



Email Expiration Dates

The purpose of this guide is to assist with applying expiration dates to email messages in Outlook. This guide supplements existing policies, standards and practices related to the management of information in the Government of Alberta.

Email expiration dates should only be applied to emails identified as being transitory records with short-term value (e.g. out-of-office messages, event reminders and reference material).

This guide covers:

- setting expiration dates on outgoing and received email messages;
- understanding what an email will look like once it expires; and
- understanding how to locate and delete multiple expired messages.

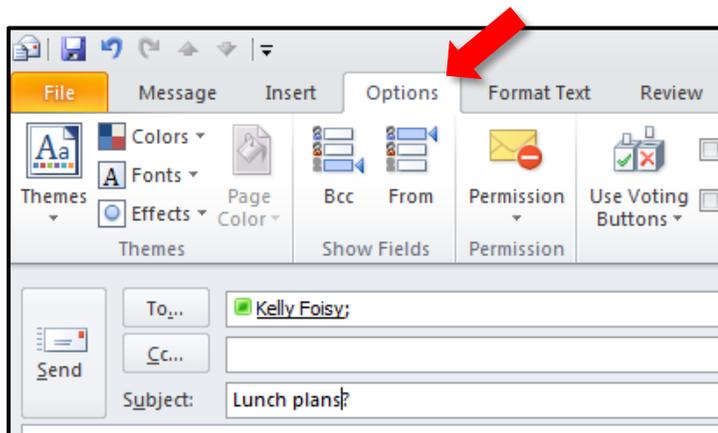
NOTE: This guide is specific to Outlook 2010, but may be relevant to other versions.

Setting Expiration Dates on Outgoing Email Messages

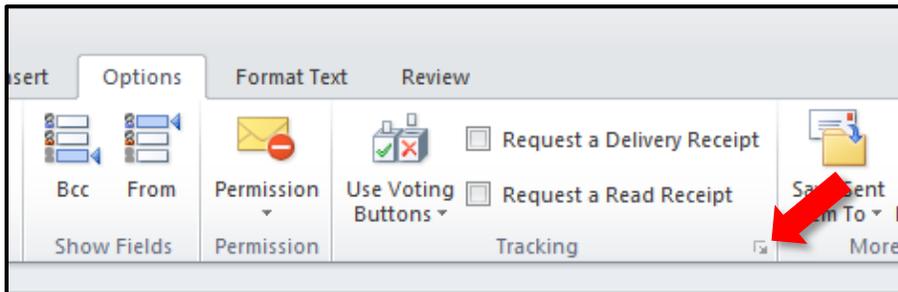
When the sender of an email adds an automatic expiration date to a message, both the sender and the receiver can easily identify and categorize these emails once they have expired.

