

## **The complaint**

Miss B has complained that Revolut Ltd blocked her account when she reported her card and phone as being stolen.

## **What happened**

Miss B's card and phone were stolen, and two payments were made on her Revolut account, totalling about £13.

Miss B reported this to Revolut, who blocked her account to prevent any further fraudulent payments from being made. They asked Miss B to go through the normal security process to re-verify herself and unblock her account. Miss B refused to do so. She feels it was illegal for Revolut to block the account, and feels she was being treated like a fraudster.

Revolut raised disputes for the fraudulent payments, doing the forms for Miss B as she said she couldn't do them herself. They refunded the payments and also paid another £13.78 to Miss B as a goodwill gesture.

Our investigator looked into things independently and found that Revolut had acted fairly. Miss B didn't agree, so the complaint's been passed to me to decide.

## **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.

It was both appropriate and perfectly normal for Revolut to block Miss B's account in this situation. Her card and phone had been stolen – and those could both potentially be used to steal Miss B's money. Indeed, the thief had already made unauthorised payments by that point. So Revolut blocked the account in order to prevent further fraudulent payments and to keep Miss B's money safe.

This was not illegal, it was something Revolut were very much allowed and even expected to do as part of keeping Miss B's money safe. Indeed, their ability to block the account is set out clearly in the terms and conditions – the terms which Miss B agreed to in opening this account. I find that Revolut followed good industry practice by securing Miss B's account.

The block was *not* put in place because Revolut thought Miss B was a fraudster, or anything like that. It was put in place to stop the actual fraudster who had stolen Miss B's phone and card and was making payments without her permission. Revolut made it clear that they were blocking the account to keep it safe for Miss B. They did not say or reasonably imply that Miss B was a fraudster. I can reassure her that she was not being treated as one.

As part of keeping Miss B's money safe, it was appropriate for Revolut to keep the account blocked until she went through the proper security process. Her account was compromised by a thief, so it was sensible for Revolut to make sure that Miss B was the one accessing it going forward. Again, their actions here were reasonable and normal. As Miss B refused to go through the security process, her account remains blocked, which is also reasonable. If Miss B would like her account to be unblocked, even if she just closes it after, she will need to go through the security process first.

Turning to the disputed payments themselves, I can see that Revolut submitted the relevant form for Miss B so that she didn't have to. Then they refunded the disputed payments in full in good time. That seems more than fair. I've gone through Miss B's chat with Revolut, and find that Revolut handled things reasonably overall. From what I can see, the main issue was caused by Miss B refusing to go through the proper process.

I understand that Miss B felt it was difficult to complain. Our service is only allowed to consider cases about "regulated activities" – things like processing payments. But handling complaints is not a regulated activity in and of itself. So her points there are not really in our jurisdiction. I will note that Miss B's complaint came through OK and Revolut addressed it well within the 8 weeks they had to do so. They also paid her £13.78 as a goodwill gesture, which I think is enough to address the customer service issues which Miss B set out.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons I've explained, I don't uphold Miss B's complaint.

This final decision marks the end of our service's consideration of the case.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss B to accept or reject my decision before 5 December 2023.

Adam Charles  
**Ombudsman**