

complaint

Mr F complains that Santander UK Plc wrongly recorded his details on the Credit Industry Fraud Avoidance System (CIFAS).

background

Santander recorded a fraud indicator (which it later removed) against Mr F. But Mr F says, because of this, he lost out on a better paid job. Mr F holds Santander responsible for the losses he says he's suffered as a result of that job offer being withdrawn, after credit checks which revealed the fraud indicator.

Santander offered to pay Mr F a goodwill payment of £600. Mr F declined this and asked us to look into his complaint. To resolve this complaint Mr F feels Santander should do more to put things right. He's asked for substantial compensation to cover his estimated loss of earnings.

Our adjudicator didn't recommend upholding the complaint on the basis that Santander's hadn't done anything wrong and their offer was fair in all the circumstances.

Mr F disagrees and he's asked for an ombudsman review. So, this complaint's been passed to me.

my findings

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. I'm sorry to hear of the personal difficulties Mr F's encountered recently. And, I can appreciate what a frustrating situation this is for Mr F. But, I agree with the adjudicator that Santander has already done enough to compensate Mr F fairly.

Banks record information on CIFAS (The UK Fraud Prevention Service) in order to minimise the risk of fraud – often this can happen when, as in this case, the information from a customer doesn't exactly match details recorded elsewhere.

Santander said it recorded adverse information on CIFAS as a loan application, made to them, in September 2014 – from a third party related to Mr F - gave Mr F's email address. And it also contained other details which required further investigation. Santander felt that decision was correct at the time as there was a mismatch between information given on the application and what their checks revealed, following a telephone call to the applicant. So, I don't think Santander acted wrongly or unreasonably when it did this. And, in July 2015, when Santander received further information from Mr F, they removed the CIFAS record – which I agree was the fair thing to do in these circumstances. The removal, in July 2015, took 6 days which I don't consider an unreasonable amount of time.

We offer an informal dispute resolution service. The £600 payment which Santander offered is a gesture of goodwill. Mr F wants Santander to compensate him for the losses he incurred as a result of the job being withdrawn. But, as I don't think Santander have done anything wrong here, I can't ask them to take any further action. They've apologised for putting Mr F in an embarrassing position and sending a letter about the complaint to a wrong address. And I've taken into account that part of the payment offered, is to acknowledge their delay in reviewing his complaint.

I consider Santander has offered this payment as a gesture of goodwill, in a genuine attempt to settle Mr F's complaint, in a way that recognises the part it played in what's happened, even if it didn't do anything wrong. So, I think, Santander have responded fairly and reasonably to the complaint. It's now in Mr F's hands as to whether or not he accepts their offer of £600 compensation set out in the final response letter of 6 February 2016.

my final decision

My final decision is that Santander UK Plc has made a fair offer to settle this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr F to accept or reject my decision before 7 July 2017.

Annabel O'Sullivan
ombudsman