Steps

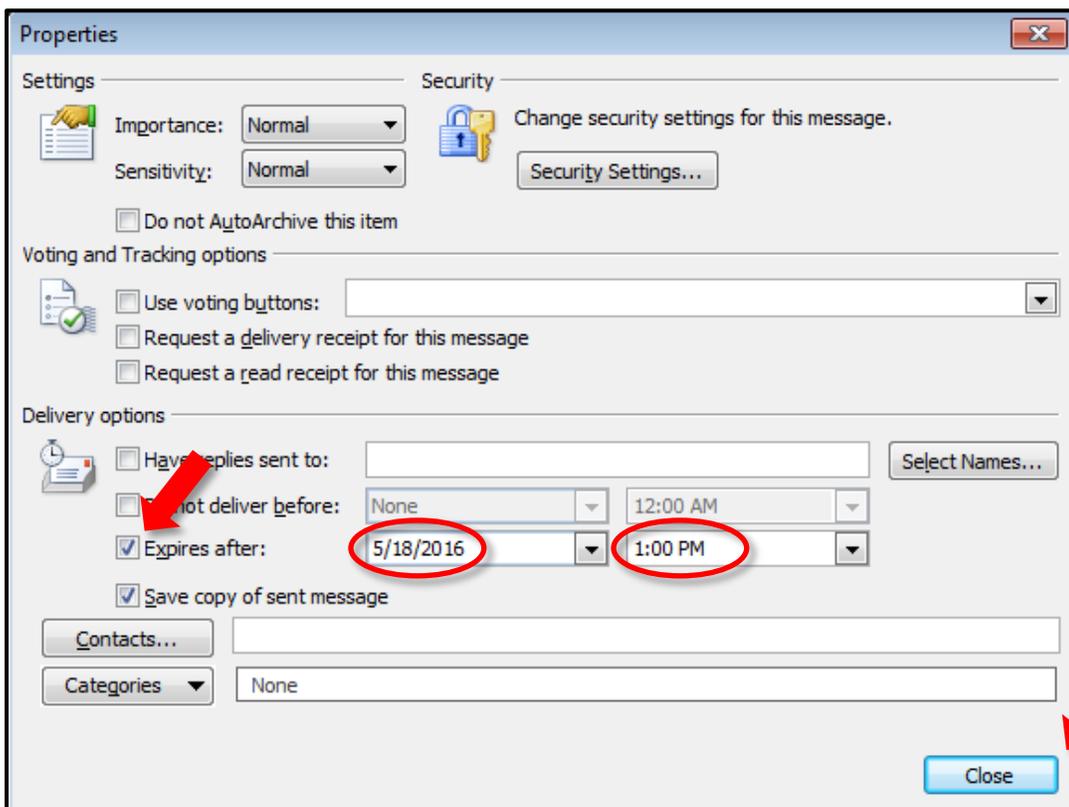
1. Create a new email message. In the email composition window, click on the **Options** tab.



2. From the **Options** tab, click on the small arrow icon next to **Tracking** to open the **Properties** window.

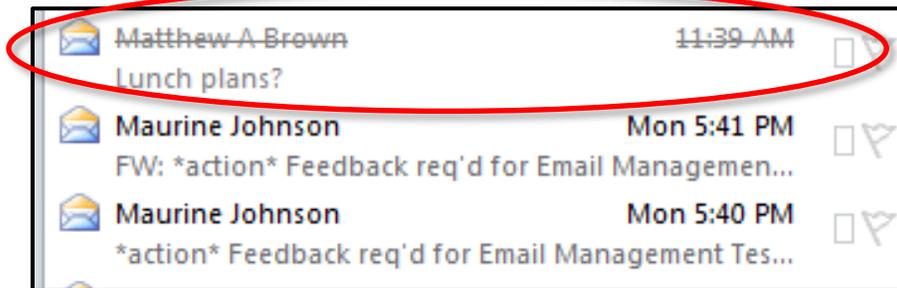


3. From the **Properties** window, click the box next to **Expires after**. From the drop-down menus next to **Expires after**, select the desired date and time for the email to expire. It is recommended that the expiration date is set for later than necessary; for example, if the email is about plans for lunch at 12 PM, set it to expire at 1 PM. After the expiration date and time have been set, click **Close**.



4. Once the email message is written and an expiration date has been added, the email is ready to send.
5. Before the expiration deadline has passed, the email will appear like any other. However, after the expiration deadline has passed, the email will appear in the sender's **Sent Items** folder and the receiver's **Inbox** in grey strikethrough font. The font

appearance will not change unless the user restarts Outlook or leaves the folder that contains the expired message.

