

Microsoft Software Assurance

Frequently asked questions

This document contains a list of questions and answers pertaining to the Microsoft Software Assurance program.

Contents

General Software Assurance	2
Home Use Program	3
License Mobility through Software Assurance	4
Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack	5
Microsoft Products and Services Agreement	5
New Version Rights	5
Office Online Server	6
Planning Services	6
Problem Resolution Support	8
Training Vouchers	9
Windows 10 Enterprise Per-User Add-On	11

General Software Assurance

What is Software Assurance, and why do I need it?

Software Assurance is a comprehensive Volume Licensing program that includes a unique set of technologies, services, and rights to help you deploy, manage, and use your Microsoft products more efficiently. Using Software Assurance benefits can help you take full advantage of your investments in IT.

How do I get Software Assurance?

Software Assurance is included with some [Volume Licensing](#) programs and is an optional purchase with others. You can purchase Software Assurance through Microsoft partners via your Volume Licensing agreement.

Which Software Assurance benefits are included in my Volume Licensing agreement?

The [Interactive Benefits Chart](#) (PDF, 768 KB) includes an overview of each benefit, and describes which benefits apply to each type of Volume Licensing agreement.

How do I activate my Software Assurance benefits?

Your Software Assurance benefits are activated in the Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC). Before you can activate your Software Assurance benefits in the VLSC, your organization needs to provide you with Software Assurance Manager permissions. Once you have signed in, you'll find a complete list of your available Software Assurance benefits. The process to start using each individual benefit may differ slightly, but the process is similar for most. Review the VLSC Software Assurance Guide (PDF, 785 KB) for steps to activate, download, and use your benefits.

Is Software Assurance available for my small organization?

Software Assurance is available to organizations that support as few as five devices. Software Assurance is only available through Volume Licensing and is purchased when you buy or renew a Volume Licensing agreement. It is included with some agreements and is an optional purchase with others. Your available benefits are determined by the types and quantity of products that you purchase. The size of your organization may determine which of the broad range of benefits are most immediately useful to you.

Which use rights document governs the Self-Hosted Applications use right?

The [Product Terms](#) outlines the Self-Hosted Applications use right, as well as all products that are included for that licensing option (clearly marked in the [Product Terms](#)). With the exception of Windows Server, which alternatively may be licensed under the Services Provider License Agreement (governed by the Services Provider Use Rights) or through Azure (governed by the [Online Services Terms](#)), products that an ISV licenses in the delivery of their Unified Solution under this option are governed by the Product Terms. For Unified Solutions delivered on dedicated servers, use of Windows Server is governed by either the Product Terms or Service Provider Use Rights.

Home Use Program

What products can I get through the Home Use Program and how much does the Home Use Program cost?

- Office 365 Subscription Offer: Special 30% discount on Office 365 Home or Office 365 Personal annual subscriptions.
- Project Professional 2019 Software Offer: \$14.99 USD or local market equivalent for a license of Project Professional 2019.
- Visio Professional 2019 Software Offers: \$14.99 USD or local market equivalent for a license of Visio Professional 2019.

Project Professional and Visio Professional Home Use Program offers aren't available to everyone. Please visit the [Home Use Program](#) website to learn more about the program.

Who is eligible for the Microsoft Home Use Program offer?

For employees to use the Microsoft Home Use Program discount, they need a valid corporate email address and an active Microsoft account, and the organization must meet one of the following criteria:

- Have active Software Assurance for qualifying Office applications.
- Have Office 365 or Microsoft 365 E3 or E5 from Software Assurance.
- Be a commercial or government organization that has purchased 2,000 or more licenses of Office 365 E3 or E5 and/or Microsoft 365 E3 or E5 (or a mix of these).
- Be an education or nonprofit organization.

Eligibility for the Visio Professional 2019 Software Offer:

- Customers with active Software Assurance on Visio Standard or Visio Professional. Employees of these customers who use the Qualifying Office Applications at work are eligible to purchase the Microsoft Home Use Program software for use on a personal device during the term of their employment.
- Customers with Microsoft 365 E3/E5 From SA and/or Office 365 E1/E3/E5 From SA subscriptions.

In which markets is the Office 365 Subscription offer available to eligible organizations?

This offer is available to employees of eligible organizations worldwide. Administrators can see and manage their organization's eligible Home Use Program benefits on Microsoft Store for Business and employees can access the offers at www.microsoft.com/home-use-program.

