

How can a user unlock their Microsoft Outlook account (outlook.com)

To unlock an Outlook.com account, the user must go through Microsoft's online unlock or recovery flow; you cannot unlock it for them from the desktop Outlook client.

Standard unlock flow (most cases)

Have the user:

1. Go to <https://account.microsoft.com> and sign in with the locked address; they should see a prompt that the account is locked.
2. Choose to **get a security code**, enter a phone number that can receive SMS (it does not have to be on the account), and enter the code they receive.
3. If prompted, create a **new password** and sign in again.

For Outlook.com-specific messaging (“Your account has been blocked”), Microsoft’s guidance is to use the “Unblock my Outlook.com account” helper which walks them through the same verification steps.

If they cannot receive codes

If they no longer have access to the registered phone/email:

1. Go to the **Microsoft account recovery form**: <https://account.live.com/password/reset>
→ choose “I forgot my password” or “I don’t have any of these”.
2. Provide a different working email where Microsoft can reach them, then fill in the form with as many account details as possible (recent subjects, contacts, billing data, etc.).
3. Microsoft may put the account under a security hold (often up to 30 days) before allowing password reset and re-access.

If the account was suspended for abuse

If the error mentions terms of use/behavior rather than sign-in activity:

- The user must submit the **Account Reinstatement** request at Microsoft's digital safety page and wait for review; normal unlock/recovery flows will not work.

After the account is unlocked

Once web sign-in works again:

- In desktop Outlook, re-enter the password or remove/re-add the Outlook.com account if needed and clear any stale credentials in Windows Credential Manager.

When you see this with a user, the key triage question is: do they still have access to at least one of their recovery options (phone or alternate email) listed on the Microsoft account?