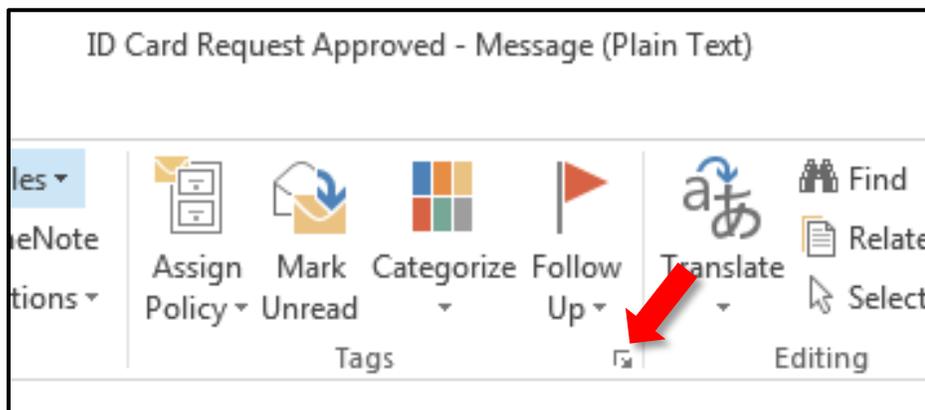


Setting Expiration Dates on Received Email Messages

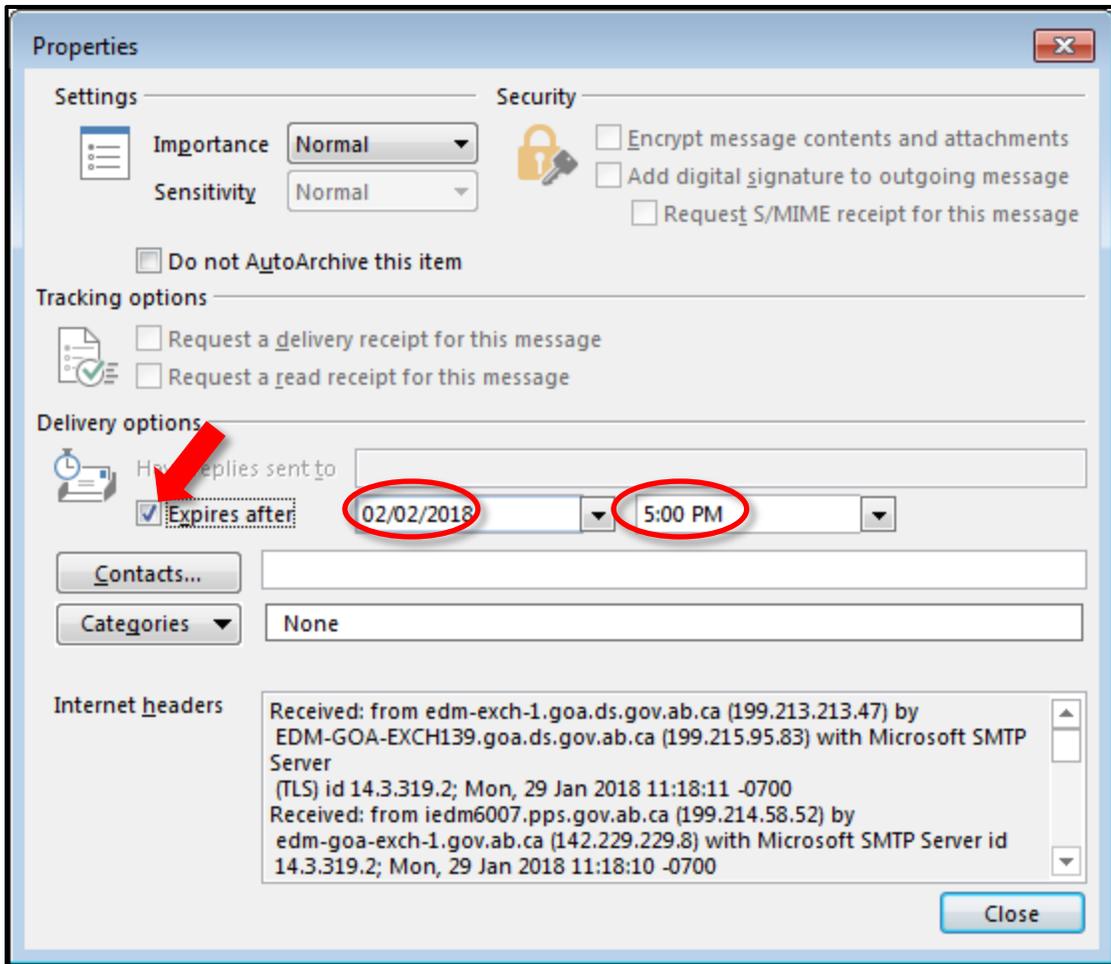
When an email is received you can check to see if there is an expiration date on it and, if not, you can set an expiry date to easily identify and categorize these emails once they have expired.

