

Reply to Gemma, Stripe Executive Escalations Team

From: compassion@dr.com (compassion@dr.com)

To: escalations@stripe.com

Cc: john@stripe.com

Date: Monday, 16 October 2023 at 14:51 BST

Monday 16 October 2023

Dear Gemma and John,

Hope you are well and had a good weekend.

We are grateful John swiftly forwarded our last email to Gemma. The reason we copied in John is because the experts helping us identified a serious flaw in the system (i.e. Express Stripe refused to accept us as a small charity with tax exemption status granted by the UK Government HMRC. HMRC confirmed we as a small charity with less than £5,000 annual income do NOT need to fill in any tax forms, including the one Express Stripe online system forced us to fill in. HMRC confirmed our charity reference number is EW33811, which is only given to small poor charities like ours who are exempt from paying tax).

Please ask staff to urgently amend the Express Stripe online form or other appropriate actions to enable X to pay us for the ads revenue generated by approximately 8 million impressions we earned in the last 3 months.

Purpose of this email: To respond fully to the queries raised in your email with hard evidence from lawyers and present you with workable solutions to bring closure to the issue that is causing distress for the communities we support.

Hard evidence in 3 PDF files attached:

1. PDF file number 1 containing 6 pages of screenshots of the online form with correct answers

With support from charity experts who are experienced in this field, we have filled in the W-8/W-9 Certification again in Express Stripe. This time, we took screenshots of all answers for you to view.

Please see pages 1 to 3 for screenshots of our answers.

Page 4 is the area in Express Stripe online form where the tax form button was by default switched on, even though the UK Government's HMRC granted us exemption from tax, which means we do not need to fill in any forms about tax. Please ask staff to create an option for people like us to tick a box or click on a

button to confirm the UK Government HMRC granted us tax exemption and then bypass the tax form.

Page 5 is one of the emails from X confirming they suggest we fill in the online form again, which we did at least 3 times but it did not solve the problem. When we provided the correct answers (checked by charity experts, accountants and lawyers), the system refused to accept the submission after we click on the submit button. The legal experts suspected the system contained flaws and for the purpose of their independent investigation, they tested the system by providing incorrect answers, the same outcome occurred. This proved the system designed by Stripe needs to be urgently fixed.

Page 6 is the link sent by Express Stripe (requested by X) asking us to fill in the online form again, which we did at least 3 times but it did not solve the problem.

2. PDF file number 2 containing our letter to Stripe Chief Executive with legal advice on page 3

3. PDF file number 3 containing the latest and final reply (after a long string of lengthy and complex email exchanges) from X confirming there's nothing they can do and confirming Stripe needs to sort out the highlighted problem

Below we outlined the full explanations of the answers provided:

1. The answer to the question entitled Professional Details

The Little Portion Community Project is the name of the small health charity which established Healed by Compassion (this health support network) and we are a part of them. For full details, please see legal advice on page 3 of our letter to the Stripe Chief Executive, which is PDF file number 2 attached.

Below the name of Little Portion Community Project is a contact postal address of one of our volunteers, which we supplied in full on the online form (with his permission, of course). Before funding was reduced by the UK cost of living crisis, we used to rent a PO Box address but this was stopped after our funding was cut. As a result not having a charity PO Box address, one of our volunteers kindly offered his family home address for postal correspondence.

The UK Government's HMRC fully accepted this and the address typed on the online form is the address registered with HMRC (in the UK, HMRC is the Government Agency responsible for taxes)

When you view the screenshot attached, you will see even though the full address was supplied in the online form, our lawyers blanked out parts of the volunteer's home address on the PDF file attached to this email, this is to protect the volunteer's privacy, human dignity and to comply with relevant legislation such as GDPR and Data Protection. This is because the volunteer's current and past positions in society forbid people from viewing his personal address unless they are authorised to do so.

Please see page 1 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

2. The answer to the question entitled is the business associated with this Stripe account considered a US person

We wrote no, which is the correct answer as all our volunteers are based in England.

