

The complaint

Mr B has complained Prepay Technologies Ltd, trading as Monese, lodged a fraud-related marker on the industry fraud database, CIFAS, in his name.

What happened

Mr B opened an account with Monese on 15 March 2025. He used this to transfer funds between this account and one he held with another bank (who I'll call R).

Monese received two fraud claims for payments that had been made into Mr B's Monese account. He'd transferred those funds out as soon as they'd been made. Monese closed Mr B's account and lodged a fraud-related marker on the CIFAS database.

Mr B raised a complaint with Monese in May. Monese confirmed they didn't feel they'd done anything wrong and refused to remove the marker.

Mr B brought his complaint to the ombudsman service. He also provided copies of messages with one of the individuals who'd made a fraud claim.

Our investigator noted Monese's evidence that they'd received two fraud reports. On the other hand, Mr B was able to provide no proof of his story that he'd lent money to friends. She felt that Monese had enough evidence to lodge a CIFAS marker.

After receiving the view, Mr B asked an ombudsman to review his complaint.

I completed a provisional decision on 15 December 2025 as I was considering upholding Mr B's complaint and asking Monese to remove the CIFAS marker.

Mr B accepted this outcome. Monese reviewed the evidence I'd considered and let our service know they didn't agree and made the following points:

- They believed the clips of messages were convenient to Mr B's story and submitted these had been completely fabricated by Mr B. In support of this they noted some messages had clear time stamps whilst others didn't and felt this was inconsistent.
- They noted that one set of messages – the one with no timestamps – indicated a message and immediate response which they didn't believe was likely.
- Neither party asked what a CIFAS marker was which they'd have expected to have seen.

I now have all I need to complete my 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've reached the same outcome as I did in my provisional decision. I'll

explain why.

It is clear what the requirements are prior to lodging a marker. Specifically:

“There must be reasonable grounds to believe that an identified fraud or financial crime has been committed or attempted.

The evidence must be clear, relevant and rigorous.”

Monese must be able to provide clear evidence that an identified fraud was being committed, and Mr B was involved. This means that they must have more than a suspicion or a concern that Mr B may be involved.

There's also a requirement that Monese should be giving the account holder an opportunity to explain what was going on.

I've seen the evidence provided by Monese. This confirms they received two notifications that individuals had sent payments of £250 and £170 to Mr B's account. These payments were supposedly for concert tickets which were never received and a fee for a driving test.

Monese queried Mr B's entitlement to these funds but wasn't convinced by his story that these were repayments after he'd lent money to supposed friends. Mr B hadn't held this Monese account long. Monese could see that immediately on receipt of the funds as three payments of £170, £100 and £150, he made transfers of the same amounts (minus £1) to his account with R. They were satisfied Mr B had benefitted from the proceeds of fraud.

Mr B has told our service he was willing to lend money to friends and the payments he received were repayments. He'd given these two individuals cash so had no evidence of these loans. He told us he'd been shocked when he found claims had been raised against him and realised these individuals were probably not really friends and had always intended to defraud him.

Mr B has shared messages with one of these individuals. The one who sent him £170. The name certainly matches, and I have to say that there's no suggestion that any money sent was for a driving test. These messages appear to be after the CIFAS marker was lodged. I believe the tenor of these don't suggest to me Mr B was defrauding the individual concerned. In fact it appears to me that the fraud claims may well have been raised maliciously.

It is these messages which Monese is unconvinced about. I have noted their concerns. I can see they think Mr B had manufactured these. However, I don't agree with them. There is some inconsistency in the format these have been shared with our service. However, it is very normal for messages to be exchanged without any real time delay. I don't believe it would be appropriate to see the points Monese make as providing *“clear, relevant and rigorous”* evidence as required by the CIFAS rules.

That said I do believe these *“friends”* were involved in something that's not above board. That would explain why there's an accepted use of the term CIFAS marker. However, this is no more than a suspicion and I don't believe any doubts I may have are sufficient to suggest that Monese can lodge a CIFAS marker.

As I don't believe there's sufficient evidence to show Mr B knew he was in receipt of fraudulent funds, I will be asking Monese to remove the CIFAS marker.

My final decision

For the reasons given, my final decision is to instruct Prepay Technologies Ltd, trading as Monese, to remove the CIFAS marker from Mr B's record.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 2 February 2026.

Sandra Quinn
Ombudsman