Password-Protected Excel Files Fail to Download from Box when Using Secure Access

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Issue

Users are unable to download password-protected Excel files from Box when Cisco Secure Access is enabled. When attempting to download password-protected Excel files, the downloads fail even after adding the Box tenant to the Do Not Decrypt list in Secure Access policies. The downloads only succeed when the Umbrella service is completely disabled on the workstation, which is not a viable solution for maintaining security posture.

Environment

- Cisco Secure Access
- Box cloud storage service
- Password-protected Excel files
- External collaboration workflows requiring file downloads

Resolution

To resolve the issue with downloading password-protected Excel files from Box while maintaining Secure Access protection, configure the advanced setting in the Secure Access access policies:

Step 1: Navigate to the **Secure Access access policies configuration**.

Step 2: Locate the **Advanced settings** section within the access policy.

Step 3: Enable the **Allow access to encrypted files** setting.

This advanced setting specifically addresses the handling of encrypted or password-protected files that can be blocked by default Secure Access policies, even when the domain is added to the Do Not Decrypt list. The **Allow access to encrypted files** setting permits the download of password-protected content while maintaining the security inspection capabilities for non-encrypted files.

After enabling this setting, test the download of the password-protected Excel file from Box to verify that the issue is resolved and that the file can be successfully downloaded without disabling the Umbrella service.

Cause

The issue occurs because Cisco Secure Access policies have a default restriction on accessing encrypted files, including password-protected Excel files. Adding the Box domain to the Do Not Decrypt list alone is insufficient because the restriction applies specifically to encrypted file access rather than just SSL/TLS decryption. The **Allow access to encrypted files** advanced setting is required to permit downloads of password-protected content while maintaining security inspection for other file types.

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