

The complaint

Mr K complains that PayrNet Limited ("PayrNet") have failed to assist him in accessing his account after he had forgotten his PIN.

What happened

Mr K holds a Pockit account (an electronic money agent of PayrNet), but he found he had trouble accessing his account. He informed PayrNet that he had lost his PIN and required it being sent again, but the business said they were unable to assist as he was corresponding from an email address they did not recognise.

Mr K told PayrNet that he had told it numerous times that he had a new email address (as he was unable to use his old one) and had submitted supporting information it had requested in order to identify him and send him his PIN. He asked PayrNet to either send his PIN to his new email address, or to his residential address. However, PayrNet declined to do so as it said it would constitute a breach of data protection regulations.

Our investigator upheld the complaint and said that PayrNet should process Mr K's request and pay £300 compensation. PayrNet disagreed and offered £100 instead, which Mr K accepted. However, he recently got back in touch with our service to explain that the complaint had not been settled as agreed. Our investigator attempted to reach out to PayrNet to gain an update on the progress of the agreed settlement and granting Mr K access to his account, but it failed to respond. As a result, the matter has been escalated to me for a final decision.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so, I agree with the conclusions reached by the investigator for the reasons set out below:

- When Mr K contacted PayrNet to request his PIN from a new email address, it asked Mr K to submit documents to prove his identity, including a photo of him holding a form of ID, a recent utility bill and the 9 digits on the back of his card. Mr K has provided an email to show that he provided this information to PayrNet, and I've seen nothing from the business in response that would suggest any of these documents were non-compliant, and PayrNet has not provided a reason as to why they would not have been acceptable.
- Mr K submitted the requested information in May 2021, but it took PayrNet around four months to respond to this and re-request information from him. It is not clear why it was requested again, or what was wrong with the evidence Mr K provided in May 2021. But this delay further extended the period he has been unable to access his account and worsened his financial hardship.
- Our investigator recommended an amount of £300 compensation for the distress and

inconvenience caused by PayrNet's handling of the matter. Following the investigator's view, PayrNet offered £100, which Mr K accepted. However, Mr K has said that it hasn't settled the complaint as agreed, and neither has PayrNet responded to our recent enquiries on this matter. So, given that matters still do not appear to have been resolved and Mr K still does not have access to his account, I consider the original recommendation of £300 made by the investigator to be fair compensation in the circumstances in light of the upset and financial hardship caused to Mr K as a result. PayrNet will need to ensure this amount is paid to Mr K within 28 days, after which point interest will accrue on the sum at 8% (simple interest) per year until it is paid.

- In terms of Mr K's account access, PayrNet said that he provided everything they needed in September 2021, which it said was being processed by its relevant department at that time. However, Mr K says he still hasn't been sent his PIN and given access to his account. Given that Mr K has seemingly provided everything PayrNet has asked for, it should now process his request without delay and use its best endeavors to allow him access to his account. I understand it was hesitant to send his PIN to a new email address, but there is no reason why it wouldn't be able to send it through other channels (such as by post to his registered address, for example) following the submission of his identity documents. So, it will now need to assist Mr K in allowing him access to his account as soon as possible.

My final decision

For the reasons given above, I uphold this complaint and direct PayrNet Limited to:

- Use its best endeavors to process Mr K's identity documents as soon as possible (if it has not yet done so) and take all reasonable steps to allow him access to the funds in his account.
- Pay £300 compensation (if it has not done so already) to a nominated account of Mr K's choosing within 28 days of receiving Mr K's acceptance of this final decision. If it has not been paid within 28 days, PayrNet will also need to add 8% simple interest per year on the sum from the date of this decision until the date it is paid.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr K to accept or reject my decision before 6 July 2022.

Jack Ferris
Ombudsman