

Licensing Programs

Collapse All

EA and EAS

Q: What are the ordering requirements under an Enterprise Agreement (EA), and how does the minimum license requirement work?

Under the Enterprise Agreement, customers are required to license a minimum of 500 Qualified Users and/or Devices. This means you must purchase at least 500 licenses within a single product pool - either for Enterprise Products (such as Windows OS, Office Professional Plus, or the Enterprise CAL Suite) or Enterprise Online Services (like Microsoft 365 E3, Windows E3, or EMS E3). If you need products from multiple pools, you will need to meet the 500-license minimum per pool - you cannot split the total across different pools.

Customers can mix Enterprise Products and Enterprise Online Services within the same enrollment. However, if there is a dependency between products (for example, Core CAL Bridge for O365 and Office 365 E3) you are required to license enterprise wide for both. If you are only using Enterprise Online Services, you must maintain at least 500 subscription licenses to meet the minimum requirements.

Q: What does "Enterprise" mean in the context of a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA)?

"Enterprise" refers to the Enrolled Affiliate and the Affiliates it chooses to include in its Enrollment. Only these entities are covered under the EA licensing rights.

Q: Are all affiliates of a customer automatically considered part of the Enterprise under an EA?

No. Only those Affiliates explicitly included by the customer in the Enrollment are considered part of the Enterprise and are eligible to use licenses under the EA.

Q: Can VL (Volume Licensing) licenses be used by organizations that are not defined as Affiliates?

No. VL licenses are for the benefit of the customer and its Affiliates (if applicable). Organizations that do not meet the Microsoft Business and Services Agreement (MBSA) definition of an Affiliate are not eligible to use the licenses. Under the MBSA, an "Affiliate" is any legal entity that a party owns, that owns a party, or that is under common ownership with a party. Ownership means control of more than a 50% interest in an entity.

Q: How does Microsoft define an "Affiliate" in licensing agreements?

Under the Microsoft Business and Services Agreement (MBSA), an "Affiliate" is any legal entity that a party owns, that owns a party, or that is under common ownership with a party. Ownership means control of more than 50% of the entity.

Q: Who is considered the “customer” in a Microsoft Volume Licensing agreement? —

The “customer” is the legal entity that enters into the Volume Licensing agreement with Microsoft. This entity is the primary beneficiary of the licenses granted under the agreement.

Q: Can an affiliate use licenses purchased by the customer? —

Yes, but only if the affiliate is explicitly included in the licensing agreement or Enrollment. Affiliates not listed or not meeting the Microsoft Business and Services Agreement (MBSA) definition are not eligible to use the licenses.

Q: What’s the Enterprise Agreement? —

The Microsoft Enterprise Agreement offers the best value to organizations with 500 or more devices that want a manageable volume licensing program that gives them the flexibility to purchase cloud services and software licenses under one agreement in response to the changing technological landscape.

Please note, 500 minimum user/device requirement is for commercial customers. Doesn’t apply to Server and Cloud Enrollment (SCE). The minimum requirement for public sector customers is 250 users/devices.

Q: How is the Enterprise Agreement structured? —

The Enterprise Agreement is a three-year agreement, which allows you to forecast software technology costs up to three years in advance.

Q: What do I buy with an Enterprise Agreement? —

With the Enterprise Agreement, you’re able to purchase Microsoft end-user products and online services as well as server and cloud technologies. Take advantage of enrollments within your Enterprise Agreement:

- **Enterprise Enrollment:** Get the best pricing, per user/device or hybrid licensing options, and simplified license management for end-user technologies from Microsoft.
 - **Server and Cloud Enrollment (SCE):** Get the best pricing, cloud-optimized licensing options, and simplified license management when you buy one or more server and cloud technologies from Microsoft.
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Q: How much flexibility do I have to make changes to my Enterprise Agreement during the term? —

The Enterprise Agreement gives you the flexibility to add or remove (Available with the Enterprise Subscription Enrollment) additional cloud services and software at pre-agreed terms and pricing to the agreement when needed without having to report or order each time.

