

## **The complaint**

Mr R complains that Revolut Ltd blocked his account without providing a proper explanation. He says this caused him unnecessary trouble and upset for which he should be compensated.

## **What happened**

Mr R had an account with Revolut, which he opened in 2019.

Mr R has told this service that his Revolut account was his only account. And he used it to receive his wages and pay his bills.

In December 2023, Revolut applied a block to Mr R's account. Mr R discovered that he was unable to use his account and contacted Revolut via its in app chat to try and find out what was happening with his account. Revolut told Mr R that it had placed his account under review to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations. But wouldn't give Mr R much more information

Mr R told Revolut that he needed access to the money in his account to buy food and pay for transport costs to get to work. He said he hadn't done anything wrong and couldn't understand why Revolut blocked his account. Revolut apologised for any trouble the block caused Mr R and completed its review and on 29 December 2023. Following this Revolut decided to close Mr R's account.

Mr R complained to Revolut. He pointed out that he'd been a good customer for a number of years and said he'd always maintained his account properly. He explained that the block to his account had caused him a great deal of stress and that he hadn't been able to enjoy his Christmas because he wasn't able to access the money in his account. So, he said Revolut should pay him compensation for the trouble and upset he'd suffered by Revolut blocking his account. And he said Revolut should explain why it blocked his account.

In response, Revolut said it hadn't done anything wrong and had blocked Mr R's account to comply with its legal obligations. So, it didn't uphold Mr R's complaint.

Mr R remained unhappy and asked us to investigate his complaint. He said the block on his account and lack of access to his funds caused him a lot of problems. He wants Revolut to provide a proper explanation about why it blocked his account. He said Revolut's actions caused him a great deal of worry and whenever he contacted Revolut the responses he got were like a broken record because he kept being told the same thing over and over, which was very frustrating.

One of our investigators reviewed Mr R's complaint. She said whilst she appreciated Revolut's actions had caused Mr R trouble and upset, she thought Revolut hadn't done anything wrong. She looked at all the evidence and was satisfied that Revolut had acted in line with their legal and regulatory obligations when it blocked Mr R's account. So, she didn't uphold Mr R's complaint.

Mr R disagreed. He said Revolut's actions weren't legal, and it wasn't right that they were allowed to block his account for as long it did without telling him why. Mr R also submitted several reviews from other dissatisfied Revolut customers which he says shows he was treated unfairly by Revolut.

As no agreement could be reached the matter has come to me to decide.

### **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.

I would add too that our rules allow us to receive evidence in confidence. We may treat evidence from financial businesses as confidential for a number of reasons – for example, if it contains information about other customers, security information or commercially sensitive information. Some of the information Revolut has provided is information that we considered should be kept confidential. This means I haven't been able to share a lot of detail with Mr R, but I'd like to reassure him that I have considered everything.

I appreciate that Mr R is upset that Revolut blocked his account. I can also understand that this was no doubt stressful for him especially as Revolut's actions made it difficult for him to pay for the cost of getting to work. But for me to uphold this complaint, I must be satisfied that Revolut has done something wrong. And in this case, I don't think it has. I'll explain why.

I want to make it clear that I understand why what happened concerned Mr R. I've no doubt it would've come as quite a shock to him, and he would've been very worried to find out that his account had been blocked. But as the investigator has already explained, Revolut has extensive legal and regulatory responsibilities they must meet when providing account services to customers. They can broadly be summarised as a responsibility to protect persons from financial harm, and to prevent and detect financial crime.

I've considered the basis for Revolut's review and having done so I find this was legitimate and in line with its legal and regulatory obligations. So, I'm satisfied Revolut acted fairly by blocking Mr R's account. I appreciate that Mr R wants to know more about why Revolut did what it did. But Revolut isn't obliged to tell Mr R why it blocked and reviewed his account, and I don't believe it would be appropriate for me to require it to do so as much as he'd like to know.

The terms and conditions of Mr R's account also make provision for Revolut to review and suspend an account. And having looked at all the evidence, I'm satisfied that Revolut have acted in line with these when it suspended Mr R's account. So, although I understand not having access to his account caused Mr R trouble and upset it wouldn't be appropriate for me to award Mr R compensation since I don't believe Revolut acted inappropriately in taking the actions that it did when it blocked Mr R's account.

Mr R has said that Revolut took far too long to complete its review of his account. And he wants compensation for the trouble and upset he's suffered as a result of not being able to access his account. Mr R's account was blocked between 7 and 29 December 2023 – so just over three weeks. I've looked at the information Revolut provided about what it was doing as part of its review. Having done so I'm not satisfied that Revolut has provided sufficient evidence to show it couldn't have completed its review earlier. But it doesn't follow that I must award Mr R compensation in these circumstances. Instead, I have to consider all the circumstances and information surrounding Mr R's complaint to decide whether I think awarding compensation would be a fair and reasonable outcome.

After considering what Mr R has said and the content of Revolut's review, which includes the information Revolut has provided to our service in confidence, I don't find awarding Mr R compensation would be fair or appropriate. I understand Mr R would naturally want to know the information I have weighted in order to reach this finding. But as I've set out already, I am treating this information in confidence, which is a power afforded to me under the Dispute Resolution Rules (DISP), which form part of the Financial Conduct Authority's regulatory handbook.

Accordingly, I have accepted information in confidence which I am not disclosing to Mr R. And the description of that information is that it's of a nature which justifies Revolut's review, and which has led me to decide that awarding Mr R compensation would not be a fair or appropriate outcome for any of the matters he has brought as part of this complaint.

So, I'm not requiring Revolut to compensate Mr R for any trouble and upset he may have experienced as a result of the time taken for Revolut to carry out its review, and the further dissatisfaction he experienced which ultimately flowed from not having access to the funds in his account, including his unhappiness with Revolut's communication and the information it didn't provide him.

In summary, I recognise how strongly Mr R feels about his complaint, so I realise he will be disappointed by my decision. But overall, based on the evidence I've seen I won't be telling Revolut to do anything more to resolve Mr R's complaint.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons I've explained, my final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr R to accept or reject my decision before 19 November 2024.

Sharon Kerrison  
**Ombudsman**