Please see page 1 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

3. The answer to the question entitled Tax Classification

We selected Tax-Exempt Organisation, which was advised by accountants and lawyers because as a small charity with less than £5,000 total income a year, the British Government's HMRC does not require us to pay any kind of taxes. To confirm this fact, the HMRC provided us with a charity reference number, which is EW33811. For legal advice, please see page 3 of our letter to the Stripe Chief Executive, which is PDF file number 2 attached.

Please see page 1 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

4. The answer to the question entitled Country of Citizenship

We selected United Kingdom as all our volunteers are British Citizens

Please see page 1 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

5. The answer to the question entitled Non-US Permanent Residence Address

With kind permission from one of our most senior and most experienced volunteers, we typed his address.

When you view the screenshot attached, you will see even though the full address was supplied in the online form, our lawyers blanked out parts of the volunteer's home address on the PDF file attached to this email, this is to protect the volunteer's privacy, human dignity and to comply with relevant legislation such as GDPR and Data Protection. This is because the volunteer's current and past positions in society forbid people from viewing his personal address unless they are authorised to do so.

Please see page 2 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

6. The answer to the question entitled is your postal address the same as the permanent residence address above

We answered yes. Before funding was reduced by the UK cost of living crisis, we used to rent a PO Box address but this was stopped after our funding was cut. As a result not having a charity PO Box address, one of our volunteers kindly offered his family home address for postal correspondence.

The UK Government's HMRC fully accepted this and the address typed on the online form is the address registered with HMRC (in the UK, HMRC is the

Government Agency responsible for taxes)

Please see page 2 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

7. The answer to the question entitled check if non-US taxpayer identification number not legally required

We ticked the box to indicate non-US taxpayer identification number not legally required, because we are based in England

Please see page 2 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

8. The answer to the question entitled Tax Treaty Claims

We answered we are NOT claiming a reduced rate of withholding under a tax treaty because as a small charity with less than £5,000 income a year, the Law and the UK Government's HMRC does not require us to pay taxes.

Please see page 2 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

What happened next:

After we answered all 8 questions in full, and after our answers were checked by charity experts, accountants and lawyers, we then asked the senior volunteer (whom we nominated as our Representative when communicating with UK Government and HMRC, and whom the UK Government and HMRC accepted and recognise as our Representative) to tick the relevant box in the certification (final part of the online form) to certify all answers are correct and true. He then typed his full name and clicked on submit.

What happened after the authorised senior volunteer (our official representative recognised by UK Government HMRC) clicked on the submit button:

After he clicked on submit, the system refused to accept online form and red words appeared next to question 8 (the question about Tax Treaty claims).

The red words next to a triangle exclamation mark stated "The tax classification provided requires a tax treaty claim to submit a W-8 BEN-E form"

Please see page 3 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached.

However, the experts advised as we are exempt from paying tax, we did not need to fill in W-8/W-9 (also known as the W-8 BEN-E Form) as it is not relevant to our small charity.

Remedies advised by charity experts, accountants and lawyers helping this distressing case:

Remedy 1

As the UK Government's HMRC granted us tax exemption status on the ground our total annual income is less than £5,000 (our HMRC charity reference number is EW33811, legally we were not required to fill in W-8/W-9 (also known as the W-8 BEN-E Form) as it is not relevant to our small charity.

However, the Express Stripe online form (which is relevant for sole traders, businesses and charities with more than £5,000 annual income) does not recognise our status granted by the UK Government's HMRC and forced us to fill in the form, which was totally unnecessary.

The remedy is clear, Express Stripe needs to amend the online form so that there's a box for us to tick to confirm we are legally not required to fill in the tax.

X confirmed they can't do this and urged we contact you (see evidence in PDF file number 3 attached)

Please also see page 4 of the screenshots in PDF file number 1 attached (the tax form button is by default turned on and we could not turn it off, so Stripe needs to correct this)

Other remedies

The other remedies suggested by experts can be found on page 2 of our letter to Stripe Chief Executive, which is attached in PDF file number 2

Conclusion:

When designing the Express Stripe online form, the staff overlooked the fact a small charity like ours, who have been granted tax exemption status by the UK Government HMRC, does not need fill in any tax forms. This means there should be a button or box to click for people in our situation so we are not forced to fill in a form that the Law states we are exempt from doing.

