option offered at the time, nor is it equivalent. Although Costco may temporarily allow another person to use a Costco card, they cannot authorise the use of another person's credit cards. My Costco Card is a Credit Card and for a legal team to suggest such a fraudulent use, against all Credit Card policies, is disturbing. In addition, I use one of multiple credit cards for purchases at Costco, not just the Costco branded one, which again, a cursory review of my account would have shown before they responded. These cards provide points with monetary value which I would lose if I did not make the purchase myself. This is on top of the issues around me not being able to browse and select my own goods and produce or services. How does another family member get my eyes tested when I am not there?

All the above ignores some services that cannot be provided outside of the Costco premises. Again, a review of my account would have shown a few years ago that my wife and I had our eyes tested at Costco and we bought our glasses there. We had planned on getting our eyes retested and purchasing each other new glasses for Christmas last year but Costco has distressingly put an end to that option. We have delayed this whilst this complaint is ongoing despite the significant inconvenience. We hope that Costco will reverse their decision and allow us to continue to use the services our family has enjoyed (at a cost) for almost half a century, in three countries (Canada, UK and US).

As you can see, some of the items were discussed at varying levels of detail during my encounter. However, the two managers cut the conversation short. They made it clear I would not be allowed in the store nor would receive any reasonable accommodation unless I submitted to their new face mask policy.

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?keyword=Milk&costcoprogramtypes=2daydelivery&dept=All&refine=||item\\_program\\_eligibility-2DayDelivery](https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?keyword=Milk&costcoprogramtypes=2daydelivery&dept=All&refine=||item_program_eligibility-2DayDelivery) (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?keyword=freybe&costcoprogramtypes=2daydelivery&dept=All&refine=||item\\_program\\_eligibility-2DayDelivery](https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?keyword=freybe&costcoprogramtypes=2daydelivery&dept=All&refine=||item_program_eligibility-2DayDelivery) (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?dept=All&keyword=balderson+cheese> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?keyword=eggs&costcoprogramtypes=2daydelivery&dept=All&refine=||item\\_program\\_eligibility-2DayDelivery](https://www.costco.ca/CatalogSearch?keyword=eggs&costcoprogramtypes=2daydelivery&dept=All&refine=||item_program_eligibility-2DayDelivery) (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

During this time, only the City of Edmonton bylaw 19408<sup>5</sup> was in effect (Calgary had a similarly worded bylaw in place too). This bylaw had been in effect since August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and had specific exemptions to the mask mandate that Costco was in full support of until November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This bylaw was amended on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to extend the date only. All exemptions remained (and remain to this date) unchanged. Prior to this, the official Costco policy was<sup>6</sup>;

***“Face Coverings***

***Some provinces/territories and local jurisdictions require the use of face coverings in public settings. Costco will adhere to those requirements. Please follow your local by-laws and guidelines.” [emphasis added]***

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, that all changed, as can be seen on the video I provided with the complaint.

During this interaction:

- The Costco manager (Ken) told me I had to wear a mask, because of the bylaw.
  - I corrected him about the exemptions and he then stated it was a Costco policy.
  - I explained that I am unable to wear a mask and produced my exemption to prove this, although the bylaw does not require this step<sup>7</sup>.
    - *“Individuals may self-identify that they are exempt. No proof or detail are required.”*
- The Costco Manager restated I could not shop at Costco without a mask.
  - I reminded him that there were exemptions under the bylaw<sup>5,7</sup> and requested the attendance of Edmonton City Bylaw and/or Edmonton Police. Ken, the Costco Manager refused this request.

*“Exceptions... People who are unable to wear a face covering because of **mental or physical concerns** or **protected reasons under the Alberta Human Rights Act**”<sup>7</sup>.  
[emphasis added].*
- I told the managers I could not wear a mask.
  - Both managers at Costco stated they were not going to allow me in the store.
  - They offered no practical alternative to receive the full services I am entitled to as a paying member.
  - In fact, they were offering services that are not even available to me based on my location.
  - These options, as was explained to them (and as they were aware), do not offer the same products, services or prices.
- Both managers told me I could wear a face shield (Costco would provide).
  - I asked if it was a class 6 safety shield (Ken did not know). Anything less would be potentially dangerous.
  - Regardless, I told him them I could NOT wear a safety shield because of my disability, which I described in detail when asked, despite having no obligation to do so.

