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Common Problems When Forwarding Email

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Forwarded Email May Bounce or be Deferred

We have seen occasional increases in bounced (i.e., messages not delivered with a note to the sender) or deferred (delayed but delivered) messages sent to Wharton/Penn addresses forwarded to a personal address (this most often occurs when forwarding to a free Gmail address, but does affect other email providers).

This intermittent issue predominantly affects students who are forwarding their Google@Wharton account to another address and alumni using their alumni forwarding address. These deferrals and bounces are often the results of unexpected changes in the way the recipient's email host handles spam email or changes made to mail security settings that affect all mail sent from the University.

We are investigating long-term architectural changes that may mitigate these issues, but at the moment, there is no universal solution to this problem.

How it Affects You

Bounced Messages

A message that "bounces" never reaches your inbox and generates an error notification to the sender. A reason and error code is often provided in this situation, for example:

550-5.7.26 This message does not have authentication information or fails to
550-5.7.26 pass authentication checks. To best protect our users from spam, the
550-5.7.26 message has been blocked. Please visit
550-5.7.26 <https://support.google.com/mail/answer/81126#authentication> for more
550 5.7.26 information.

Generally, senders will notice the error and notify you via an alternate contact method if your forwarded mail is consistently bouncing messages. Most bounces/message denial reasons will point back to configurations on the part of the sending email domain as the cause (i.e., there is an issue with the sender's configuration).

Deferred Messages

Deferred messages are emails that won't arrive in your inbox until hours - or in some cases more than a day - after sending. Deferrals usually occur due to transitory reputation issues with the sending mail servers or Penn's mail servers in some cases. Email headers included as part of the message will confirm when and where delays happen. If instructed by Gmail to "try again later," Penn's mail servers will reattempt sending the message until successful (as confirmed in the headers).

Take Action

Students/Faculty/Staff

If either of these situations occurs for you, and you have a Wharton or Penn-provided Google mailbox, we **recommend unforwarding your mail and sending mail directly to your inbox**. Unforwarding your mail reduces the likelihood of blocked messages to a near-zero chance and significantly decreases the chances of having messages deferred.

Alumni Forwarding

For users without a Wharton or Penn-provided Google mailbox, such as alumni, you may **try changing your forwarded mail destination to a non-Gmail provider** (e.g., Yahoo or Outlook). However, this may not work in all situations and may pose similar or new challenges to those experienced with Gmail.

Questions?

We will update this page as we learn more about the problem, and/or identify a more permanent solution. If you still have questions, please contact:

Current Students: [Wharton Computing Student Support](#)

Alumni: [Alumni Relations](#)
