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Transactional e-mail statuses: sent, delivered, bounced, complained and failed explained

E-mail

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MozOut Mozambique
RLX Holdings, S.A. · Group RLX Holdings
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Transactional e-mail statuses: sent, delivered, bounced, complained and failed explained

E-mail Created on **November 13, 2026** 2 min read



The short answer: every e-mail moves through statuses, and every recipient has their own events. The ones that matter are `sent` (it left), `delivered` (the recipient's server accepted it), `bounced`, `complained` (marked as spam) and `failed` (it did not leave, and the credits go back to the balance).

The five events

Status	What it means	What to do
`sent`	It went out to the receiving servers	Nothing. Wait for delivered
`delivered`	The recipient's server accepted the message	Nothing. It does not mean it was read, nor that it skipped spam
`bounced`	It bounced. If the bounce is permanent, the address joins the suppression list	Fix the address with the customer
`complained`	The recipient marked it as spam. The address joins the suppression list	Look at why that person got the e-mail
`failed`	It did not go out. The credits go back to the balance	Look at the `error` field

The other statuses in the list

The list of e-mails also shows in-between and final statuses:

Status	When
`queued` / `sending`	Waiting to go or going, for example at the end of a big batch

Status	When
`scheduled`	Scheduled with `send_at`, not sent yet
`cancelled`	Scheduled and cancelled before the time
`simulated`	Sent with a Sandbox key or in test mode: nothing went out

Why it failed

Error in `error`	What it means
`delivery_failed`	It could not be delivered
`insufficient_credits`	A scheduled e-mail had no balance when it was due
`domain_not_verified`	The sender domain is no longer verified. See **sender domain not verified**

Each recipient's events, with the time and detail, come in `GET /v1/email/messages/{id}`. To avoid asking, receive them by **webhook**.

An address that bounces for good receives nothing more.
It joins the suppression list and later e-mails to it are left out, at no cost. If the customer fixes the mailbox, remove it from the list: see **the suppression list**.

Want to understand a bounce?
The event detail usually carries the receiving server's answer. The most common ones are explained in **bounce message 550**.

NEED A HAND?

A bounce or complaint you cannot make sense of? Open a support ticket with the e-mail id.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

The Email Center log: finding an e-mail, filtering it and why the content goes after 30 days →

- The Email Center suppression list: why an address stops receiving and how to remove it
- Email Center webhooks: receiving delivery, bounce and complaint events in your system
- Email Center statistics: delivery, bounce and complaint rates, and what they tell you
- Bounce message 550: user unknown, relay denied and rejected, what each one means
- Email Center credits and the daily limit: what a credit pays for and when it comes back

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