Steps

1. Open the selected email, and select **Tags**.



2. From the **Properties** window, click the box next to **Expires after**. From the drop-down menus next to **Expires after**, select the desired date and time for the email to expire. It is recommended that the expiration date is set for later than necessary; for example, if the email is about the status of a request, it can be set to expire at the end of the workday, such as 5 PM. After the expiration date and time have been set, click **Close**.



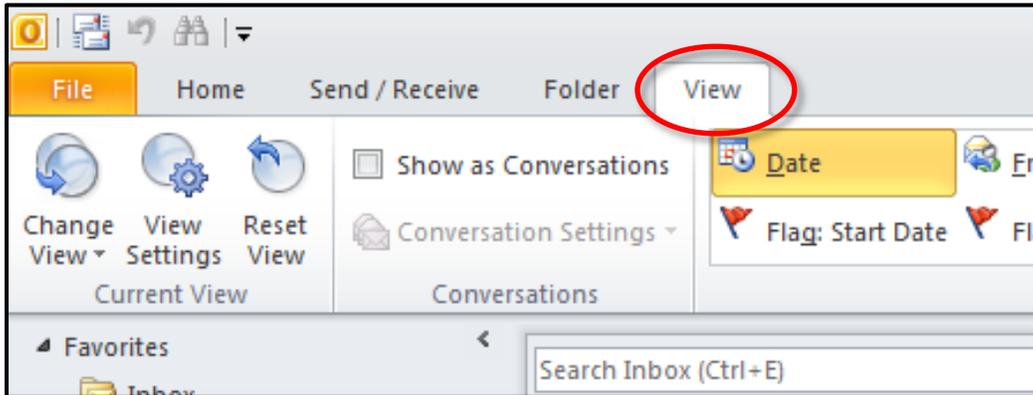
3. Before the expiration deadline has passed, the email will appear like any other. However, after the expiration deadline has passed, the email will appear in the receiver's Inbox or other mail folder in grey strikethrough font. The font appearance will not change unless the user restarts Outlook or leaves the folder that contains the expired message.

Finding, Reviewing and Deleting Multiple Expired Items

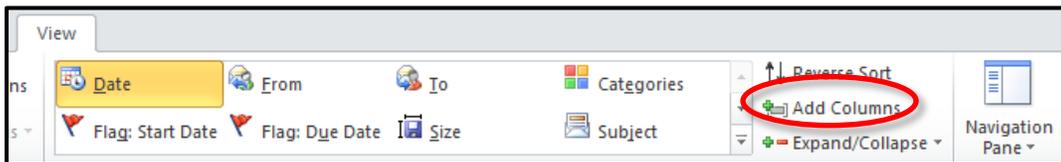
To quickly identify multiple expired messages, you can add the Expires field to your Inbox or other mail folder.

Steps

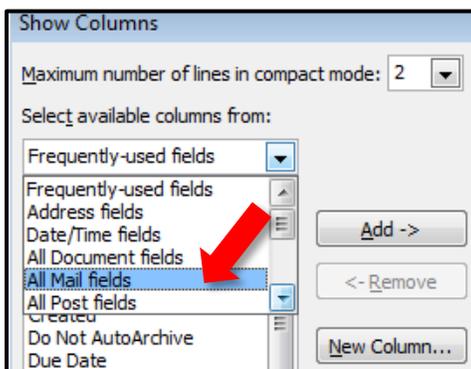
1. From the **Mail** section of Outlook, click on the **View** tab.