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://pub-edmonton.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=59178> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>6</sup> <http://web.archive.org/web/20201108081000/https://www.costco.ca/coronavirus-response.html> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.edmonton.ca/masks> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

- Although they both should have been aware, I informed them no-one was allowed to wear a face shield in lieu of a mask as per the City Bylaw<sup>7</sup>.
  - ***“Frequently Asked Questions... What is the difference between a face covering, a mask and a face shield?... A face shield typically does not provide adequate protection from the periphery (sides) and cannot be used as an alternative to a non-medical mask when physical distancing cannot be achieved, unless it wraps around the face and underneath the chin...” [emphasis added].***
- As I pointed out at the time, the face shields provided by Costco are NOT compliant with the Government of Alberta direction/law or the City of Edmonton direction/bylaw. This would contradict the position in Costco’s response on their insistence on safety.
- Neither manager at Costco provided an alternative to a facemask (I could not wear) or a face shield (I was not allowed to wear nor could I wear) due to my disability and due to the lack of compliance with the bylaw as per the above. Both managers continued to refuse me access to the store.
- During my time there, I observed able body persons entering the store and interacting with staff and customers without wearing masks or safety shields (as the video shows).
- I pointed out that Costco was not compliant with the Edmonton City Bylaw, Provincial Health Act, Health and Safety legislation and regulations and the Human Rights Act. I asked if they would let me go into the store to shop.
  - The managers stated many times I would not be allowed in because of Costco’s face mask policy.

Costco has confirmed in writing that the interaction and treatment I experienced that day would have been the same on any given day and at any location since their policy changed. They also stated that they intend for it to remain unchanged. During the specific interaction, the manager(s) offered:

- Costco Grocery<sup>8 9</sup>
- Instacart<sup>10</sup> Error! Bookmark not defined.
- At that time, I informed the managers that these were not an option as I could not see the product. He nodded in agreement and apologised.
- At that time, I informed the managers that Costco.ca does not offer the same products or all products at the same prices. Dave (Costco manager) stated they do. This is a false statement as any Costco staff member, let alone two managers, would know. Ken (Costco manager) did not correct him.
  - I reminded him that Costco does not sell the same products for the same price between towns, let alone online.
  - I informed him that I live in a rural location (on an acreage) so delivery is a significant obstacle.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.costco.ca/grocery-household.html> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.costco.ca/CanadaGroceryDeliveryRedirect> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.instacart.ca/costco-canada> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

- I reminded him that if I have an issue with the products bought online, I must bring them back to the store (in person). This is something that would not be the case if I were able to select them in the store.

The only response was that without a mask (or face shield), I would not be allowed into the store.

I note that Costco has since modified their online return process. An online return process is available but is not an equivalent as unlike the in-store return that is instant, the online refund can take up to 4 weeks. So, in addition to the delay to receive the product, the return process is lengthy to the point it would cause significant financial harm, especially in the current economic climate. Further, this process is apparently not available in my area, as Costco would have known. The negotiation of timing to return products this way is also a further hinderance, especially to a disabled person, that is not present in store.

*"2. To return an item through Costco.ca, please use the Online Return Form. Please note that the pickup and refund process may take up to 3 to 4 weeks to complete. An email confirmation will be sent once your refund has been issued."*<sup>11</sup>

Note that this option was NOT offered at the time, nor is it an equivalent to shopping in-store as per the above. I also note this is NOT something that is expanded on in the Costco response.

At this point, while I was trying to have a conversation with these managers and discuss options, Dave (Costco manager) walked away and told Ken (Costco manager) to also walk away. No further offers were made to address my concerns. I was unable to find any resolution with the management team who had decided that a disabled person was not worth their time. In total, they spent less than 7 minutes with me and failed to address any of my concerns.

Due to the very nature of the store, many purchases are impulse buys at the time I am in the store. This is no longer the case as I am no longer welcome. During this time, without access to the store, I have missed my wife's birthday, my birthday, my eldest daughter's birthday, Christmas and more. I am about to miss the opportunity to shop for a gift for my granddaughter's first birthday this week. The pain and hardship continue, as you can see.

