

Talk to your bank if you have a problem

Sometimes you may have a problem with a product or service you receive from your bank.

Fortunately, most problems can be quickly resolved when you contact your bank and tell someone about your problem.

If your bank can't resolve your problem there and then, they will let you know how and when it intends to resolve the issue, and will aim to keep you informed of what's happening.

If the bank *hasn't* been able to resolve the problem to your satisfaction, you can take the following steps:

Step 1: Make a complaint to the bank

The Code of Banking Practice and National Credit Code require your bank to have an internal complaint handling procedure.

Banks aim to resolve complaints when first contacted. If your bank can't resolve it immediately, they will let you know who is handling your complaint, keep you informed of what's happening and aim to resolve your complaint within 45 days of receipt of the dispute.

If your issue hasn't been resolved to your satisfaction, then you can take your complaint to an external dispute resolution scheme for independent review (see Step 2).

In 2016, banks announced they'll be appointing new customer advocates to give people a greater voice when they have a complaint, as part of a number of changes to better protect customers.

The customer advocate may help you navigate the complaints handling process, directly resolve a complaint for you or escalate complaints through the bank.

Step 2: Make a complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service

The Code of Banking Practice, Corporations Act 2001 and National Credit Code require your bank to be part of an external dispute resolution scheme.

The Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) is an independent complaints scheme that is free for bank customers. It provides a way of resolving disputes without having to go to court. If you agree with the FOS's decision, the bank must comply with the decision.

Only go to FOS after you've tried to resolve the dispute with your bank, as FOS won't deal with your issue unless you've first given the bank the chance to put things right.

Refer your complaint to:

Financial Ombudsman Service Australia

Telephone: 1800 367 287 (Free Call)

Email: info@fos.org.au

Lodge a dispute online [here](#).