Since X confirmed only Stripe can resolve the matter (see evidence in PDF attachment number 3), please urgently asked your staff to amend the form and then either email us the amended form or you can tick the box on our behalf (this email gives you consent).

Other relevant information:

As stated in our letter to Stripe Chief Executive, many of our friends, neighbours, relatives and colleagues are Stripe customers and they highly recommended you. Among our volunteers there are numerous retired journalists and they trust you will take appropriate swift actions to bring this distressing matter to a full and satisfactory closure for all.

Friends in press and media pointed out since the cost of living crisis widely announced by British mainstream media over the last 3 years, the UK Government and its tax agency HMRC strongly encourage small poor charities like us to help local communities. Therefore, since our charities activities are in line with Government Priorities and Policies, please would Express Stripe respect the wishes

of the Establishment and take appropriate swift actions to enable X to pay us for ads revenue generated by 8 million impressions we earned from publishing interesting information on X (formerly Twitter) in the last 3 months.

Our friends and mentors in major national charities advised the UK Government's HMRC is supportive of small poor charities like ous and Express Stripe as a business needs to be on the same side as the Establishment.

Communication: Email is the best way for us to communicate.

Thank you.

With our very best wishes and warmest regards,

Volunteers Team in London

Healed by Compassion international health support network, part of the Little Portion Community Project, a small health charity founded in 2010.

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 at 6:55 AM
From: "Stripe Escalations" <escalations@stripe.com>
To: "compassion@dr.com" <compassion@dr.com>
Subject: Your Stripe Express Account with X

Hi there,

My name is Gemma and I'm with the executive escalations team in Stripe. Your email to John was flagged to me so that I could step in and try to resolve the issue you're having.

I've read through the letter you've sent to John and would like to verify some information so I am able to assist you appropriately here. From my understanding, you are hoping to either:

1. Have X process payouts to your account acct_1O1QzxPE2ZlmAk3v (linked to email "compassion@dr.com")
2. Link your account acct_1O1Tt2JswGsPUwke (linked to harmony@engineer.com) to X so you will be able to receive payouts from X

I am hoping to help you resolve this issue with account acct_1O1QzxPE2ZlmAk3v under (1). As stated on your letter, I can verify that there is a pending W8/W9 tax requirement on the account, it does not show that your account is rejected on our end. Also, if you refer to [0], you would be able to complete a W8 form. A W-8 tax form is for non-US residents and is used to confirm that you are not a US taxpayer.

Can we check if you have reached out to X for this issue and have they provided you with any information on how to resolve this? X should be able to send you a link to complete a W8 form which will then help to clear the pending tax requirement on your Stripe Express account. This tax requirement will have to be cleared by X as it is a connected, Express account under them. Stripe will not be able to help clear this requirement.

Do let me know of any correspondence you had with X thus far and any other information you think would be useful for me to help unblock this issue for you.

In the meantime, if you have any other questions or issues please feel free to flag them here.

Regards,

Gemma

[0] <https://support.stripe.com/express/topics/w-8-w-9-tax-forms>



1. Evidence.pdf
664.6kB



2. Letter to CEO of Stripe 15.10.2023.pdf
154.9kB



3. Latest reply from X.pdf
77.1kB

W-8/W-9 Certification

Complete the information below for your W-8/W-9 tax form, confirm it's correct, and certify it with an electronic signature. The information you submit such as your Taxpayer Identification Number (e.g., Social Security Number), name, and address will be shared with Twitter to help them accurately fulfill their tax and legal obligations.

Professional Details

The Little Portion Community Project

Court

High Street

London

E14

United Kingdom

Is the business associated with this Stripe account considered a US Person?

For non-individuals, a US Person is an entity that was formed, organised, or incorporated in the US (click here to learn more)

Yes

No

Form W-8

Tax Classification

Tax-Exempt Organisation

Country of citizenship

United Kingdom

Non-US Permanent residence address

United Kingdom



██████████ Court

██████████ High Street

London

E14 ██████████

Is your postal address the same as the permanent residence address above?

