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Sieve Vacation Extension: "Seconds" parameter  
draft-ietf-sieve-vacation-seconds-02

## Abstract

This document describes a further extension to the Sieve Vacation extension, allowing multiple auto-replies to the same sender in a single day by adding a ":seconds" parameter.

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## 1. Introduction

The Sieve [[RFC5228](#)] Vacation extension [[RFC5230](#)] defines a mechanism to generate automatic replies to incoming email messages. Through the `:days` parameter, it limits the number of auto-replies to the same sender to one per [n] days, for a specified number of days. But there are cases when one needs more granularity, if one would like to generate "vacation" replies for shorter-term situations ("in a meeting", for example, or "out to lunch").

This extension defines a `:seconds` parameter to provide more granularity for such situations.

### 1.1. Terminology Used in This Document

The upper-case key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [RFC 2119](#) [[RFC2119](#)].

## 2. The `:seconds` Parameter

The purpose of the `:seconds` parameter is to specify the minimum time interval (in seconds) between consecutive auto-replies to a given sender. The `:seconds` value, if specified, is used instead of the `:days` value, and works in a similar way (see the Vacation extension [[RFC5230](#)] for details). Only one of `:days` and `:seconds` is allowed -- use of both parameters in the same vacation action MUST result in a Sieve processing error.

The capability string associated with this extension is "vacation-seconds". Note that "vacation-seconds" implies "vacation", and a script with "vacation-seconds" in a "require" list can omit "vacation" from that list.

The time value is specified in seconds, and MUST be greater than or equal to 0 and less than 2\*\*31. All valid values MUST be accepted without error, but sites MAY define a minimum value to actually be used if a smaller value is specified, and/or a maximum value to be used if a larger value is specified. If a site imposes a maximum value, that value MUST be at least 86400 (one day).

If 0 is specified and used, it means that all auto-replies are sent, and no attempt is made to suppress consecutive replies. This changes the base vacation specification, which does not allow ":days 0"; the change is necessary to allow operation of an auto-responder (see [\[I-D.ietf-sieve-autoreply\]](#)).

If ":seconds" and ":days" are both omitted, a site-defined interval is used (see [\[RFC5230\]](#)).

```
Usage: vacation [":days" number | ":seconds" number]
           [":subject" string]
           [":from" string]
           [":addresses" string-list]
           [":mime"]
           [":handle" string]
           <reason: string>
```

### [3.](#) Examples

This example will automatically reply to senders with a message that the recipient is in a meeting. Multiple replies to the same sender will only be sent every half hour (1800 seconds).

```
require ["vacation-seconds"];
vacation :addresses ["tjs@example.edu", "ts4z@landru.example.edu"]
           :seconds 1800
           "I am in a meeting, and do not have access to email.";
```

This example is used to send an acknowledgment to every message received. A `:seconds` value of zero is used to reply to every message, with no removal of duplicates to the same sender. This requires that the Sieve engine allow an interval of zero; if it does not, and it imposes a minimum value, not every message will receive an auto-reply.

```
require ["vacation-seconds"];
```

```
vacation :handle "auto-resp" :seconds 0
    "Your request has been received. A service
    representative will contact you as soon as
    possible, usually within one business day.";
```

#### [4.](#) Security Considerations

Security considerations for the Sieve Vacation extension [[RFC5230](#)] apply equally here. In addition, implementations SHOULD consider the number of auto-replies that might be generated by allowing small values of `:seconds` (including 0), and MAY impose additional limits on that number. See the Security Considerations section of [RFC 3834](#) [[RFC3834](#)] for a fuller discussion.

#### [5.](#) IANA Considerations

##### [5.1.](#) Registration of Sieve Extension

To: [iana@iana.org](mailto:iana@iana.org)  
Subject: Registration of new Sieve extension  
Capability name: `vacation-seconds`  
Description: adds the `:seconds` parameter to the Sieve Vacation extension. Implementations that support this MUST also support `"vacation"`.  
RFC number: this RFC  
Contact address: The Sieve discussion list <[sieve@ietf.org](mailto:sieve@ietf.org)>

## [6.](#) References

### [6.1.](#) Normative References

- [RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", [BCP 14](#), [RFC 2119](#), March 1997.
- [RFC5228] Guenther, P. and T. Showalter, "Sieve: An Email Filtering Language", [RFC 5228](#), January 2008.
- [RFC5230] Showalter, T. and N. Freed, "Sieve Email Filtering: Vacation Extension", [RFC 5230](#), January 2008.

### [6.2.](#) Informative References

- [I-D.ietf-sieve-autoreply]  
George, R., Leiba, B., and A. Melnikov, "Sieve Email Filtering: Use of Presence Information with Auto Responder functionality", [draft-ietf-sieve-autoreply-02](#) (work in progress), October 2010.
- [RFC3834] Moore, K., "Recommendations for Automatic Responses to Electronic Mail", [RFC 3834](#), August 2004.

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