

Microsoft Defender

Licensing guidance

Summary

Microsoft Defender products that defend endpoints are integral to Microsoft’s threat protection solutions, providing customers with security for their organizations. These solutions are designed to help organizations prevent, detect, investigate, and respond to advanced threats. The products are available through user- and server-based subscription licenses. Server protection is also available on a consumption basis through Microsoft Defender for Cloud.

This guidance is intended to provide clarity on device entitlements provided by Microsoft Defender licenses. It is not designed to introduce new or supplement existing terms but rather provide insight into this topic and the intent of existing guidance.

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Applicable products

This guidance applies to the following products:

User subscription licenses

Product	Overview
Microsoft Defender for Vulnerability Management	Microsoft Defender for Vulnerability Management provides continuous asset discovery and inventory in a consolidated view, intelligent assessments leveraging Microsoft threat intelligence, risk-based prioritization, and built-in remediation and mitigation flows.
Microsoft Defender Vulnerability Management Add-on	Microsoft Defender Vulnerability Management Add-on is available for customers who have Defender for Endpoint P2, and includes consolidated inventories, expanded asset coverage, and enhanced assessment and mitigation tools.
Microsoft Defender for Business	Defender for Business is an enterprise-grade, AI-powered security solution designed especially for small and medium-sized businesses (up to 300 employees). It helps protect your company's devices from ransomware, malware, phishing, and other cyberthreats.
Microsoft Defender for Endpoint P1	Microsoft Defender for Endpoint P1 offers a foundational set of capabilities, including industry-leading antimalware, cyberattack surface reduction, and device-based conditional access. Also available with Microsoft 365 E3.
Microsoft Defender for Endpoint P2	Microsoft Defender for Endpoint P2 offers all the capabilities in P1, plus endpoint detection and response, automated investigation and incident response, and cyberthreat and vulnerability management. Also available with Microsoft 365 E5.

Server subscription licenses

Product	Overview
Microsoft Defender for Endpoint for servers	Defender for Endpoint for servers is for server protection and offers all the same capabilities as Defender for Endpoint P2.
Microsoft Defender Vulnerability Management Add-On to Microsoft Defender for Endpoint for servers	This add-on SKU provides advanced vulnerability management capabilities beyond what is included in Defender for Endpoint for servers.
Microsoft Defender for Business for servers (Subscription License)	Microsoft Defender for Business for servers is an add-on to Defender for Business that enables you to secure your server operating systems with the same protection that you get for client devices in Defender for Business.

Server consumption-based licenses

Product	Overview
Microsoft Defender for Servers P1	Defender for Server P1 offers all the same capabilities as Defender for Endpoint for servers. Licensed and priced based on consumption.
Microsoft Defender for Servers P2	Defender for Servers P2 builds on Defender for Servers P1 with additional capabilities for multi-cloud server environments. Licensed and priced based on consumption.

Licensing models

User subscriptions

You can license the protection of client and mobile devices on a user subscription basis through commercial licensing programs such as the Microsoft Cloud Agreement (MCA) or Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA). Assign a User Subscription License to the account for any user whose devices you want to protect. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Server subscriptions

You can license the protection of servers on a subscription basis through commercial licensing programs such as the Microsoft Cloud Agreement (MCA) or Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA). Assign a separate Subscription License to each server (physical or virtual) you want to protect. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Server consumption

You can also license the protection of servers on a consumption basis through Microsoft Defender for Cloud.

- [Learn more about choosing a Microsoft Defender for Servers plan and deployment scope.](#)
- [Find Microsoft Defender for Cloud pricing.](#)

Product-specific provisions

Protecting the licensed user's devices

For applicable Microsoft Defender products, each User Subscription License (SL) allows for the protection of up to five client and/or mobile devices that are designated for the Licensed User's use. These may be personal devices or devices provided by your organization. (Servers require server-based licensing.)

The specific devices being protected may change as long as no more than five of the licensed user's devices are protected at any given time. If a user has more than five devices that need protecting at the same time, you can purchase additional User Subscription Licenses.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What platforms are supported by Microsoft Defender products licensed under the user subscription model?

Microsoft Defender products support, but are not limited to the platforms below:

- Windows clients
- macOS
- iOS
- Android

You can find additional information on supported platforms and releases here:

- [Onboard client devices \(Windows or Mac\) to Microsoft Defender for Endpoint - Microsoft Defender for Endpoint | Microsoft Learn](#)
- [Microsoft Defender for Endpoint on other platforms - Microsoft Defender for Endpoint | Microsoft Learn](#)
- [Microsoft Defender for Endpoint - Mobile Threat Defense - Microsoft Defender for Endpoint | Microsoft Learn](#)

2. Can I use Microsoft Defender products licensed under the user subscription model to protect server products?

No. Defender User Subscription Licenses are for protecting the licensed user's client and/or mobile devices, not an organization's servers. For a list of options for server protection see the list of server applicable licenses above.

3. Can I protect Linux-based servers with Defender products?

No, Linux Server is a server-based product and requires server-based licensing.

4. Can I protect Linux-based client devices with Defender products?

Microsoft Defender for Endpoint does not currently support Linux client devices.

5. What are the server types covered under Microsoft Defender products?

The server products include, but are not limited to:

- [Windows Servers](#)
- [Linux Server](#)

6. Does the five-device rule apply to Frontline Worker User Subscription Licenses?

Yes, Frontline Workers User Subscription Licenses have the same provisions as Information Worker User Subscription Licenses and qualify for the five client and/or mobile devices. [See relevant Product Terms for Frontline Worker eligibility.](#)

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