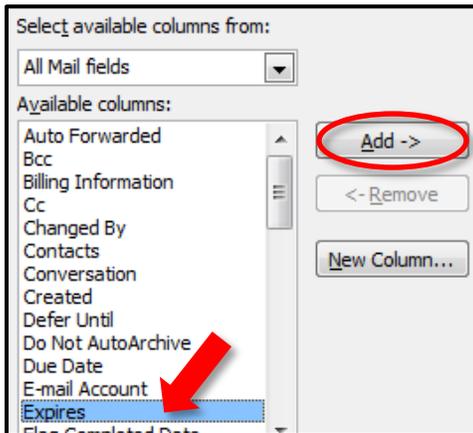
2. From the **View** tab, click on the **Add Columns** button to open the **Show Columns** window.



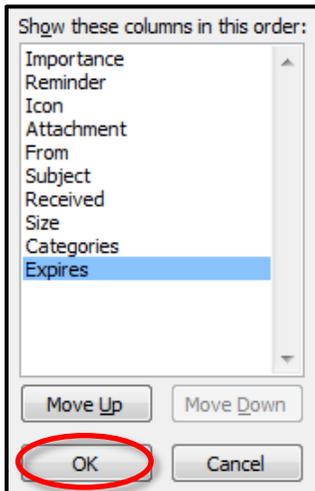
3. In the **Show Columns** window, open the **Select available columns from:** drop-down menu and select **All Mail fields**.



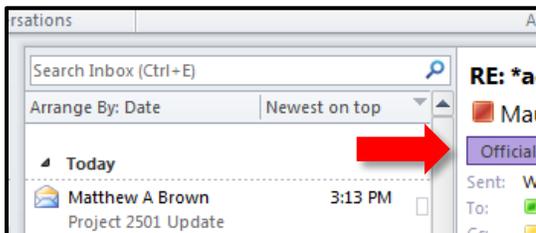
4. Scroll down the **Available columns:** list until **Expires** is visible. Click on **Expires** and then click on the **Add ->** button.

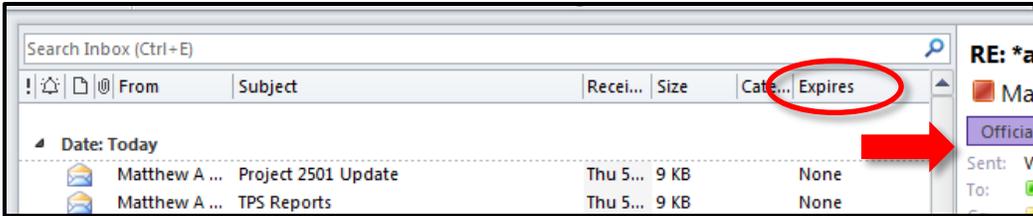


5. **Expires** should now be listed under **Show these columns in this order.** Click **OK**.

