

That is right! If you forget to pay your domain registration fee on time again it is going to cost you more than ever to get it back. But come on, did you really think the registrars were going to lower the penalty? When does that ever happen? The registrars are required to pay a fee to ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) for any domains held after their time is up and there is only one place to get that money--from you the registrant. That you might think the price is exorbitant is not going to change anything.

By agreement with ICANN the accredited registrars are required to send at least two notices to the registrant prior to removing the domain from the zone. Some actually send more. You will never be able to prove that your registrar sent less and any attempt will probably prove frustrating as the ultimate responsibility for keeping a domain current resides with the owner. Still, the registrant might want to argue that paying \$250 for a bookkeeping mistake is a little much. Yup, that is right, the domain redemption fee for at least one of the big registrars has climbed to \$250 from \$200 a few short years ago.

That registrar, according to comments on the web, is Enom, reputedly the biggest single purveyor of resellers on the Internet. Which means a whole lot of domains are at risk. This writer attempted to verify that figure on Enom's website but was unable to discover any figure at all for domain redemption fees at that address. Which does not mean it was not there, only that I could not find it. And that brings to mind another issue: availability!

While ICANN's contract with the registrars (The RAA or Registrar Accreditation Agreement), requires that information pertaining to the RGP (Redemption Grace Period)--including the amount required to get a domain back--"must be clearly displayed on the website" the "registrars may exercise reasonable discretion" in deciding where that might be. Needless to say, none of them make that particular information prominently available on their landing pages. In many cases it is downright difficult to discover, which makes providing my readers with a short list an exercise fraught with the possibility of error. In other words, let me know if I am wrong!

Although Enom's DRF was the highest I could find at \$250 there may be higher out there. With those fees I could discover, in descending order, NameCheap comes in second highest at \$200, followed closely by Fatcow at \$160 and Network Solutions at \$150. Giant Godaddy demands \$80. The lowest fee I could find was \$40 at 1and1. Oh, and don't forget that all of these fees are exclusive of your renewal fee, whatever that is at the various registrars.

Let me make the point that in common with all things, these fees will continue to rise. You can count on the registrars up to a point but in the end the responsibility to keep your domains current is yours.

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