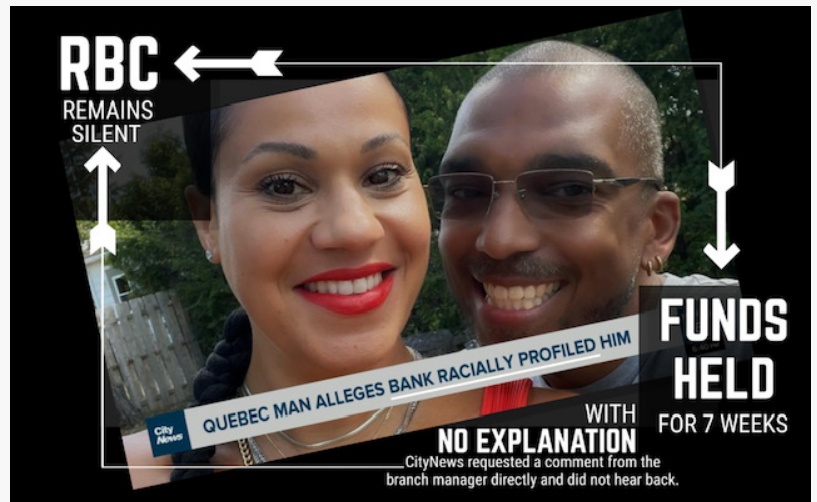


QUEBEC MAN'S FUNDS WITHHELD FOR NEARLY TWO MONTHS

A Quebec man says he's unable to access a portion of funds in his bank account after nearly two months, alleging he was racially profiled by his branch.

MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA, January 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- QUEBEC MAN'S FUNDS WITHHELD FOR NEARLY TWO MONTHS

A Quebec man says he's unable to access a portion of funds in his bank account after nearly two months, alleging he was racially profiled by his branch.



RBC Racially profile William McMillan in December a bank in Pincourt Qc

William McMillan says he was flagged, for no reason, by his Royal Bank of Canada (TSX: RY) (NYSE: RY) bank in Pincourt, Que., – west of Montreal – in December and part of his account has been frozen ever since.

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“I can’t even say disheartening there’s no real word,” said William McMillan, who hasn’t had access to his money in nearly two months after he claims he was racially profiled at Royal Bank of Canada.”

William McMillan

Even seven weeks later, McMillan says he’s still in a state of disbelief.

“Being devalued by multiple levels of RBC I can’t even say ‘disheartening,’” he said. “There’s no real word to verbalize everything that has transpired for this long and it hurts me on multiple levels.

“It’s only now, there’s like slight connections of, ‘wow that really happened to me. It wasn’t in a movie, not on TV, it really happened to me.’”

In early December, CityNews reported McMillan had a portion of his account blocked by the branch manager while he was trying to pay bills for his

mother through their joint account. He is the primary holder of the account and has a power of attorney.

McMillan planned to use money from the sale of a property that day for those bills as his notary had wire transferred the proceeds to that joint account.

McMillan says Royal Bank of Canada (TSX: RY) (NYSE: RY) flagged his account, specifically related the funds from the property sale, without asking for documentation.

He returned to the bank twice after the first encounter, with his mother and wife present. The branch allegedly told McMillan they were attempting to protect the client – his mother.

A few days later, he communicated with someone who claimed to be a representative of the bank, saying there was an anti-money laundering hold on the account.

McMillan hasn't heard anything since, even after several attempts to get answers.

McMillan's wife Svetlana Chernienko believes it's a clear case of racial profiling.

"When you get racially profiled, it mentally messes with you," said Chernienko. "I want people to imagine. You go to the bank, you can't access your money, you have no access. We didn't have access during the holidays. My mother-in-law couldn't get gifts for her grandchildren, she couldn't do anything, she couldn't pay her bills.

"This is wrong. What we have had to endure and go through, we've gotten no reasons, we've heard nothing besides that email. We have no reason, there's no justification. Why are you holding the funds?"

CityNews reached out to Royal Bank of Canada (TSX: RY) (NYSE: RY) and received an emailed statement. They deny this is a case of racial profiling but could not provide more details about the account.

"We vigorously dispute any allegations of discrimination made by Mr. McMillan but are not at liberty to discuss the specifics of the situations due to client privacy obligations. We would like to reiterate that discrimination – in any form – is against everything we stand for, and we do not tolerate it.

"We can assure you that the welfare of our clients, including elderly clients represented by others, is imperative to us and is an important part of our decision process."

CityNews requested a comment from the branch manager directly and did not hear back.

McMillan and Chernienko say the the past two months have taken a toll on their mental health, calling the situation "financial abuse."

The couple filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission with the help of Red Coalition, an organization dedicated to end systemic racism in Canada.

“We feel that there are a lot of discrepancies, whenever there are cases of racial profiling or bias or discrimination, a lot of things don’t match up,” said Joel DeBellefeuille, the founder of Red Coalition. “The back doesn’t know what the front is doing. You’ll get information that should’ve been given at the beginning as opposed to in the middle or at the end.

“And according to the couple, they have yet to hear a clear response from RBC with regards to, six weeks later, why are they still without funds right.”

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