

The complaint

X complains that Airbnb Payments UK Limited (which I'll call "APUK") has not passed on a payment for a booking and that it has closed his account.

What happened

X is an Airbnb host. APUK is an electronic money institution which facilitates payments between Airbnb guests and hosts.

X listed an apartment on the Airbnb website and received a booking for one night in December 2024. The guest made the rental payment to APUK and stayed at the apartment as arranged. X expected to receive payment within a few days, but it was not made. Instead, APUK closed X's account and retained the funds.

X complained to APUK, but it said it had acted fairly. X referred the matter to this service, where one of our investigators considered what had happened. She agreed with APUK that it had acted fairly and did not recommend that the complaint be upheld. X did not agree with the investigator's assessment and asked that an ombudsman review the case.

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.

In making its submissions, APUK asked that some of the evidence and arguments which it submitted be kept confidential and not be disclosed to X. This service can accept evidence in confidence where it considers it appropriate to do so (DISP3.5.9(2)R). Having considered carefully the nature of the evidence in this case, I am satisfied that it is appropriate to accept it in confidence.

Having considered very carefully the evidence which has been provided here, I am satisfied that APUK acted fairly in deciding to close X's account. The account terms allowed it to do so, and I believe APUK had legitimate reasons for deciding to end its relationship with X in the way it did.

The investigator also took the view that APUK was within its rights to retain the funds it had received from his guest. I agree with that assessment, and I don't believe APUK treated X unfairly.

My final decision

For these reasons, my final decision is that I do not uphold X's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask X to accept or reject my decision before 5 January 2026.

Mike Ingram
Ombudsman