Exceptions: This offer will not be available in Russia and Venezuela.

Can Software Assurance benefit administrators view and manage their Microsoft Home Use Program benefit for Office 365 subscriptions on VLSC?

No, benefit administrators whose organization qualifies for the Home Use Program discounts can view and manage their [Home Use Program](#) benefit only on the [Microsoft Store for Business](#).

How do Software Assurance benefit administrators allow employees to access Home Use Program Offers?

Please refer to [Microsoft Home Use Program – A guide for Software Assurance customers](#) for how to activate the Home Use Program benefit on [Microsoft Store for Business](#). Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions in the guide for any questions on the process.

The Home Use Program process requires an Azure Active Directory; What is Azure Active Directory?

[Azure Active Directory](#) is an identity and access management solution. It is an identity service that helps Microsoft [Store for Business](#) validate your organization. Signing up for Azure Active Directory does not require on-prem customers to move their existing services to the cloud or purchase additional licenses. For more information, see [Azure Active Directory](#).

Why do I have to create an Azure Active Directory account to use the Home Use Program through Microsoft Store for Business?

We updated the [Home Use Program](#) to a broader range of license and product benefits, and part of the updated included changing the way we fulfill Home Use Program orders. Microsoft Store for Business is used for eligibility validation and to assign Home Use Program benefits, and it relies on Azure Active Directory to connect information from the Volume Licensing Service Center and validate the email domains your organization's employees are on. More information can be found [here](#).

Where do employees go to order using the Home Use Program discount offered on Office 365 Home and Personal subscriptions?

Employees can check their eligibility and view the available discounts on the new [Home Use Program store](#).

For detailed instructions on the employee purchase process, see the [Microsoft Home Use Program – A guide for employees](#).

License Mobility through Software Assurance

What is License Mobility?

With License Mobility through Software Assurance, you can deploy certain application server licenses on-premises or in the cloud in a shared hardware environment and assign your existing licenses to an Authorized Mobility Partner. This lets you choose between deploying on-premises or through any Authorized Mobility Partner's shared data center. By letting the partner use your existing licenses, you can help lower your cloud infrastructure costs.

What Microsoft products are eligible for License Mobility?

Customers who have active Software Assurance coverage on applicable Microsoft products, including Microsoft SharePoint and Microsoft Exchange, are eligible for License Mobility. For specific terms and a complete list of Microsoft products that are eligible for License Mobility, refer to the "Appendix B: Software Assurance Benefits" section in the [Microsoft Product Terms](#).

Note on SQL Server: For SQL Server customers with core-based licensing and Software Assurance coverage, broader benefits are available under Azure Hybrid Benefit rights. For more information, see [Azure Hybrid Benefit](#). The steps described below under "How do I use this benefit?" do not apply to Azure Hybrid Benefit use.)

Note on Windows Server: Because the Authorized Mobility Partner provides Windows Server to you as a part of their infrastructure software, Windows Server is not included in the License Mobility benefit.

How do I use the License Mobility benefit?

To use License Mobility through Software Assurance, you can deploy on [Microsoft Azure](#) or work with any Authorized Mobility Partner. Complete the [verification form](#) available on the Volume Licensing website and give it to your Microsoft representative or preferred partner, who can help you submit it to Microsoft. After receiving the form, Microsoft will confirm your eligibility and communicate your verification status to you and your chosen Authorized Mobility Partner.

Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack

What is the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack?

The Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP) is a dynamic desktop solution available to customers who have Windows licenses with Software Assurance coverage. MDOP helps you manage Windows features; virtualize the operating system, applications, and the user experience; and restore user productivity after a system issue. [Learn more about MDOP.](#)

Microsoft Products and Services Agreement

What is the Microsoft Products and Services Agreement?

The [Microsoft Products and Services Agreement](#) is a single purchasing agreement that provides flexible options for your software, Online Services, and Software Assurance purchases across your organization.

Is Software Assurance available through the Microsoft Products and Services Agreement?

Yes, Software Assurance is an option available through the Microsoft Products and Services Agreement.

Are Software Assurance benefits managed differently through the Microsoft Products and Services Agreement?

With the Microsoft Products and Services Agreement, your Software Assurance benefits are easily managed through the [Microsoft Business Center](#), where you'll find clear, consolidated views of how benefits are earned and straightforward ways to allocate them.

Where can I find information about the Software Assurance benefits available through the Microsoft Products and Services Agreement?

