

The complaint

Mr K complains about the service he had from Motability Operations Limited ("Motability") and that it wouldn't offer him compensation or a gesture of goodwill.

What happened

Mr K leased a car from Motability.

His car was taken for service to a main dealer. When his car was returned to him, the driver had accidentally left their lunchbox on the rear seat, which had apparently spilled.

Mr K complained to the main dealer and Motability. The main dealer offered to collect his car, clean it and return it to him. It later said it would refund the cost of a valet up to £65 as it wasn't prepared to work with Mr K as a customer anymore.

Mr K complained to Motability. He complained about the main dealer's responses to him and that it hadn't offered him a gesture of goodwill in addition to the valet. It told him it thought the main dealer's response was fair. It said it wouldn't pay a gesture of goodwill as it thought the main dealer had agreed to sort the problem out.

Mr K remained unhappy and brought his complaint to this service. He asks for £75 compensation or a goodwill gesture. He also said the incident had caused him a great deal of worry exacerbated by his conditions and at a very stressful time in his life.

Our investigator looked into it and thought his complaint wouldn't be upheld. She thought Motability had acted fairly by apologising and saying it would collect and clean the car.

Mr K didn't agree with the view and asked that his complaint was reviewed by an ombudsman. Because he didn't agree, this complaint has been passed to me to make 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.

I've only provided brief details of Mr K's complaint above, but I'd like him to know that I've read all of the file of evidence I've been provided even if I don't mention it further here. This is in line with the informal nature of this service's approach.

Having read the file of evidence I've been provided, I'm not upholding Mr K's complaint and I'll explain why.

In dealing with this complaint I'm only able to consider the points made by Mr K to Motability and for which it's given him its final response. What that means is that I can look at Mr K's request for compensation due to the stress he says the incident caused him. I can see from the file that Mr K has also mentioned that the main dealer in question won't deal with this anymore, but I can't see that this specific point has been made to Motability. However, I will

comment that it's not this service's role to interfere in a commercial organisation's choice about who it wants to work with.

Turning now to Mr K's complaint about Motability's response to him. I can see that Motability thought the main dealer's initial offer to collect, clean and return his car to him was fair. And having thought about this, I agree that it was. Although I appreciate the relationship between Mr K and the main dealer then ended, I also think the main dealer's response to say Mr K could have his back seat cleaned at an independent company up to £65 was fair. And it said it was willing to pay for a valet of his car, not just the area in question. So, I think its response was also fair.

Mr K asks for compensation or other gesture of goodwill of around £75 from Motability because he says it's caused him stress at a very difficult time in his life. I've thought carefully about this and I've read about Mr K and his family. I'm sorry to hear about the situation he and his family were in while this issue was happening.

Having considered this service's guidelines on compensation, I think the two offers made by the main dealer were both fair and what I'd expect to see to resolve an issue like this. I don't doubt Mr K was under considerable stress at the time, but I don't think I can fairly say Motability caused him additional distress.

It follows that I don't think I can ask Motability to pay any additional amounts, and I'm not upholding this complaint.

My final decision

For the reasons set out above, my final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr K to accept or reject my decision before 14 May 2025.

Richard Sowden
Ombudsman