Unlike many other stores, Costco offers multiple services and products in a one stop shop from eye exams to tires to pharmacy consults, food, gifts and more. As a disabled person, this has a very specific value to my overall ability to shop that cannot be replicated online or at another store. As a result, I am being unfairly discriminated against by Costco's policy that contradicts the City Bylaw and Provincial Act beyond the Human Rights complaint.

Since this complaint was filed, it is has been made abundantly clear that I, along with other disabled persons, are not welcome at Costco. This is something that was reinforced by the disturbing ad hominin response.

Since the complaint has been made, Alberta has declared a state of emergency and provided multiple Orders that specifically relate to mandatory masks. However, from the introduction of the Provincial mandatory mask orders, through all revisions, there are exemptions beyond those expected by the Human Rights Act. Despite all the research Costco did, they deliberately omitted this fact.

---

<sup>11</sup> [https://customerservice.costco.ca/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/6509](https://customerservice.costco.ca/app/answers/detail/a_id/6509) (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

- November 24, 2020 Order 38-2020 S.27 (c)<sup>12</sup>
- November 28, 2020 Order 40-2020 S.19.1 (c)<sup>13</sup>
- December 11, 2020 Order 42-2020 S.19.1 (c)<sup>14</sup>

These Orders all state an exemption from the mask requirement if a person:

*“...is unable to wear a face mask due to a mental or physical concern or limitation;...”*

On February 8, 2021 Order 02-2021 S.26 (c)<sup>15</sup> modified this slightly to remove the one word ‘concern’. This made no practical change to the exemptions and specifically had no impact to my Human Rights complaint.

*“...is unable to wear a face mask due to a mental or physical limitation;...”*

At the time of the incident, I requested that the managers call Bylaw and the Police to attend to resolve the issue. The manager(s) refused this request. This was not in any way a reasonable or genuine response to accommodate or resolve the issue. In fact, the whole situation of a manager ambushing me at the door then telling the person behind me (not wearing a mask) to go around and go into the store was disturbing to say the least. It almost felt as if this Costco was expecting me and prepared to stop me specifically. As I was in their disabled electric cart, it is possible that they did target me specifically as an easy disabled victim.

I understand that on the following day, this specific store called the Edmonton Police and had a disabled person arrested who could not wear a mask using a simple trespass allegation, not the bylaw or Provincial Health Act. Is this really about safety, or about discrimination against those already vilified in these difficult times? This person was not forcibly stopped from entering the store or ambushed by a manager at the door as I was though. I assume this was because he was not easily identifiable as disabled, unlike myself. As can be seen from the few links of similar stories around the world at the beginning of this letter, does any of this sound like the actions of a store that cares about disabled people and their rights?

As regards the use of masks, there are no other alternatives in the legislation or guidance from the City or Provincial Government. The exemption to mask wearing is a defacto exemption<sup>12 13 14 15 16</sup>. For me, it specifically relates to a recognized disability that has already been accepted as part of this Human Rights Complaint.

From the **City of Edmonton**<sup>17</sup>, at the time and to this date:

***“Exceptions where mask requirements may not apply...”***

- *“If you are unable to wear a facemask due to a mental or physical concern or limitation.”*

***“If you qualify for an exception...”***

<sup>12</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/cmoh-order-38-2020> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>13</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/cmoh-order-40-2020> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>14</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/cmoh-order-42-2020> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>15</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/cmoh-order-02-2021> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>16</sup> <https://pub-edmonton.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=59178> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.edmonton.ca/masks> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)



- “you don’t need to provide proof”

**“Face shields...**

- Face shields do **not** replace masks or face coverings.

*A face shield is used to protect the eyes of the person wearing it.*

*Using a face shield without a mask won’t protect...*

- you from potentially inhaling infectious respiratory droplets exhaled by others
- others from your infectious respiratory droplets, as they can escape around the face shield”

*“A face shield typically does not provide adequate protection from the periphery (sides) and cannot be used as an alternative to a non-medical mask when physical distancing cannot be achieved, unless it wraps around the face and underneath the chin.”<sup>18</sup>*

**Alberta Health Services states:**

**“Face shields<sup>19</sup>**

*Face shields do not replace masks or face coverings.*

*A face shield is used to protect the eyes of the person wearing it. Using a face shield without a mask won’t protect:*

- you from potentially inhaling infectious respiratory droplets exhaled by others
- others from your infectious respiratory droplets, as they can escape around the face shield”

**The Government of Canada states:**

**“Face shields<sup>20</sup>**

*Face shields do not replace masks, but can be worn in addition to a mask.*

*A face shield is used to protect the eyes of the person wearing it. Using a face shield without a mask won’t protect you or others from infectious respiratory particles that can escape around the face shield.”*

Despite this information freely available online, Costco still encourage people to wear a face shield as an alternative to masks in store. Is this really about safety?