Q: How do I account for these changes? —

The Annual True-up allows you to take an inventory of additional products and services used during the year without having to report or order each time.

Q: What happens at the end of the three-year term? —

At the end of the third year, you'll work with Microsoft to renew your Enterprise Agreement for another three years. Renewing a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement gives you the best value while allowing you to build on existing investments, respond to a changing technological landscape, and maintain a higher level of engagement with Microsoft.

Q: Can I sign up for an OLS-only Enterprise Agreement? —

Yes, you may establish an OLS-only Enterprise Agreement with a minimum of 500 Subscription Licenses for Enterprise Online Services in a single pool.

Q: Must I include all my affiliates under an Enterprise Agreement, or can I select which affiliates will be part of the Enterprise Agreement for purposes of defining the enterprise? —

No. When you purchase Additional Products under an Enterprise Agreement, there are no minimum quantities required. You may purchase any quantity.

Q: Can I spread payments for my initial order, or do I have to pay for the initial order all upfront? —

For your initial order under your Enterprise Agreement, you have the option to pay for it all upfront or to pay for it in installments.

Q: When are my True-up orders required in EA? —

Your first two True-up orders are required 60 to 30 days prior to your Enterprise Agreement enrollment anniversary, and your final True-up order is required within 30 days of your enrollment end date.

Q: If I currently have an Enterprise Agreement with Office, Windows, and Core CAL, and I'm interested in purchasing some OLS licenses for Office 365 for one department, do I have to purchase the OLS on an organization-wide basis? —

No. In this case you may purchase incremental additional OLS licenses and still maintain your initial Professional Desktop commitment.

Q: When I renew my Enterprise Enrollment, what do I own? —

After your final payment(s) has been made for your Licenses and Software Assurance, you'll own perpetual licenses to the then-latest version of the software. When you renew, you'll then be paying for Software Assurance-only for that license.

Q: What is Server and Cloud Enrollment (SCE)?

The Server and Cloud Enrollment (SCE) is a licensing vehicle under the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement that enables organizations to standardize on one or more Microsoft Server and Cloud technologies. To enroll in an SCE, you make an installed base-wide commitment to one or more components. This means committing to full Software Assurance coverage across the installed base of an SCE component. In the case of System Center, this means committing to full System Center coverage on your Windows Server installed base through Core Infrastructure Suites (CIS). In return for making this commitment, SCE provides significant incremental value and benefits that include:

- 15 percent off Licenses and Software Assurance (L&SA) products and 5 percent off Software Assurance products.
- A subscription-based licensing option is available alongside perpetual licenses. This gives you access to more flexibility when you need to retire workloads, consolidate, or migrate to the cloud.
- If you commit to the Core Infrastructure Suite (CIS), you will receive incremental rights to use System Center to manage Microsoft Azure virtual machines and resources at no additional cost.
- Microsoft Premier Services customers may also qualify for unlimited problem resolution support for SQL Server, Windows Server and System Center, BizTalk Server, and SharePoint Server.
- All the benefits of Software Assurance including access to License Mobility for many applications, which enables even more seamless migrations to the cloud.

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Q: What are the key benefits of SCE?

The SCE is designed to build a standardized and high-value licensing foundation for customers adopting Microsoft's server and cloud technologies. It does so across three key benefits:

- The SCE is a cloud enabled enrollment. The SCE provides flexible terms for Microsoft Azure, application license mobility to the cloud through Software Assurance, System Center benefits for managing Azure resources, and subscription options. Packaging these benefits in a single enrollment provides more options than ever to customers operating in dynamic and hybrid environments.
- The SCE better enables customers to standardize on Microsoft Server and Cloud technologies. SCE customers have the opportunity to access Microsoft's latest technologies and benefits through Software Assurance across all deployments.
- The SCE simplifies licensing management through standardization, making it easier to plan, administer, and adapt as organizations evolve.

Q: Will I benefit from SCE?

SCE is ideal if you want to do the following:

- Get Microsoft's best pricing in exchange for Standardizing on Microsoft Server and Cloud products across your organization.
- Use the most up to date versions of each product.
- Have consistent and predictable pricing for the length of the term.
- Have the flexibility to own perpetual rights to products as well as subscribe.
- Lower your maintenance costs.

