

Techno-Tips

AFSM Electronic Communication System:

We need your collaboration

By Antonio Hernandez

The AFSM Board has given priority to improving the electronic communication system for its members; the Communication Committee is working on an outreach program for all members or their representatives, through an email communication system. To reach this goal, we need your collaboration by either contacting us if you are not receiving the regular messages or alerting your retired colleagues if they have not received messages or have not registered their email addresses.

To present the challenge we are facing, I would like to provide the current status of the membership.

- Currently, it is estimated that there are over 1600 retirees that qualify to be AFSM members.
- From the above figure, only 653 retirees, or their spouses or representatives, are listed as members. Spouses, from members that have passed away, can continue benefiting from the membership through receiving information on pension, health insurance and other relevant information provided by the AFSM.
- From the roster of retirees, only 530 (83%) of them have a registered email address and are included in the "AFSM Mail Distribution System." From this group, only 504 addresses are accepted by the system. The remaining 26 have been rejected by the system for reasons that will be explained below.
- For the 103 (17%) members without a registered email address, they are either not receiving information in a timely manner or they are receiving no information at all. Because of this, any exchange of information with the pension fund and about health insurance will take longer to be received.

Our preliminary assessment shows that only 80% of the 530 registered members with email addresses are regularly receiving the messages posted in the AFSM mail distribution system. If you are one of the 530 members with a registered electronic address and you are not getting any message from AFSM, there are several reasons for that. We will address some of the more common reasons for not receiving the message:

- **The most common issue for not receiving the message, is that the member has changed the email address and forgot to notify AFSM or has stopped using the email address registered with AFSM.** This has been detected (deleted this) with members that moved from paid mail services to free email systems like Gmail, Yahoo or Hotmail.
- The AFSM uses a service for mail distribution to the members. The mail distribution system (deleted s) sends the messages to the list of addresses registered. This massive message (deleted s) package (deleted s) "Blast" could be perceived by the recipient inbox of the member as an "SPAM Message" and the message is sent either directly to the "Spam Box" or is eliminated without notifying the owner of the account. The first step to correct this issue is to check the "Spam" or "Junk box" in your system for messages from the AFSM.

- Other common reasons for not receiving messages is due to a “Full Inbox.” Some email accounts have a limitation on the messages one can keep active in the Inbox; once the limit is reached, the messages are rejected. This rejection is known as a “Soft Bounce”; if you do not correct this problem, the distribution system that sent the message will eliminate your email address after several bounces and you will stop receiving messages. You should perform regular maintenance on your “Inbox” by deleting or archiving messages. Other systems allow you to define the number of messages you can keep active.
- A solution to keep receiving messages, especially with Gmail, Yahoo and Hotmail accounts, is to include the AFSM electronic address AFSMPAHO@gmail.com in the address book of your mail system. Your mail system will recognize the AFSM address and it will accept the message.
- A misspelling of the email address results in the total rejection of the message. This is known as a “Hard Bounce” and the address is blocked by the distribution system. Be sure that we have your correct email address.

If you have problems with your electronic communications with AFSM or if you are aware you are not receiving the AFSM message, we encourage you to either follow the procedures indicated in this article or contact us using the AFSM Website. We will be glad to help you to solve any electronic communication problems.

Remember, keep AFSM informed of any change of email addresses or your physical addresses. Having registered your current email address is fundamental to have timely access to communication. Remember that in the AFSM Website <https://www.AFSMPAHO.com>, under the “Documents Tab”, you have access to the forms to change or update your information.

Your collaboration and active participation to improve the AFSM Communication System is highly appreciated. Help AFSM with the Members Outreach Program for PAHO Retirees. We need you!