

complaint

Mrs B complains that Provident Personal Credit Limited did not send an agent to her home to collect her monthly loan payments, which meant that she was unable to reduce the balance due under a loan agreement.

background

In May 2009 Mrs B took out a loan with Provident for £1,000. Shortly afterwards, the account fell into arrears. Provident agreed to accept reduced payments from Mrs B. She made repayments in a number of ways. Some were made to an agent during a visit to her home address. Others were made via a payment line, or through Allpay PayPoint. Mrs B lost her Allpay card in 2012, but a replacement one was sent to her.

The adjudicator did not recommend that the complaint should be upheld. She considered that Mrs B was aware she could make repayments in a number of ways, and this was not restricted to the times when an agent visited her home.

The adjudicator noted that Provident has said it will close Mrs B's account once the balance due on the loan is £100. The adjudicator considered this offer to be fair and reasonable.

Mrs B is not happy to accept the adjudicator's recommendation. She says that the loan agent did not always call to collect payment from her. Mrs B also lost her pay card which made it difficult to make repayments. She says that she was told she could not make payments in person at the local office of Provident. Mrs B adds that a payment of £7 she made has not been credited to her loan.

my findings

I have considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Financial businesses have a duty to act positively and sympathetically when a customer is in financial difficulty. This does not however mean that it is under any requirement to write off the debt. Provident agreed to a repayment plan for Mrs B, and it has offered to reduce her loan by £100. In light of these actions, I find that Provident has satisfied its duty to treat her positively and sympathetically when Mrs B found herself in financial difficulty.

Mrs B says that she found it difficult to make repayments towards her loan as the agent did not always visit her home to collect payment from her. I note however that Mrs B has made her payments in other ways, such as via a payment line. Provident also wrote to Mrs B in September 2011 to tell her of the different ways she could make repayments. I am therefore persuaded that Mrs B did not need a visit from an agent to allow her to make repayments.

Mrs B says that it was difficult to make repayments when she lost her Allpay card. I note a replacement card was sent to her which should have resolved any problems this loss caused.

Mrs B points out that a payment of £7 she made on 4 June 2011 has not been credited to her account. It does appear from her Payment Book that this sum has not been taken into account. Given that Provident has offered to close Mrs B's account once the remaining balance is £100, I consider that this will remedy this oversight.

In all the circumstances, I do not find that there are any grounds on which I can reasonably require Provident to write off Mrs B's loan.

my final decision

My decision is that Provident Personal Credit Limited should close Mrs B's account once the remaining balance is £100.

Rosemary Lloyd
ombudsman