

The complaint

Miss K complains Lowell Portfolio I Ltd have sent letters regarding debts to an address they shouldn't have.

What happened

Miss K has three debts with Lowell – and her complaint relates to three letters sent to an old address where an abusive ex-partner still lives.

I'll be deliberately vague about some of the details, as this decision is published on our website.

Lowell said they'd obtained the address they used from reliable sources but noted Miss K later told them to stop using this address in a call she'd had with them – but then they sent three letters to this address. They upheld Miss K's complaint and sent her a cheque for £50.

Unhappy with this Miss K asked us to look into things. As part of our standard process, we asked Lowell for their file. In response, they made an increased offer of a total of £150 (including the £50) and raised questions about the accounts we could consider.

Our Investigator found we couldn't consider one account but could consider the other two. And, having done so, thought Lowell needed to increase their compensation to £300. Lowell agreed to that, but Miss K didn't. She said she thought it'd be fairer for a figure of £650-£750 to be offered. So, the complaint's been passed to me to decide, and I'll consider everything she said when replying to our Investigator.

To be clear – this decision is only looking at the two accounts our service can consider. The one account we can't consider has been addressed in a separate 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 think it's important to explain I've considered all of the information provided by both parties in reaching my decision. If I've not reflected or answered something that's been said it's not because I didn't see it, it's because I didn't deem it relevant to the crux of the complaint. This isn't intended as a discourtesy to either party, but merely to reflect my informal role in deciding what a fair and reasonable outcome is.

Lowell have accepted they made an error, and the only issue remaining in dispute is whether the compensation currently on offer of £300 in total is a fair way to put this matter right.

Deciding compensation isn't an exact science. And when reaching an outcome I don't intend in any way to downplay the distress Miss K has experienced.

In terms of what I can take into account – it's the impact of two letters rather than three – because of the accounts our rules don't allow me to consider. I have though taken into account Miss K is likely to have experienced a similar impact whether it was one letter or three that were sent.

And regardless I appreciate this would have been a very upsetting situation for Miss K and appreciate what she's explained to us about the fear she experienced when she realised letters had been sent to her previous address.

Having listened to the call Miss K had with Lowell, I understand she asked for the address in question not to be used and there was undoubtedly confusion about which address that Lowell held on file was then to be used for a correspondence address. But, I note that Lowell weren't made aware of the circumstances of why Miss K wouldn't wish any correspondence to go to that address at the time, so I don't think they could have reasonably foreseen any potential harm at that time. I also need to factor in that it's been over a year since these letters were sent – and I understand nothing seems to have come of the letters having been sent to the wrong address.

That doesn't mean the distress and fear Miss K has experienced isn't real and is absolutely something I can award compensation for. I have also factored in what she's said about her losing sleep, and that she feels this is a data breach. Overall, although I'm aware Miss K doesn't think this is a fair figure, I do think £300 is a fair amount of compensation to reflect Lowell's error.

My final decision

For the reasons I've explained above I require Lowell Portfolio I Ltd to pay Miss K £300 compensation.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss K to accept or reject my decision before 12 December 2025.

Jon Pearce
Ombudsman