Why does my Moira list name appear as the sender name in my Exchange email client?

Q: Why does my Moira list name appear as the sender name in my Exchange email client?

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- Why does my Moira list name appear as the friendly sender name in my email for MIT recipients?
- Why does my custom friendly name not appear for my email to MIT recipients?
- Why do MIT users not see the custom name I put in the From: line of my email?

Symptoms

Case 1: Mail from you, with a different friendly name

- You are sending email **from your own email address** but are specifying a different "friendly name" in the "From" line of your email message
- MIT recipients using Exchange clients see your **real name** as the "friendly" name in their Inbox, rather than the custom friendly name you specified

An example "From" line for such a message might look like this:

```
From: "The Office of Joe User" <joeuser@mit.edu>
```

This message appears in the Inbox of MIT Exchange users as coming from:

> ***Joe User***

Note that MIT recipients using Exchange clients includes users of Outlook, but also Apple Mail and iOS users who may be using the Exchange protocol.

Case 2: Mail from a Moira list, with a friendly name

- You are sending email **from a Moira list** but are specifying a person or office name as the "friendly name" in the "From" line of your email message
- MIT recipients using Exchange clients see your **Moira list name** as the "friendly" name in their Inbox, rather than the custom friendly name you specified

An example "From" line for such a message might look like this. In this example, `janeuser-replies` is a Moira list:

```
From: "The Office of Prof. Jane User" <janeuser-replies@mit.edu>
```

This message appears in the Inbox of MIT Exchange users as coming from:

> ***janeuser-replies***

Note that MIT recipients using Exchange clients includes users of Outlook, but also Apple Mail and iOS users who may be using the Exchange protocol.

What changed?

All of MIT's incoming Mail routes through Microsoft's Office 365 Exchange cloud infrastructure. This change was made on Monday, December 3rd, 2018, to keep MIT's email operational during extensive denial of service attacks from outside the Institute. Microsoft's Exchange infrastructure has entries for all of MIT's users and lists in its directory service. Newer versions of Exchange will not show the manually entered "friendly name" from an email's "From" line to internal recipients. They will instead show the "display name" that is stored in Microsoft's Active Directory for each user and group. For users, this will be your real name. For groups, this is group name without the "@mit.edu" extension. Older versions of Exchange, such as the one we ran on campus, did not yet implement this behavior, so this is new for the MIT Community since the transition.

Who is affected?

While this new behavior does not impact most regular email users, or normal use of email lists, it may impact communications officers, campaign managers, and other administrators who may want to send mail that looks like it is coming from their office rather than their individual email address, or bulk mailings that use a Moira list as the sender address for replies.

I am impacted. What can I do about it?

Unfortunately we cannot change this behavior of Microsoft's Exchange infrastructure. However, there are several workarounds depending on which case you are trying to address:

Workaround 1: Sending mail from your address that looks like it's coming from your office

If you regularly send mail from your own email address, but need a "friendly name" that is your office or department name, we recommend that you create a Moira list to use as the sender instead of using your email address directly. An administrator can then set a custom display name for the Moira group in Office 365, which will appear as the "friendly name" for users at MIT. To follow our example from "Case 1" above, you would:

1. Create a Moira list called `joeuser-replies` and add yourself to it; mail sent to `joeuser-replies@mit.edu` will now go to `joeuser@mit.edu`
2. Send an email to the IS&T Service Desk; let them know:
    a. You would like a custom **display name** in the Office 365 Active Directory
    b. The name of the Moira list, `joeuser-replies`
    c. The display name you want for mail sent "From" that Moira list, "The Office of Joe User"

Once the custom display name is set, you can send your messages with a "From" address set to `joeuser-replies@mit.edu`. The friendly name for mail received by members of the MIT Community will correctly appear as **The Office of Joe User**.

Workaround 2: Sending mail from a Moira list address that has a custom friendly name

If you have a Moira list you use as the sender/from address in your mailings, but you do not want the "friendly name" to appear as just the Moira list name, you can request a custom display name for that Moira list and then continue to use it as you currently do. To follow our example from "Case 2" above, you would:

1. Send an email to the IS&T Service Desk; let them know:
    a. You would like a custom **display name** in the Office 365 Active Directory
    b. The name of the Moira list, `janeuser-replies`
    c. The display name you want for mail sent "From" that Moira list, "The Office of Prof. Jane User"

Once the custom display name is set, you can send your messages as you did before, with a "From" address set `janeuser-replies@mit.edu` . The friendly name for mail received by members of the MIT Community will correctly appear as **The Office of Prof. Jane User**.

Note: It will take roughly 30 minutes for the change to take effect.

See also

- Exchange Landing Page
- Network and Email Security Infrastructure Changes FAQ
- Email Lists Landing Page