**“Updated Face Mask Policy<sup>21</sup>**

*Members and guests must wear a face mask that covers their mouth and nose at all times. Individuals who are unable to wear a face mask due to a medical condition must wear a face shield. Children under the age of 2 are exempt. Entry to Costco will be granted only to those wearing a face mask or face shield.*

*The use of a face covering should not be seen as a substitute for social distancing. Please*

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.edmonton.ca/programs\\_services/emergency\\_preparedness/masks-toolkit-for-businesses.aspx](https://www.edmonton.ca/programs_services/emergency_preparedness/masks-toolkit-for-businesses.aspx)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.alberta.ca/masks.aspx> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.costco.ca/coronavirus-response.html> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

*continue to observe rules regarding appropriate distancing while on Costco premises. For members who are unable to wear a mask or face covering, Costco has delivery options available on Costco.ca. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.”*

In addition, Alberta Human Rights has already confirmed that even conditions much less serious than mine are considered a valid disability and reason to be exempted from wearing a mask.<sup>22</sup>

**“Mask-wearing and human rights in Alberta...**

***Duty to accommodate***

*People with certain disabilities may have difficulty wearing a mask if, for example, they have severe allergies, experience asthma attacks, or have other respiratory issues. Masks are a barrier to people with hearing disabilities who rely on lip reading or facial expressions to communicate. Masks may not be suitable for children and adults with certain physical, intellectual, mental, or cognitive disabilities, such as autism or anxiety.”*

Costco state this is about safety, yet they do not follow the Provincially mandated protocols for cleaning all high traffic areas including the payment terminals, conveyor belts, shopping trolleys etc. between customers.

The Costco sanitization policy at the time was apparently every 4 hours (it appears to have been reduced to 30 minutes now, although I am reliably informed this is not standard practice in the store). Small businesses have been shut down for a failure to sanitize high traffic areas such as the pay terminal and conveyor belt between **every** customer. Why does Costco get a pass? Is this really about safety?

Costco were allowing exemptions to mask mandates and their own policies from March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 until November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and on their own website refer to adhering to local legislated policies. From August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to this date, the City of Edmonton bylaw has exemptions beyond those allowed under the Human Rights Act.

Until November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Costco followed those exemptions even for people without a recognized disability. The City has not changed the bylaw since it implemented it other than to extend it without change.

On November 24<sup>th</sup>.2020, the Province implemented an initial policy mandating masks for the Edmonton and Calgary regions. This Order had all the exemptions that were in City bylaw and some additional exemptions such as a process to allow staff to not wear masks.

Since the Province implemented the Mask policy, they have changed the Orders around it multiple times. Each time, the exemptions, way beyond those covered by the Human Rights Act, have not changed. Even after the Province initiated a State of Emergency, it did not remove the quite extensive exemption list for wearing a mask. That exemption list has survived multiple changes in the Provincial orders and stands today beyond the expectations of the Human Rights Act.

Finally, one has to ask, if Costco truly believes the words in their own response *“Given the serious, and potentially fatal, threat to health and safety that COVID-19 poses, permitting any exceptions to Costco’s face covering policy would constitute undue hardship.”*

- Why are they allowing face shields despite the clear illegality of them?

---

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/employment/Pages/covid19.aspx> (last viewed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

- Why do they not follow the required cleaning protocols of high traffic areas that other stores are forced to follow?
- Should they even be open at all considering the risk they suggest?

I think Costco knows the real answer to these questions and as such I do hope Costco can change their position from what is evidently a sustained and disturbing attack on the disabled. Sadly though, as can be seen by the multiple articles at the opening of this letter, this appears to be much larger than just this one location. It is a worldwide issue from this global organisation that has now allowed others to follow suit. This has resulted in untold damage to the disabled community worldwide and has set disabled causes back decades.

David Dickson  
16<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.