☒ Yes ☐ No

☒ Check if Non-U.S. Taxpayer Identification number not legally required

Tax treaty claims

Are you claiming a reduced rate of withholding under a tax treaty?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Certification

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined the information on this form and to the best of my knowledge and belief it is true, correct, and complete. I further certify under penalties of perjury that:

- The entity identified in this form is the beneficial owner of all the income or proceeds to which this form relates, is using this form to certify its status for chapter 4 purposes, or is submitting this form for purposes of section 6050W or 6050Y;
- The entity identified above is not a US person;
- This form relates to: (a) income not effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States, (b) income effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States but is not subject to tax under an income tax treaty, (c) the partner's share of a partnership's effectively connected taxable income, or (d) the partner's amount realized from the transfer of a partnership interest subject to withholding under

Tax treaty claims

Are you claiming a reduced rate of withholding under a tax treaty?

☐ Yes ☒ No

 The tax classification provided requires a tax treaty claim to submit a W-8 BEN-E form.

Twitter platform settings



DISPLAY NAME



Twitter




BUSINESS DETAILS

The Little Portion Community Project



██████████ Court
██████████ High Street
London
E14 ██████████
United Kingdom

W-8/W-9 FORM

 Missing W-8/W-9 certification

 Update

TAX FORM DELIVERY METHOD

Stripe Express

 ☒ On

Postal mail delivery

 ☐ Off

 To request a change to your delivery method, please contact Twitter.

TEAM MEMBERS

Invite and remove



Add other people to manage this account

Done


Delete Spam Reply  Forward Move 

Sort   

Case# 0344472230: Paid features support [ref:!00DA00K0A8.!5004w02pB3Ep:ref]

Close Fullscreen

^ From: Twitter Support +

10/15/2023 at 1:31 PM 

To: harmony@engineer.com 

Hello @compassion_heal,

Thanks for reaching out!

We apologize but we are unable to change the set of information asked by the platform. We can only reset the Stripe account. If you have indicated wrong information in the Stripe account, would you like to initiate a request to reset so you could start over?

You may also contact Stripe if you have issues with information asked in setting up the payout account.

Thanks,

Vanna

X Support

[Help](#) | [Privacy](#)

X Corp. 1355 Market Street, Suite 900 San Francisco, CA 94103

Type quick response here ...

Reply instantly

Update your Stripe account to receive your funds from X (formerly Twitter)

10/15/2023 at 2:22 PM ⓘ

From: Stripe +
Reply to: express@stripe.com +
To: compassion@dr.com +



Update your payout information to receive your payments from X (formerly Twitter)

Stripe needs to know where to send your earnings from X (formerly Twitter). You can use your Stripe dashboard to securely add checking account or debit card information, and track the progress of your earnings.

[Update payout details](#)

We take your privacy and data security seriously. Learn more about Stripe's [security and privacy policy](#), and our [verification process](#).



Healed by Compassion

International health support network

www.hope-and-compassion.com

PRIVATE &
CONFIDENTIAL

Letter to Mr John Collison
Chief Executive of Stripe

15 October 2023

Dear Mr Collison,

Introduction: Healed by Compassion is an unfunded health support network, founded by a small health charity called the Little Portion Community Project. We are inspired by the wonderful work you and your colleagues are doing at Stripe. Many of our relatives, friends and colleagues are clients of Stripe and they highly recommended your service.

Purpose of this letter: To let you know despite the fact we answered all the questions correctly (guided by friends who are lawyers and accountants) in the W-8/W-9 certification part of the online application to join Express Stripe, it still won't let us join. Friends who are lawyers and accountants investigated and advised those questions are primarily for businesses in America, whereas we are an unfunded health support network (founded by a small health charity) based in England.

Impact of the rejection: Our verified premium profile on X (which has exceeded 7 million impressions in the last 3 months) is eligible to share ads revenue from X, but as Express Stripe rejected our online application, X is unable to transfer the money to our community bank account.

