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SIP Header : Expire

Simply put, the Expire header indicates the duration in which a message/session remains valid, but the detailed meaning varies a little bit depending on each message and situation. The official definition of Expire header is described as follows in RFC 3261 20.19.

The Expires header field gives the relative time after which the message (or content) expires. The precise meaning of this is method dependent.

The expiration time in an INVITE does not affect the duration of the actual session that may result from the invitation. Session description protocols may offer the ability to express time limits on the session duration, however.

*The value of this field is an integral number of seconds (in decimal) between 0 and (2**32)-1, measured from the receipt of the request*

Meaning of Expires 0

The meaning of Expires header is pretty straightforward when the value is not Zero. But when the value is zero, the meaning changes widely.

< Expires 0 in REGISTER >

If expires header is set to be Zero in REGISTER message, it means 'DeREGISTER'. Refer to following specifications.

34.229-1 8.3 Mobile Initiated Deregistration - 8.3.2 Conformance requirement

On sending a REGISTER request that will remove the binding between the public user identity and one of its contact addresses, the UE shall populate the header fields as follows:

e) a registration expiration interval value set to the value of zero, appropriate to the deregistration requirements of the user;

< Expires 0 in SUBSCRIBE >

If expires header is set to be Zero in SUBSCRIBE message, it means UNSUBSCRIBE or 'ONE-TIME SUBSCRIBE'. 'ONE-TIME SUBSCRIBE' means 'Get the status only once and stop subscription'. Refer to following specifications.

34.229-1 8.3 Mobile Initiated Deregistration - 8.3.2 Conformance requirement

If all public user identities are deregistered and all security association or TLS session is removed, then the UE shall consider subscription to the reg event package cancelled (i.e. as if the UE had sent a SUBSCRIBE request with an Expires header field containing a value of zero).

RFC 3856 - 4. Overview of Operation

[Last Paragraph] It is also possible to fetch the current presence state, resulting in a one-time notification containing the current state. This is accomplished by sending a SUBSCRIBE request with an immediate expiration. <-- 'Immediate expiration' can be interpreted as 'Expires 0'.

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