

Teletext to pay back over £7 million for all outstanding refunds

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) opened an investigation into Teletext Holidays and its sister travel operator, Alpharooms.com (Alpharooms), on 4 February after receiving hundreds of complaints. This showed that people were not receiving refunds they were owed within 14 days, as required by law, for package holidays cancelled by the company due to the pandemic.

On 30 April, the CMA informed Truly Holdings Ltd, the company that operates Teletext Holidays and Alpharooms, that it was preparing to take court action against the firm for over £7 million in outstanding refunds owed to its customers.

Truly Holdings Ltd has now signed formal commitments, known as undertakings, that ensure affected customers still owed a refund will get their money back. This includes a repayment schedule that prioritises refunds to customers with the longest-standing claims.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

There's no excuse for travel firms to delay refunding customers what they are legally owed, even in these extraordinary times. Companies should be doing the right thing without the threat of court action.

As a result of our work, customers who have waited many months for their money back from Teletext Holidays and Alpharooms will now receive a full refund.

With international travel resuming and many people considering long awaited trips abroad, all package holiday firms must give refunds within 14 days where these are due, and should also provide clear cancellation information, so that no one else is unnecessarily put through this ordeal.

Having carefully reviewed Truly Holdings Ltd's financial information and how quickly it can realistically make the repayments, the CMA has accepted its commitment to pay back all customers owed refunds by 31 August 2021 at the latest. The timeframe that has been agreed balances the challenges experienced by the travel sector as a result of the pandemic with the need to get customers their money back in full as quickly as possible. The company has also committed in its undertakings to refunding in full within 14 days any package holidays it cancels due to the COVID-19 pandemic going forward.

To ensure that the company adheres to its commitments, it has agreed to provide the CMA with regular reports on the progress of its repayments. If

the firm fails to repay customers according to the undertakings, the CMA is prepared to take it to court.

Customers waiting for their money back should visit www.teletextholidays.co.uk or www.alpharooms.com from 28 May, where there will be dedicated pages explaining the process regarding refunds and a webform enabling customers to request a cash refund. In addition, Teletext Holidays and Alpharooms package holiday customers who have not received cash refunds but who have Refund Credit Notes for their cancelled trips, which have not expired or been redeemed, should receive an email from the company shortly, asking them to confirm whether they want a refund.

Today's announcement follows significant action by the CMA in relation to holiday cancellations during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including securing refund commitments from [LoveHolidays](#), [Lastminute.com](#), [Virgin Holidays](#), and [TUI UK](#). The CMA has also [written to](#) over 100 package holiday firms to remind them of their obligations to comply with consumer protection law, and [warned package holiday companies](#) to respect the refund rights of holidaymakers ahead of the summer period.

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

Notes to editors

1. Teletext Holidays is the trading name of Truly Travel Limited, which is a subsidiary of Truly Holdings Limited. Truly Travel Limited and Alpha Holidays Limited (which trades as Alpharooms.com) are both subsidiaries of Truly Holdings Limited.
2. Truly Holdings Ltd has agreed to a schedule of repayments, where customers who are still owed cash refunds for bookings cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic on or before 31 July 2020 will be refunded by 30 June 2021; customers with bookings cancelled between 1 August 2020 and 31 October 2020 will be refunded by 31 July 2021; and customers with bookings cancelled between 1 November 2020 and 24 May 2021 (inclusive) will be refunded by 31 August 2021.
3. The CMA sent a letter before claim to Truly Holdings Limited on 30 April 2021. This outlined that the CMA intended to apply to the court for an order under section 217 of the Enterprise Act 2002 requiring the company to comply with its obligations under [the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018](#).
4. The CMA's investigation relates to package travel holidays booked with Teletext Holidays and Alpharooms, not flights or accommodation booked on a standalone basis.

5. Where package holidays are cancelled and consumers are entitled to a full refund under the Package Travel Regulations, those refunds must be provided within 14 days of the cancellation.