

The complaint

Mr F complains about obstructions he says were caused by ReAssure Limited when surrendering his Flexible Mortgage Individual Savings Account (FMISA).

What happened

Mr F complain to ReAssure when the request to surrender his account took longer than he thought it should.

ReAssure looked into what happened but didn't uphold the complaint. They said it wasn't possible to accept an online surrender request for this type of account, so a signed form was required. When this was received they say the surrender was processed within their normal timescales.

Remaining unhappy Mr F brought his complaint to our service where one of our Investigators considered the issues. Whilst understanding the frustration they thought ReAssure followed their procedures when surrendering the account, so the correct amount of money was received.

Mr F said ReAssure didn't provide the level of customer care expected.

Because an agreement couldn't be reached the matter has come to me for a 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.

Mr F has provided a lot of information about the complaint and it's clear how strongly he feels about what happened. I want to assure Mr F that I've read and considered everything provided even if I don't mention it all in detail. I've summarised some of what happened which reflects the informal nature of our service.

There are three different businesses involved in the management and administration of the account. This is because the product is split into two parts – the ISA and the life insurance cover. So I can understand why it may not always have been clear to Mr F which business was responsible for which activities. And I know there were some difficulties at times with this.

This decision only considers the role of ReAssure and in this situation that role was limited to surrendering or paying out the account.

In Mid July 2023 Mr F submitted an online request to surrender the account however ReAssure required a signed form to do this.

A few days later when contact was made with ReAssure the Payment Release Form was provided which was signed and returned.

ReAssure received the form on 28 July 2023 and that date was used to calculate the surrender value.

Looking at what happened ReAssure followed their policies and procedures when processing the surrender of the account. And I think they acted fairly and reasonably when doing so. ReAssure say they have a 10 day service standard and the surrender was processed within this timeframe.

It's not my role to say what procedures a business can have in place. If ReAssure require a paper based form in order to surrender the account then it is entitled to do so. Though I acknowledge this caused some inconvenience for Mr F.

Looking at the timeline of events I think ReAssure acted quickly to let Mr F know of the requirements and provide the form. And when the form was received it was processed using the value on that day. I haven't seen any evidence of delays on the part of ReAssure when processing the surrender.

Having carefully considered everything that happen I'm satisfied ReAssure acted fairly and reasonably when processing the withdrawal so won't be asking them to take any further action.

My final decision

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

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr F to accept or reject my decision before 6 December 2024.

Warren Wilson
Ombudsman