Software Assurance offers tools and resources to help your company deploy, manage, and maximize your MPSA purchases, including deployment planning, training, and support. For details about the broad range of Software Assurance benefits available through MPSA refer to the [Microsoft Product Terms](#).

How do I activate my Software Assurance benefits?

If your organization has a Microsoft Products and Services Agreement, go to the [Microsoft Business Center](#) to access and start using your benefits. Your Software Assurance benefits are ready to view and use as soon as you have signed in to the [Business Center](#). The Business Center includes instructions to get started with each benefit and links to more detailed information about each benefit.

New Version Rights

If my organization has Software Assurance, can we upgrade to the new version of any product?

You can upgrade to the latest version of any underlying licensed product for which you have Software Assurance coverage.

What determines eligibility to receive new versions of product releases—the availability of the product on the monthly Price List or availability of the product for download on the Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC)?

For Software Assurance customers, eligibility to receive new versions of products is the earlier of either:

- the month Microsoft makes licenses for that product available for ordering (on the Price List), or
- the month the product is available for download from the Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC).

Software Assurance customers have rights to the next version of a product if their Software Assurance coverage continues through the month of the availability of the product. We recommend that you stay in touch with your Microsoft reseller or Microsoft Account Manager for news about new products and their availability.

What happens if my organization drops Software Assurance in the same month that a new product is made available on the VLSC? Can I still download and use the new product?

Yes. Active Software Assurance coverage always expires at the end of a month no matter what day within the month your organization originally signed the agreement. For new product version rights, this means that you can still download eligible new products posted to the VLSC during that final month.

Office Online Server

What is Office Online Server?

Office Online Server provides browser-based versions of Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote from on-premises environments. Office Online Server is version-less and provides most of Office Online service features through regular software updates. Office Online Server succeeds Office Web Apps Server 2013.

Which Office licenses qualify for create/edit/save rights in the new Office Online Server?

Create/edit/save rights in Office Online Server are included with Software Assurance for Office Standard, Office Professional Plus, or Office for Mac Standard. They are also included with an Office 365 ProPlus subscription.

What if I purchased Office 2016 without Software Assurance prior to the launch of Office Online Server?

Office Standard 2016, Office Professional Plus 2016, or Office 2016 for Mac Standard licenses without Software Assurance purchased prior to August 1, 2016, will include rights to use create/edit/save functionality in the new Office Online Server without restriction through August 1, 2019. Licenses purchased after August 1, 2016, will be subject to the new licensing terms requiring Software Assurance for an Office suite or an Office 365 ProPlus subscription.

Do I need a license for viewing files with Office Online Server?

View-only rights in Office Online Server are available without any license requirements.

Are there any licensing changes for Office Web Apps Server 2013?

No. Customers may continue using Office Web Apps Server 2013 with their Office licenses. The new Software Assurance licensing requirements for create/edit/save rights are specific to the new Office Online Server product.

Planning Services

What's changing with the Planning Services benefit?

Beginning in February 2020, we're retiring the Planning Services benefit in Software Assurance. We're consolidating our programmatic deployment planning assistance to a single approach, and Microsoft FastTrack is our primary implementation support offer. You can use FastTrack for Azure, Microsoft 365, and Dynamics 365

engagements. Cloud services engagements have been retired from Planning Services eligibility in favor of FastTrack deployments. Planning Services will be fully retired on January 1, 2022.

When are Planning Services being retired, and how long do I have to use my Planning Services days?

We want you to have plenty of time to use your current Planning Services days. These are the significant dates leading up to the retirement of Planning Services:

- September 2019: Planning Services retirement announced for January 2022.
- February 2020: Deployment Planning Services cloud engagements were retired.
- February 2020: Training vouchers can no longer be converted to Planning Services days.
- February 2021: End to accrual of new deployment planning days.
- June 2021: Last day to create Planning Services vouchers.
- January 2022: Last day to use Planning Services vouchers.

Note: there is no change to the voucher redemption process, and once a voucher is created, you have 180 days in which to use the voucher.

Can I still convert Training Vouchers to a Planning Services voucher?

Training vouchers can no longer be converted to Planning Services days.

What is Microsoft FastTrack?

Microsoft FastTrack can help you plan for and deploy our cloud solutions. FastTrack is for eligible customers when they are ready to plan and implement their full migration to cloud, and it provides end-to-end guidance built by Microsoft engineering. Eligible customers can use Microsoft FastTrack for deployment and planning requests for Azure, Microsoft 365, and Dynamics 365. Learn more about FastTrack.

