

The complaint

Ms C complains that Paymentsense Limited didn't accurately complete a change of address request on her account.

Ms C is represented in bringing this complaint by her partner, Mr C.

What happened

In August 2019, Ms C signed a contract with Paymentsense for the provision of card terminals and associated services. At this time, she also entered into a separate contract with First Data (now trading as Clover) who would be responsible for processing the card transactions.

Ms C's partner and representative, Mr C, contacted Paymentsense in July 2021 and asked for the address to be changed on the account. Approximately eighteen months later, Mr C discovered the address had not been updated with First Data.

In June 2023, Mr C contacted Paymentsense and asked why the address hadn't been changed with First Data and asked for it to be updated. Paymentsense apologised for their error but explained that since the time of the original request, First Data's policies had changed, and they required a short, written request and a copy of a utility bill for the change to be made. Paymentsense agreed to pass this information across to First Data as soon as it was received from Mr C.

Mr C was unhappy with this outcome and brought the complaint to our service. One of our investigator's looked into matters. He agreed that Paymentsense had made an error but explained to Mr C that we wouldn't ask them to change their policies. He said Paymentsense had provided a resolution to the complaint and although it caused a minor inconvenience, he didn't think it was unreasonable for them to request that Mr C take this additional step to ensure the address was updated accurately.

Mr C was unhappy with this response and said it was wrong that he needed to expend effort to correct the mistake Paymentsense had made. He asked for an ombudsman to review the matter.

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.

I'll start by agreeing that there is no doubt that Paymentsense did make a mistake in July 2021, at which time they should've updated the address correctly. I can see that they did advise First Data of the address change at that time, but not in the correct format, which resulted in the change of address being unsuccessful. Paymentsense have acknowledged and apologised for their error but they've explained that First Data's process has changed and Paymentsense are physically unable to make this change on their customer's behalf.

Having reviewed the information provided to us by Paymentsense I can confirm that they don't have the ability to change the address with First Data. I understand this has caused a minor inconvenience to Mr and Ms C as they now need to provide a short, written request and the copy of a utility bill for the change to be made.

Although I appreciate there is an inconvenience involved, I don't think it's unreasonable for Paymentsense to request that Mr C takes some action to ensure this change is made. I've also not seen that this has caused any financial loss to Ms C's business nor has it impaired the operation of that business in any way. So, I think the explanation and apology from Paymentsense is enough to compensate for their error in the circumstances of this case.

I understand that Mr C would like us to instruct Paymentsense to change its process, however, as our investigator has already explained, our service wouldn't look to instruct Paymentsense to take that kind of action. Security measures like this are put in place to protect the account holders and although it is unfortunate that the process changed since Mr C first provided the instruction to Paymentsense, I don't think the new process is unreasonable or unfair.

However, there seems to have been some confusion caused by the change of name by First Data to Clover. I wouldn't expect Mr or Ms C to have necessarily known about this change and this caused some confusion for them. So Paymentsense should take this on board and be careful in future correspondence with their customers to ensure they are clear about which business they are referring to if a name change has taken place.

I appreciate this matter has caused some frustration to Mr and Ms C but if they still wish for the address to be changed, they will need to follow the process outlined by Paymentsense as there is no other way for this to be done.

My final decision

For the reasons set out above, I don't require Paymentsense Limited to take any further action unless the required information is provided to them by Mr or Ms C.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms C to accept or reject my decision before 19 October 2023.

Tara Richardson
Ombudsman