

Subject: [Patentpractice] Assignment Center is broken for IPv6
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Thank you everybody for reporting on this.

I tried it again on Chrome just now and same error message. Tried it with https and with http. In Chrome, I cleared all USPTO-related cookies. Tried it again with https and with http. Still no joy.

Tried it in Edge. Nope, no joy.

Tried it in Firefox. Nope, no joy.

The various browsers puke on assignmentcenter.uspto.gov with an error message that sounds like a TLS version fail or an SSL cert chain-of-trust fail.

Just now I used the Qualys SSLabs tester to test the access to assignmentcenter.uspto.gov. I note with great interest that the Qualys tester carries out its testing in two paths -- Assignment Center resolves not only to an IPv4 address (151.207.245.82) but also to an IPv6 address (2610:20:5011:1604:0:0:0:82). It crosses my mind that the non-identical results among users might be because some are using IPv6 and others are using IPv4 to reach Assignment Center.

The Qualys tests finished just now. For both paths (the IPv4 and the IPv6) Qualys gives a grade of "B" for the quality of USPTO's TLS and SSL for this domain. For both paths, the USPTO's HTTPS stack fails to provide forward secrecy. For both paths, the USPTO's HTTPS stack offers to negotiate to some very old and weak TLS cipher suites. And HTTP simply fails, for the IPv6 stack. (The IPv6 stack is not set up with HSTS.)

(For those keeping score at home, blog.oppedahl.com gets a grade of "A" for the TLS and SSL quality.)

Aha! The defect in USPTO's systems is now clearer. I turned off IPv6 on the network interface of my notebook computer, and now I have no difficulty making use of Assignment Center.

The USPTO people don't know how to configure IPv6 correctly for Assignment Center.

Time for a blog article I guess.

For those who had difficulty getting Assignment Center to work, the question I have for you is, do you have your computer set up to do IPv6 as well as IPv4?