# Scottish postman receives nearly £5,000 for wrongful dismissal after altercation with customer



A Scottish postman, Andrew Drysdale, has been awarded nearly £5,000 in damages for wrongful dismissal after being sacked following a physical altercation with a customer over a parcel delivery. The incident occurred in February 2024, when Drysdale, 60, was accused by a customer of failing to properly deliver a parcel, leading to a confrontation that would ultimately result in his termination from Royal Mail.

Drysdale had been employed as a postman since 2008 and asserted that he acted in self-defence during what he characterised as a "square go." He claimed that after he had made multiple attempts to deliver the parcel—leaving a card when the customer was not home and delivering it to a neighbour on the third attempt—he was approached aggressively by the customer. The tribunal established that the customer, who is 20 years younger than Drysdale, confronted him outside the property, prompting a physical response.

The incident escalated when, according to the findings, the customer punched Drysdale first. The tribunal found that Drysdale reacted defensively, resulting in him making contact with the customer. A judgement from the employment tribunal noted, “The customer was annoyed and replied that (Mr Drysdale) should do his job properly,” and detailed that when Drysdale attempted to leave, the customer approached him aggressively while his dog was being restrained.

Taking the matter to a tribunal in Glasgow, Drysdale argued that his actions were not a breach of contract as they were a response to an aggressive threat. The tribunal ultimately ruled in favour of Drysdale, stating that while it was regrettable he had punched the customer, his actions did not warrant immediate dismissal as a repudiatory breach of contract. Employment Judge Shona MacLean remarked on the evidence presented, expressing scepticism towards the customer's account of events, suggesting that it may have been embellished, thus lending credibility to Drysdale’s version of the encounter.

Following the incident and subsequent hearings, Drysdale was initially suspended and later dismissed for gross misconduct, having been deemed the “instigator.” Although a claim for unfair dismissal was dismissed, the tribunal determined he was wrongfully discharged and, as such, was entitled to compensation amounting to £4,734.36 for the procedural shortcomings in his dismissal, specifically the lack of notice.

In light of this outcome, a spokesperson for Royal Mail stated their acknowledgment of the tribunal’s findings, emphasising their firm stance against violence at work and their commitment to investigating such incidents thoroughly.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-64718620> - This article discusses the case of Andrew Drysdale, including the physical altercation with a customer that led to his wrongful dismissal from Royal Mail.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/apr/09/royal-mail-postman-wrongfully-dismissed-customer-incident> - The Guardian article provides details about Drysdale's employment history and the circumstances surrounding the incident, corroborating claims about his self-defense assertion.
* <https://www.scotsman.com/news/crime/postman-wrongfully-dismissed-after-violent-altercation-with-customer-3628888> - This source covers the tribunal’s findings that supported Drysdale's account of the altercation, emphasizing the customer’s aggression towards him.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/postman-wrongful-dismissal-tribunal-royal-mail-glasgow-b2351201.html> - The Independent article elaborates on the tribunal's ruling in favor of Drysdale, including details about employment Judge Shona MacLean's skepticism towards the customer's testimony.
* <https://www.mpac.co.uk/news/2025/apr/01/court-rules-in-favour-of-postman-wrongfully-dismissed> - This piece highlights the compensation awarded to Drysdale and the procedural flaws in his dismissal that were brought to light during the tribunal process.