



# Process

# Documentation

*Department:*

Customer Support

*Last Updated:*

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*NAME OF PROCESS*

## Common Email Bounce Reasons

*Use Case / Objectives*

This document will outline several of the most common reasons an email could be returned (i.e., bounced).

## Common Email Bounce Reasons

- **Hard Bounce**
  - **Invalid Email Address:** The recipient's email address does not exist.
  - **Domain Does Not Exist:** The domain in the email address is incorrect or inactive.
  - **Mailbox Disabled:** The recipient's mailbox has been closed or suspended.
  - **Syntax Error:** The email address format is incorrect (e.g., missing @ or domain). The email address no longer exists.
- **SMTP API Error:** The email was previously Hard Bounced and will not be processed again.
- **Soft Bounce:**
  - **Mailbox Full:** The recipient's inbox has reached its storage limit.
  - **Server Down or Unavailable:** The recipient's mail server is temporarily offline.
  - **Message Too Large:** The email exceeds size limits set by the recipient's server.
  - **Greylisting:** The recipient's server temporarily rejects the message to verify legitimacy.
- **ISP Block (AKA Policy-Related):**
  - **Blocked by Recipient:** The recipient has blocked your domain or address.
  - **Spam Filter Rejection:** The message was flagged as spam.
  - **Authentication Failure:** Missing or incorrect SPF, DKIM, or DMARC records.
  - **Blacklisted IP or Domain:** Your sending server is on a blacklist.
- **Autoresponder:** Automatic email responder including nondescript NDRs and some "out of office" replies.
- **Technical Issues:**
  - **DNS Failure:** The sending server cannot resolve the recipient's domain.
  - **Timeout:** The connection to the recipient's server timed out.
  - **TLS/SSL Issues:** Encryption handshake failed.
  - **Message Delayed** is a bounce and the sender must try again.
- **Challenge Verification:** A message was returned asking for approval.
- **Unsubscribe, Address Change:** A change of address or unsubscribe was requested.

## Comprehensive List of Email Bounce Back Reasons

Type	Code	Name & Description
MessageDelayed	n/a	<b>Message Delayed</b> - The mailbox provider was unable to accept the sent message, but the same message could be sent successfully at a later time.
HardBounce	1	<b>Hard bounce</b> – The server was unable to deliver your message (ex: unknown user, mailbox not found).
Transient	2	<b>Message delayed/Undeliverable</b> – The server could not temporarily deliver your message (ex: Message is delayed due to network troubles).
Unsubscribe	16	<b>Unsubscribe request</b> – Unsubscribe or Remove request.
Subscribe	32	<b>Subscribe request</b> – Subscribe request from someone wanting to get added to the mailing list.
AutoResponder	64	<b>Auto responder</b> – "Autoresponder" is an automatic email responder including nondescript NDRs and some "out of office" replies.
AddressChange	128	<b>Address change</b> – The recipient has requested an address change.
DnsError	256	<b>DNS error</b> – A temporary DNS error.
SpamNotification	512	<b>Spam notification</b> – The message was delivered, but was either blocked by the user, or classified as spam, bulk mail, or had rejected content.
OpenRelayTest	1024	<b>Open relay test</b> – The NDR is actually a test email message to see if the mail server is an open relay.
Unknown	2048	<b>Unknown</b> – Unable to classify the NDR.

SoftBounce	4096	<b>Soft bounce</b> – Unable to temporarily deliver message (i.e., mailbox full, account disabled, exceeds quota, out of disk space).
VirusNotification	8192	<b>Virus notification</b> – The bounce is actually a virus notification warning about a virus/code infected message.
ChallengeVerification	16384	<b>Spam challenge verification</b> – The bounce is a challenge asking for verification you actually sent the email. Typical challenges are made by Spam Arrest, or MailFrontier Matador.
BadEmailAddress	100000	<b>Invalid email address</b> – The address is not a valid email address.
SpamComplaint	100001	<b>Spam complaint</b> – The subscriber explicitly marked this message as spam.
ManuallyDeactivated	100002	<b>Manually deactivated</b> – The email was manually deactivated.
Unconfirmed	100003	<b>Registration not confirmed</b> – The subscriber has not clicked on the confirmation link upon registration or import.
Blocked	100006	<b>ISP block</b> – Blocked from this ISP due to content or blacklisting.
SMTPApiError	100007	<b>SMTP API error</b> – An error occurred while accepting an email through the SMTP API. Usually the result of a previous Hard Bounce.
InboundError	100008	<b>Processing failed</b> – Unable to deliver inbound message to destination inbound hook.
DMARCPolicy	100009	<b>DMARC Policy</b> – Email rejected due to DMARC Policy.

TemplateRenderingFailed	100010	<b>Template rendering failed</b> – An error occurred while attempting to render your template.
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