

Lastminute.com commits to refund over £7m for cancelled holidays

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has been investigating lastminute.com after receiving hundreds of complaints that people were not receiving refunds for package holidays cancelled due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

More than 9,000 customers whose holidays were cancelled by lastminute.com are currently awaiting refunds, amounting to over £7 million. Many of these will have had to wait more than 14 days, exceeding the repayment window required by law. Following CMA intervention, lastminute.com has now signed formal commitments – known as ‘undertakings’ – to pay these refunds as soon as possible and by 31 January at the latest.

The commitments secured by the CMA will also mean that anyone entitled to a refund for a holiday cancelled by lastminute.com on or after 3 December 2020 will be paid within 14 days.

To ensure that lastminute.com adheres to its commitments, the company must provide the CMA with regular reports on the progress of its refunds.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

Online travel agents have a legal responsibility to provide prompt refunds to customers whose holidays have been cancelled due to coronavirus – irrespective of whether the agent received refunds from airlines and accommodation providers.

Our action today means that customers whose holidays were cancelled by lastminute.com will receive their money back without undue delay.

The CMA is continuing to investigate package holiday firms following concerns that people are not getting the refunds they’re entitled to when bookings can’t go ahead because of the pandemic. If we find that businesses are breaching consumer protection law, we will not hesitate to take further action.

Today’s announcement follows significant action by the CMA in relation to holiday cancellations. It has [written to over 100 package holiday firms to remind them of their obligations to comply with consumer protection law](#), and has already secured refund commitments from [Virgin Holidays](#), [TUI UK](#), [Sykes Cottages](#) and [Vacation Rentals](#).

In order to help businesses to understand their legal obligations with regard to consumer protection law, the [CMA published a statement on its view of how the law relates to cancellations and refunds due to coronavirus](#).

Further information on this case can be found on the [COVID-19 cancellations: package holidays web page](#).

Notes to editors

1. Lastminute.com will repay at least half of customers by 16 December 2020 and pay the remaining refunds by no later than 31 January 2021.
2. Lastminute.com has committed to these dates as the earliest by which it can pay.