Q: Is there a benefit to committing to multiple components in an SCE?

Once you have made an enterprise-wide commitment to a given component, you get all the benefits that go along with that component. If an additional commitment is made to an alternate component, then you will also realize the incremental benefits for that set of products. There is no "cumulative" benefit of adding multiple components other than the simplicity of standardizing your Server and Cloud licensing in a single vehicle.

Q: How do I enroll in the SCE?

To enroll in SCE, please contact your channel partner or Microsoft account manager.

Q: Where can I find more information on SCE?

<https://www.microsoft.com/licensing/licensing-programs/enterprise#PivotTarget4>

Q: If I have existing licenses without Software Assurance, how should I add those into the SCE Agreement?

For all licensed deployments of products that must be covered as part of an installed-based commitment to SCE that aren't current with software Assurance, you can choose to add them as subscription or to add them as L&SA at signing.

Q: How is subscription in SCE different than traditional L&SA?

Subscription options in SCE are available for the components that require an installed-base commitment. If workloads are retired or moved to the cloud, subscriptions license quantities can be reduced annually. Within a selected component, you can selectively choose to

own/maintain perpetual units with full term commitments of three years or have some as subscription.

Q: Can I buy a subscription for new units in SCE? —

Yes, you can select whether units you add at signing of SCE or license at True-up (based on deployments) will be subscription or perpetual (L&SA). You can choose based on your individual workload requirements.

Q: How does SCE work? —

Enrolling in SCE requires the following:

- **Enterprise Agreement:** Although you need to sign an Enterprise Agreement, an Enterprise Enrollment for Desktop isn't needed to qualify.
- **Annuity Coverage:** 100% Software Assurance or Subscription coverage is required on your install base for each product family that you commit to. This includes those licenses that weren't covered by Software Assurance when you entered the program.

With SCE, the following occurs:

- For licenses with continuous Software Assurance coverage, Software Assurance can be renewed upon entrance to the program at a discount.
- For the licenses that didn't have Software Assurance, you can subscribe to the most current version of the product.
- For incremental licenses bought during the agreement term, you receive additional price savings on L&SA.

Software Assurance ^

Q: 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.

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

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

Q: How do I activate my Software Assurance benefits? —

Your Software Assurance benefits are activated in the Microsoft 365 admin center <https://admin.microsoft.com>. To activate Software Assurance benefits, sign in to the Microsoft 365 admin center, confirm you are assigned as a Software Assurance or Volume Licensing administrator, review your eligible benefits, and activate each benefit individually. Some benefits require assigning contacts or submitting verification forms. To find more information about Software assurance benefit, see <https://www.microsoft.com/licensing/terms/product/SoftwareAssuranceBenefits/EAEAS#clause-1229-h3-1>.

Q: 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.

Q: 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 Product 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.

Q: What products can I get through the Workplace Discount Program and how much does the Workplace Discount Program cost?

Employees can get a 30% discount on Office 365 Home or Office 365 Personal annual subscriptions through the Workplace Discount Program. Please visit the [Workplace Discount Program](#) website to learn more about the program.

Q: Who is eligible for the Microsoft Workplace Discount Program offer?

For employees to use the Microsoft Workplace Discount 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 Workplace Discount 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.

Q: In which markets is the Office 365 Subscription offer available to eligible organizations under the Workplace Discount Program?

This offer is available to employees of eligible organizations worldwide. Administrators can see and manage their organization's eligible Workplace Discount Program benefits and employees

can access the offers at the [Workplace Discount Program](#).

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

Q: Can Software Assurance benefit administrators view and manage their Microsoft Workplace Discount Program benefit for Office 365 subscriptions on VLSC?

No, benefit administrators whose organization qualifies for the Workplace Discount Program discounts can view and manage their benefit only on the [Microsoft Workplace Discount admin site](#).

Q: The Workplace Discount Program process requires Microsoft Entra ID; what is Entra ID?