Is there a cost for FastTrack support?

FastTrack is included in an eligible cloud subscription at no additional cost.

How do I find qualified consultants who deliver these services?

Planning Services are delivered by qualified Microsoft partners or Microsoft Services. Your Microsoft reseller or Account Manager can also help you locate qualified consultants to suit your planning needs. You can also search for Planning Services providers on the Microsoft partner finder.

Do the Planning Services include deployment?

No. Planning Services offer structured consulting engagements provided by qualified partners or Microsoft Consulting Services to help develop a deployment plan. You may work with partner or Microsoft Consulting Services team that provided the Planning Services for the actual deployment or evaluate if FastTrack is an option for your organization.

Problem Resolution Support

What's changing with the Problem Resolution Support benefit?

We're adjusting support eligibility criteria and changing support allocations beginning sometime in 2023 to replace incident-based support with as-needed support and credit toward Unified Support. The exact timing will be announced later. Software Assurance customers will no longer earn a limited number of support incidents based on spend, agreement type, and product(s) but instead will get as-needed support with a Software Assurance spend of \$250,000 or more annually. The Software Assurance support provides business hours support with a 24-hour response time goal.

How do I get support through Software Assurance when the criteria change starts?

Starting sometime in 2023, instead of converting unused support incidents, customers that spend more than \$250,000 USD per year on Software Assurance will get basic support. Customers will also have the option to upgrade to Microsoft Unified Support and a credit if they choose to move to Microsoft Unified Support.

Customers that spend less than \$250,000 USD per year on Software Assurance with no enterprise support agreement (Premier/Unified) will be directed to a partner for support or can purchase Professional Support incidents at support.microsoft.com.

What's Unified Support?

Microsoft Unified Support offers comprehensive, 24x7 as-needed break-fix support with a response time of 1-hour or less for critical issues. With this support experience, customers gain a mix of personalized and on-demand services, including assistance from a designated Technical Account Manager (TAM), access to rich proactive services, and education and IT health assessments through the Services Hub. [Learn more about submitting a support request.](#)

How many Software Assurance support incidents do I get with Software Assurance?

The number of support incidents vary by customer and are based on the type of Volume Licensing agreement and qualifying products. Review the [Microsoft Product Terms](#), [check your benefits](#), or contact your Microsoft Account Manager or Microsoft partner for more details.

How do I start using Problem Resolution support?

The first step is to make sure you have been identified as someone who can initiate support requests for your organization. Your organization's Software Assurance Manager identifies you by using the [Volume Licensing Service Center](#) and gives you a Software Assurance Access ID (SAID) that you will need when requesting support.

Then you can initiate a Problem Resolution Support Incident at [Microsoft Support](#). Although access to this electronic support site is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, electronic or web-based support responses will occur during business hours. As such, web-based support incidents should not be initiated for business-critical situations that require more immediate assistance.

You'll need to supply the following:

- Your Software Assurance Access ID (SAID)
- The Product edition and version that shows the issue
- Contact information for the person who is authorized to use Software Assurance support benefits

How do I transfer incidents to Premier Support?

You can convert Software Assurance Problem Resolution Support incidents to Premier Problem Resolution Support until sometime in 2023 by reserving the incidents for Premier through the VLSC and contacting your Technical Account Manager. The conversion ratio will depend on local Premier list prices and can vary by country/region.

Starting sometime in 2023, eligible customers with Problem Resolution Support incidents can get a credit toward a Unified Support contract.

For more information about transferring Software Assurance support incidents to Premier Support, contact your Microsoft Services representative or visit the [Microsoft Services Premier Support](#) website.

Where can I go for more help?

For additional support options outside of the United States and Canada, see [Microsoft International Help and Support](#). You can also contact us with the [Get Help](#) app.

Customers impacted by the changes to support that start in February 2023 can reach out to their Account Executive or Technical Account Manager for any questions regarding their Premier or Unified Support contract and use of Software Assurance Benefits.

Training Vouchers

What's changing with training vouchers?

We're retiring the Software Assurance training voucher benefit starting in February 2020, and training days will no longer be used to convert to planning services days. You can still use training vouchers until January 2022, with the exception of Azure training, which was removed from the course catalog in February 2020. Training vouchers will be fully retired on January 1, 2022.

