

The complaint

Mr H is complaining on behalf of his business that he didn't receive the full amount of cash he withdrew from his account with Lloyds Bank PLC. He'd like the shortfall refunded.

What happened

Mr H is complaining on behalf of a business which I'll call C. Mr H says on 26 November 2021 he made a cash withdrawal of £4,000 in branch but when he later checked the funds, he realised £1,240 was missing. On 10 December 2021 Mr H made another cash withdrawal in branch for £3,500 but later realised £1,040 was missing.

Lloyds didn't uphold the complaint. They said they'd checked their teller cash recycling (TCR) machine that counts the money and that there was no discrepancy. They also said they checked the tills Mr H would've used, and there was no discrepancy there either. Our investigator didn't uphold the complaint. She looked at the TCR reports and the till balance receipts for both dates and confirmed these all balanced.

Mr H disagreed so the complaint has been passed to me to consider.

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 can understand why Mr H feels upset by this situation and would like the shortfall to be refunded as C is out of pocket, but I don't think Lloyds need to do anything here.

I say this because Lloyds' records demonstrate there wasn't a discrepancy as Mr H has described in the cash Lloyds retained in branch. Lloyds has also provided evidence of a search that was conducted as part of their regular checks after both transactions and this also showed that there was no discrepancy at branch as Mr H has described. If there had been a surplus of cash, I would expect the records to reflect this. But the available technical evidence suggests that Mr H was given the correct amounts.

Although this evidence is enough to satisfy me that Lloyds did provide Mr H with the right amount of cash, I've also considered Mr H's side of the story in deciding his complaint.

Whilst I'm not doubting what Mr H has told us and I can empathise with his situation, I'm mindful that Mr H had the cash for a period of time before noticing the shortfall. So it's possible something may have happened to the cash after Lloyds had given this to Mr H in branch.

In addition to this Mr H has told us the reason for the cash withdrawal was to pay wages and make cash purchases for his business. He also said that he had to draw more money out of his account to cover this loss.

Having looked at his account statements, I can see some cash withdrawals took place shortly after 26 November and 10 December but these seem to be in keeping with the pattern of the account activity. Taking this pattern into account, it doesn't seem additional cash withdrawals on top of this took place to make up the shortfalls on each occasion. So I would have expected to see additional transactions on the account as Mr H needed the cash for his business.

For these reasons I feel it's more likely than not that Lloyds gave Mr H the correct amount of money in branch, and it wouldn't be reasonable to ask Lloyds to make up any shortfalls discovered later.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask C to accept or reject my decision before 28 December 2023.

Marie Camenzuli
Ombudsman