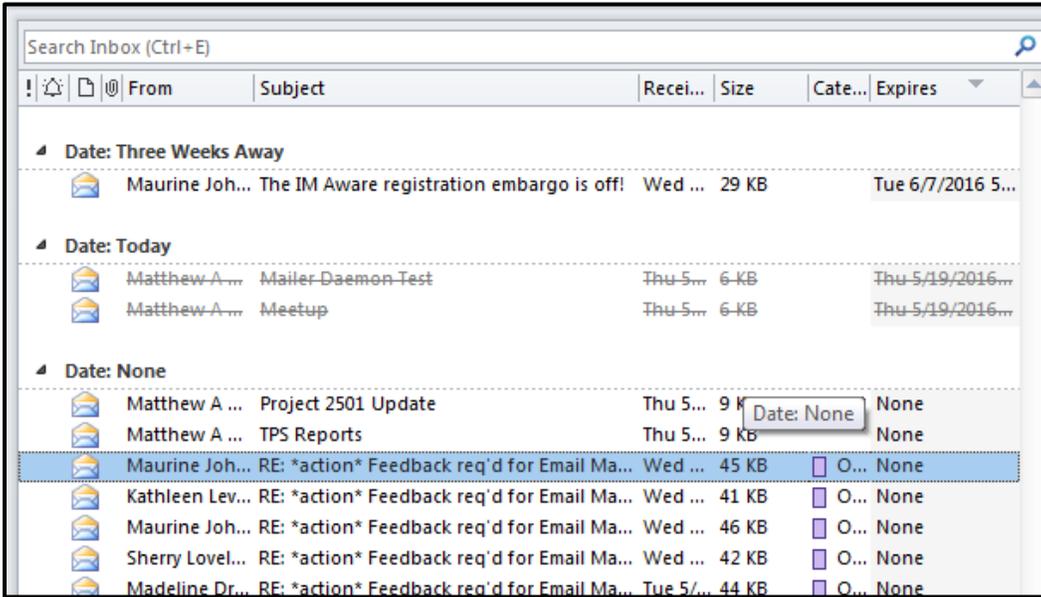


Although the **Expires** column has been added to a folder's **View**, it is not immediately visible in default configuration. Place the mouse cursor on the right side of the scroll bar until it appears as $\leftarrow\right|$. Click and drag the column to the right side of the screen until the **Expires** column is visible at the top of the screen.



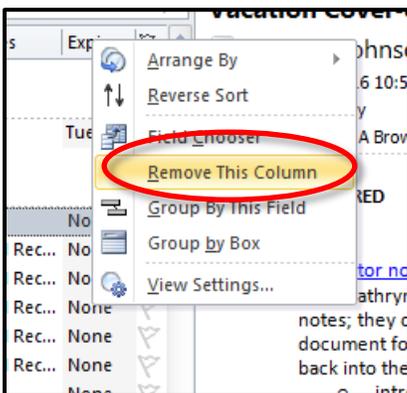


6. Click on the **Expires** column to order all messages in the folder by expiration date. Items with a set expiration date that has yet to pass will be at the top, followed by expired items, then items with no set expiration date.

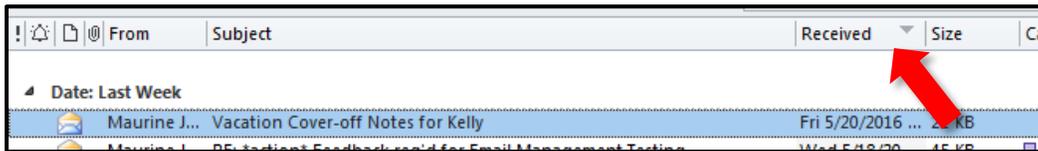


Multiple expired items can now be easily deleted. Select any item(s) to be deleted (Shift + arrow keys allows selection of multiple sequential items; holding down the Ctrl key and clicking allows selection of multiple non-sequential items). Right-click and choose **Delete** to move selected items into Outlook's **Deleted Items** folder.

7. To remove the **Expires** column from the view pane, right-click on the column heading (**Expires**) and click **Remove This Column**.



- To restore the mailbox view to the default view (arranged by date, newest on top), click on the column title **Received** and then click and drag the column width as desired.



- The **Expires** column must be added to each folder separately—adding the column to an Inbox will not add the column to any subfolders. Ensure the process of adding the **Expires** column has been completed for any folders that may contain expired items.

Things to Remember:

- Expiration dates can only be applied to transitory records.
- It is strongly recommended that users review and verify whether expired items are transitory records before deleting.
- Expiration dates should only be added to individual emails.
- The **Expires** column allows for quick location and sorting of multiple expired items.
- Adding the **Expires** column is not a global setting; it must be done in each Outlook folder separately.
- If your business area is involved in any FOIP and/or litigation hold activity, please contact your department FOIP coordinator and/or senior records officer before deleting any items.