Is there an alternative to training vouchers?

We're maintaining our commitment to instructor-led training, introducing role-based courses and advanced workload courseware, and introducing new certification. All of these are important for skilling our customers and partners. See [Microsoft Learn](#) or contact your Microsoft sales team for more information.

For how long are my training vouchers valid?

The ability to access your training vouchers expires with your Software Assurance coverage. If you create a training voucher before your Software Assurance coverage expires, the voucher remains valid for 180 days after the date it was created.

While Software Assurance Training Vouchers are being retired, you can still create and use training vouchers until January 2022, except for Azure training, which was removed from the course catalog in February 2020. These are the significant dates leading up to the retirement of Training Vouchers:

- September 2019: Training Vouchers retirement announced for January 2022.
- February 2020: Azure training was retired from the training voucher catalog and you can use Microsoft Learn training for Azure.
- February 2020: Training vouchers can no longer be converted to planning services days.
- February 2021: End to accrual of new training days.

- June 2021: Last day to create training vouchers.
- January 2022: Last day to redeem training vouchers.

Who can use Software Assurance Training Vouchers?

Anyone in your organization can benefit from Training Vouchers based on eligible training requirements. The number of training days available varies by licensing program and the number of qualifying licenses that you have with Software Assurance. For details, refer to the [Microsoft Product Terms](#) for Volume Licensing. If you're a current Software Assurance customer, you can check your Software Assurance benefits through the [Microsoft Volume Licensing Services Center](#) (VLSC) or the [Microsoft Business Center](#) for MPSA customers. You must be registered to use these tools.

What can my training vouchers be used for?

Eligible activities are as follows:

- Microsoft Official Courseware (designed for IT professionals or developers)
- Exams
- Microsoft Course Certificates

Ineligible activities include courses such as:

- Azure courses
- Courses created for information works such as Excel, Word, and PowerPoint
- Hands-on labs, first-look clinics, or Microsoft Press books

[See a complete list of SATV eligible courses](#) (filter by Training Type - Classroom; Program Type - SA)

[Locate a Microsoft Learning Partner](#)

What courses are available?

Available courses are those that have been created for IT professional and developer participants. Courses that are NOT eligible include First Look Clinics, Hands-on Labs, Microsoft Azure courses (beginning in February 2020), and Microsoft Press books.

All courses are taught by Microsoft Certified Trainers (MCT) through a Microsoft partner with a Learning Competency (Microsoft Learning Partner) using Microsoft official courses. Use the [Microsoft Learning Partner Locator](#) to find a classroom training site in your area.

You can view the [current list](#) of Software Assurance eligible courses. Under Offer Type, select SA Training Vouchers.

How long do we have to use the Training Vouchers?

The right to access training vouchers expires with your Software Assurance coverage. If you create a training voucher before the expiration of your Software Assurance coverage, the voucher remains valid for 180 days after the date it was created. While Software Assurance training vouchers are being retired, you can still create and use training vouchers until January 2022, except for Azure training, which was removed from the course catalog in February 2020. Training days will no longer be accrued beginning in February 2021. Any training days must be converted to vouchers by June 30, 2021 and vouchers must be redeemed before January 2022.

Can I still use Training Vouchers to get more Planning Services days?

With the upcoming retirement of both deployment planning and training vouchers from Software Assurance, training days can no longer be converted to Planning Services days.

Where can I go for more help with Training Vouchers?

More information is available on the [Software Assurance Training Voucher Resources](#) site.

Windows 10 Enterprise Per-User Add-On

What is Windows 10 Enterprise per User Add-on?

The Windows 10 Enterprise per User Add-on is an optional subscription license that provides Windows 10 Enterprise per user rights for a primary user whose primary device is licensed with Windows covered by Software Assurance, or Windows per User VDA rights for a primary user whose primary device is licensed with Windows VDA. For more details, visit the [Windows Volume Licensing](#) page.

What does the Windows 10 Enterprise per User Add-on provide to the licensed user?

With the Windows 10 Enterprise Add-on, the licensed user can:

- Install Windows Enterprise locally on any of the licensed user's devices that are licensed for Windows 7/8/8.1/10 Pro, and any Windows tablet with a diagonal screen size less than or equal to 10.1 inches.
- Access Windows Enterprise across any of the licensed user's devices with Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) and/or Windows To Go.*
- Utilize the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP) across all the user's devices.

* *Subject to licensing and technical limitations*

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