Microsoft Entra ID is an identity and access management solution. It is an identity service that helps the [Microsoft Workplace Discount Program](#) validate your organization's employee purchase eligibility. Signing up for Entra ID does not require you to move your existing on-premises services to the cloud or purchase additional licenses. For more information, see [Entra ID](#).

Q: Where do employees go to order using the Workplace Discount Program discount offered on Office 365 Home and Personal subscriptions?

Employees can check their eligibility and view the available discounts on the [Workplace Discount Program](#).

Q: What is License Mobility through Software Assurance?

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.

Q: 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 "[Software Assurance Benefits](#)" section in the [Microsoft Product Terms](#).

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.

Q: How do I use the License Mobility through Software Assurance benefit?

To use License Mobility through Software Assurance, you can deploy on [Microsoft Azure](#) or work with any [Authorized Mobility Partner](#). Access this [License Mobility](#) site for more information on this benefit.

Q: What is the Flexible Virtualization benefit?

The [Flexible Virtualization benefit](#) expands your outsourcing options for software to include Authorized Outsourcers' shared servers. This benefit is available broadly for software products under your subscription licenses and licenses with Software Assurance.

Q: Which products are covered by the Flexible Virtualization benefit?

The [Flexible Virtualization benefit](#) applies to all software products that are available under subscription licenses or licenses with Software Assurance coverage. This includes server products such as Windows Server, SQL Server, Exchange Server, SharePoint Server, System Center, and others. This also includes desktop products such as Windows 10/11, Office desktop applications and Microsoft 365 Apps.

Q: How is the Flexible Virtualization benefit different from License Mobility through Software Assurance?

The [Flexible Virtualization benefit](#) is similar to License Mobility through Software Assurance in that it permits deployment to the cloud. However, it is different in that it applies to many products that are not covered by License Mobility through Software Assurance (such as Windows Server and desktop products). It is also available to more customers. The Flexible Virtualization benefit permits customers to use any outsourcer that is an Authorized Outsourcer. License Mobility through Software Assurance requires customers to use Authorized Mobility Partners. Provided the customer has subscription licenses or licenses with Software Assurance, when they deploy under the Flexible Virtualization benefit, customers have the same use rights they have on-premises.

Q: 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](#).

Q: 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.

Q: 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.

Q: How do I activate Software Assurance benefits from my Microsoft Products and Services Agreement?

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.

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

Yes. For Software Assurance customers, eligibility to upgrade to 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.

Q: 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 can be downloaded from the [Volume Licensing Service Center \(VLSC\)](#). Learn how to [deploy Office Online Server](#).

Q: 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 2016, Office Professional Plus 2016, or Office 2016 for Mac Standard. They are also included with an Office 365 ProPlus subscription.

Q: 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.

Q: What's changing with the Problem Resolution Support benefit?

The 24x7 Problem Resolution Support benefit was fully retired for all customers effective February 1, 2023. For support needs without a Unified support contract, Microsoft Professional Support is available as pay-per-incident or a pack of five incidents.

Q: What is Microsoft Unified Support? —

Microsoft Unified Support offers comprehensive, 24x7 as-needed break-fix support with a response time of one 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 Customer Success Account Manager (CSAM), access to rich proactive services, and education and IT health assessments through the [Services Hub](#).

Non-profit Program ^

Q: What technology grants and discounts does Microsoft provide for nonprofits? —

Microsoft provides grants and discounts for eligible nonprofit organizations, including cloud services such as Microsoft 365, Azure and Dynamics 365, Surface hardware, on-premises software, and digital skilling. Please note that not every program may be available in every country.

Q: How do I apply for the Microsoft nonprofit programs available to my organization? —

First, review our [eligibility guidelines](#) and then [get started](#) by applying for a product grant or discount.

Q: What are the eligibility requirements for the Microsoft nonprofit programs? —

Organizations must:

Hold recognized legal charitable status as defined in their countries, or be a public library or public museum.

Have a mission to benefit the broader community.

Attest to Microsoft's anti-discrimination policy.

Only assign licenses to eligible staff.

Only use the licenses for their organization and not license partner, affiliate, or sister organizations.

Learn more about [eligibility](#).