Continue on next page

Relevant information:

With support from friends who are accountants and lawyers, we then tried signing up to Stripe on your website and it was a success, within 10 minutes we were accepted and were able to start receiving online donations (albeit no one has donated yet)

If you wish to check Stripe has accepted us, please visit our website (address on top of front page), click on the Support Us page, scroll down to the part that says click on the green button below to donate via Stripe, then click on the green button and our Stripe donation page will open in a new web page.

Our Stripe account name is the **Little Portion Community Project** and log in email address is **harmony@engineer.com** (please note during the unsuccessful earlier attempt to set up Express Stripe, we used a different email address, which was **compassion@dr.com**)

Unfortunately, as our new Stripe account was set up on a computer not linked to our X profile (we mostly access X on Apple i phone), X still can't pay us all the ads revenue we earned.

Why this matters:

Since the cost of living crisis, we have received far less donations than before. Our dedicated team of volunteers worked extremely hard on publishing useful information for communities at our verified premium profile on X, which earned 7 million impressions in the last 3 months and as a result, it is eligible to share ads revenue from X. We need the money to fill the gap in funding shortfall in order to maintain essentials services for the communities we support.

Remedies advised by experts:

1. As Stripe accepted the application we submitted on your website, can you ask staff to also accept the online application for Express Stripe linked to X
2. Or can you ask your colleagues to connect our existing Stripe account to X, which will enable X to pay us for ads revenue generated by the 7 million impressions we earned in the last 3 months
3. If the above mentioned 2 remedies cannot be implemented, can you amend the W-8/W-9 certification part of the online application of Express Stripe, which will then remove the barrier for an unfunded small charity to join.
4. As mentioned in the previous page, many of our relatives, friends and colleagues are clients of Stripe and they highly recommended your service. If the aforementioned 3 remedies are not possible, would Stripe make a small donation to fill the gap caused by funding shortfall (approximately £300)? If so, please visit the Support Us section of our website to donate via the Stripe payment link.

Continue on next page

As the W-8/W-9 certification part of the online application of Express Stripe rejected us, our friends who are accountants and lawyers provided the following advice:

As a small charity, there is no legal requirement for the Little Portion Community Project to apply for registration with the Charity Commission, because Section 30(2)(d) of the Charities Act 2011 states that a small charity whose gross income does not exceed £5,000 is not required to be registered with the Charity Commission.

The Charity Commission (the Regulator for charities in England and Wales) confirmed that in order to avoid unnecessary administrative costs, they don't register small charities whose income is less than £5,000 a year.

The Charity Commission advised that a small charitable organisation with an income that does not exceed £5,000 can enjoy the benefits of charitable status without having to meet the regulatory requirements of registered charities.

The Little Portion Community Project is recognised by the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) as a charity for tax purpose in line with Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010. The HMRC charity reference number is EW33811

Other relevant information: The community bank account belongs to the Little Portion Community Project, a small health charity that established this health support network (Healed by Compassion) in 2010.

The name Little Portion Project was used in the aforementioned Stripe applications and not Healed by Compassion.

For further details, please visit the Support Us section of our award-winning website (see link on top of front page) to read the verified information provided by experienced charity experts and checked by lawyers.

Communication: Email is the best way to communicate with us, our office email address is:

compassion@dr.com

Please kindly help us to resolve the issue, thank you.

With our very best wishes.

Authorised signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jen' or similar, written in a cursive style.

From all the volunteers at Healed by Compassion international health support network, established in 2010 by the Little Portion Community Project (a small health charity)

Case# 0344585320: Paid features support [ref:!00DA00K0A8.!5004w02ped2F:ref]

From: "Twitter Support" <support@twitter.com>
To: "harmony@engineer.com" <harmony@engineer.com>
Date: Oct 16, 2023 1:38:29 PM



Hello,

Thanks for reaching out for assistance with your Stripe account. We recommend that you contact [Stripe support](#) for further support on this issue.

Thanks,

Zanty

X Support

[Help](#) | [Privacy](#)

X Corp. 1355 Market Street, Suite 900 San Francisco, CA 94103



ref:!00DA00K0A8.!5004w02ped2F:ref