

UK lawsuits to assist passengers in recovering up to £7bn owed due to Coronavirus flight cancellations

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Up to £7bn is owed to consumers due to flights and holidays which have been cancelled by airlines and tour operators due to the Coronavirus crisis. Whilst some airlines are offering refunds, many others are delaying refunds or, in the most egregious cases of all, point blank refusing refunds.

Amongst those refusing refunds, or failing to give definitive timescales for payment, are Ryanair, KLM, and Air France, all of whom have released clear announcements that they will not be issuing refunds. Notwithstanding the challenges which the airline industry is facing during the pandemic, airlines must obey consumer protection laws which are in place to protect the customers' rights and interests.

According to the EU Regulation 261/2004 (airlines) and EU Directive 2015/2302 (travel package), both mandatory laws, passengers with cancelled flights must be offered a choice of re-routing under comparable transport conditions, to their final destination at the earliest opportunity; or reimbursement of the full cost of the ticket at the price at which it was bought, within seven days.

Whilst suggestions have been made that the rights under these laws may be suspended, consumers may still seek full refunds and compensation for distress and inconvenience under the Consumer Rights Act and the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations. These are UK laws and any EU decision will have no impact upon these.

SPG Law, the leading class action law firm in the UK, is today launching litigation against Ryanair, KLM, and Air France on behalf of consumers. Hundreds of affected passengers have already contacted SPG Law and test claims will be issued in the English courts in the coming days. The lawsuits will not only demand that the airlines fully refund the costs of customers' tickets, but also seek additional damages for stress, inconvenience, and commercial misconduct by the airlines.

In order to be represented by SPG Law, affected passengers must be residents of the United Kingdom who have purchased tickets with Ryanair, KLM or Air France.

SPG Law operates on a *no-win, no-fee* basis, and if successful will offer claimants 100% of the refund of the cost of their flights but will charge 50% of any damages recovered for stress, inconvenience and commercial misconduct.

SPG Law Managing Partner, Thomas Goodhead, said in regard to the airlines' misconduct that "*Whilst all of us who travel frequently are able to empathise with the commercial conditions that airlines face, it is highly unethical that they should seek to finance their businesses by unlawfully withholding monies which belong to consumers. After the crisis is over, consumers will remember which airlines acted honourably and which ones chose to prioritise their balance sheets over their customers' bank accounts.*"

1. To make a claim or for more information regarding the airline refunds' class-action, visit: <https://www.theairlineclaim.com>

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