

complaint

Mr E's complain concerns the actions of Provident Personal Credit Limited, trading as Satsuma Loans, in relation to his loan account.

background

Mr E has a loan account with Satsuma. I understand that in September 2016, Mr E entered into an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) which included the loan with Satsuma. In 2017, Satsuma sent him a default notice in relation to the loan. Mr E says it also registered a default on his credit file. He says it shouldn't have done that, as the loan was included in his IVA. Mr E also complains that he can't access his loan on-line.

Our adjudicator said Satsuma had dealt with Mr E's complaint fairly. She said Satsuma had apologised to Mr E for its error in sending him a default notice. It said it hadn't registered a default on Mr E's credit file. Satsuma says it freezes an account once it's included in an IVA and disables the log-in service. The adjudicator didn't think that was unreasonable. Mr E could call or e-mail Satsuma, if he wanted information.

Mr E didn't agree with the adjudicator and asked that an ombudsman consider his complaint. He says Satsuma has recorded a default on his credit file. Mr E says he needs to log into his account in order to view his balance.

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 very sorry to hear about the distress this matter has caused Mr E.

Satsuma agrees that it shouldn't have sent Mr E a default notice after the loan was included in an IVA. It's apologised for that. I think that's reasonable.

Mr E says Satsuma registered a default on his credit file and that he saw the default when he viewed his credit file on-line. The adjudicator asked Mr E for a copy of his credit file but Mr E didn't provide it. Mr E says Satsuma took too long to deal with his complaint, so the time for viewing his credit file on-line expired. He said he didn't want to pay to view his credit file again and that the free credit reports aren't always reliable.

Based on what I've seen, I don't think there's enough evidence to enable me to safely conclude that Satsuma registered a default on Mr E's credit file.

I note what Mr E says about the time Satsuma took to deal with his complaint. I can't look separately at Satsuma's handling of Mr E's complaint, as complaint handling isn't a regulated activity within the meaning of the rules that give us our powers.

Satsuma says it disables the log-in service when an account is part of an IVA. Mr E can still get information from Satsuma by phone or e-mail. I don't think that's unreasonable.

Mr E's complaint about Satsuma's letter to him of 11 December 2017 wasn't part of his original complaint, so Satsuma hasn't had a chance to respond to it. That means I can't deal with that in this decision. If Mr E wishes to complain about that letter, he should do so to Satsuma in the first instance.

I'm very sorry to disappoint Mr E but for the reasons I've set out above, I don't uphold his complaint.

my final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold Mr E's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr E to accept or reject my decision before 1 March 2018.

Louise Povey
ombudsman