Nonprofit Granted Licenses Outreach

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Frequently Asked Questions

Low Usage

Q: Where can I go to learn more about how to use my Office 365 licenses?
A: We have many nonprofit training resources available to support your organization's use of Office 365.

1. The Microsoft Digital Skills Center for Nonprofits – we partnered with TechSoup to create bite-size training with nonprofit-focused scenarios. These courses cover Teams, Excel, Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, SharePoint, OneDrive, and many others.
2. Nonprofit training resources hub – consolidated set of training content categorized by level (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced) and by cloud solution (Microsoft 365, Azure, Power Platform)
3. Microsoft 365 Admin Security Toolkit – we partnered with Tech Impact to help you become familiar with some of the security settings and tools within the Microsoft suite.
4. Free Teams training – online training designed to get you up and running with Teams.

Q: How do I see which users are inactive?
A: You can see how people in your nonprofit are using Microsoft 365 services and identify who may not need a Microsoft 365 license at all. To generate activity reports in the admin center, follow the step-by-step instructions here. You can export the report data to enable you to do simple sorting and filtering of all users for further analysis.

Q: What workloads count for active usage?
A: Microsoft Philanthropies defines active usage as a user using at least one Microsoft 365 cloud service within the past 90 days. These cloud services include Exchange Online, Yammer, Microsoft Teams, and Microsoft 365 Apps. (Note that usage of perpetual licensed Office apps, such as Office Standard or Office Professional, does not factor into active usage metrics.) Thus it is possible that you are using Microsoft products like Word, Excel, or PowerPoint that are not attached to a cloud license. It is also possible that you have multiple granted cloud licenses from Microsoft (on multiple tenants) but are not actively using all of them.

Q: What is the difference between Total Licenses and Assigned Licenses?
A: When you buy a subscription, you specify the number of licenses that you need, based on how many people you have in your nonprofit. This is the Total Licenses in your subscription management section of the admin center. After you buy a subscription, you create accounts for people in your nonprofit, and then assign a license to each person. Once a license is assigned to a user, this is the Assigned Licenses noted in the admin center, and all activity reports are calculated against these Assigned Licenses. More information about buying or removing licenses is located here. For example:

Microsoft for Nonprofits Granted Licenses Outreach Microsoft

Contoso.org	Number	Description
Total Purchased E1 Licenses	2,000	Total E1 licenses available in the subscription management section of the admin center
Assigned E1 Licenses	1,000	Total E1 licenses assigned to users
Active Users	900	Number of users that have used an E1 cloud service within the past 90 days. This number is above 85% utilization of the Assigned Licenses, and so the tenant is compliant with Microsoft Philanthropies grant requirements.
Inactive Users	100	Number of users that have not used an E1 cloud service within the past 90 days and may be staff that no longer need an E1 license, or former staff that should be removed so that they do not pose a security risk.

Q: Should I maintain a "buffer" of licenses in my Total Licenses count?
A: We understand that nonprofits often need flexibility in their staff licensing, however, to maximize the number of nonprofit organizations we can serve through our grants, we actively review utilization of granted software and ask that all nonprofits manage to within 85% utilization of granted Assigned Licenses.

Q: What licenses are available for my organization to use for volunteers and beneficiaries?
A: Volunteers are permitted to be licensed with Discount Offers or the Volunteer Use Benefit, but are not permitted to be licensed with Grant Offers. Beneficiaries, members, and donors are not eligible for any nonprofit associated use rights. Please see the Eligibility guidelines for more information.

Q: How to I manage licenses for employees on unpaid leave or in furloughed status?
A: Any paid staff members on 'mandatory unpaid time off' but who remain employees of the nonprofit, often referred to as furloughed staff, remain eligible for Grant and Discount Offers. Please see the Eligibility guidelines for more information.

Q: Can I continue to use my granted licenses for identity management or for archiving/data backup?
A: To maximize the number of nonprofit organizations we can serve through our grants, Microsoft Philanthropies requires nonprofits to manage within 85% active usage of all granted Assigned Licenses. To be compliant with our donor policies, we ask that you release enough licenses to manage within 85% utilization in your Assigned Licenses. Failure to manage within this restriction runs the risk of disqualifying you for any future grants from Microsoft.

Q: What type of security threat do inactive users pose?
A: Inactive licenses that are assigned to former employees pose a major threat because their continued access to proprietary corporate data (like PII information) put your organization and program beneficiaries at risk. Click here for details on how to remove former employees from your subscription.

Q: How can I remove the licenses I don't need, and keep the ones I do?
A: To remove users you can follow the step-by-step instructions here or through this guided simulation.

Q: Can I do a bulk removal of inactive licenses?

A: To unassign licenses from multiple users, follow the instructions here. Alternatively, if you are comfortable with PowerShell, you can remove user licenses with PowerShell.

Q: I will unassign my inactive licenses, but I want to retain the data from those licenses (e.g., emails). How can I preserve this data?
A: When a license is removed from a user, data that is associated with that account is held for 30 days. During this time, you can use these instructions to access the employee's data. After the 30-day grace period, the data is deleted and can't be recovered.

Within this 30-day window there are two main options to preserve this data:

1. To move email, contacts, tasks, and calendar information to another account, see Export or backup email, contacts, and calendar to an Outlook .pst file.
2. Alternatively, you can make the inbox an 'Inactive mailbox' using a Litigation Hold, and then delete the mailbox/remove the user. Note this requires an Exchange Online Plan 2 license (Office 365 E3) or Exchange Online Archiving license (add-on to Office 365 E1). For more information, see Create and manage inactive mailboxes in Exchange Online.

To save a document library or list content (such as contacts) from a SharePoint Online environment (OneDrive for Business or a Teams site) to file shares or to a local computer, see Manual migration of SharePoint Online content.

For additional data backup support and/or instructions on how to use the Exchange Online Archiving service you can connect to a partner by completing this form.

Q: Can I recover data in an Inactive Mailbox?
A: Yes, for more information on how to recover this data if the former employee returns to your organization or if a new employee is hired to take on the job responsibilities of the former employee please refer to these instructions.

Q: My subscription just got turned off. Can I recover my license? What about my data?
A: Yes, if you act within 90 days of your subscription being turned off, you can recover your free cloud license and all the data associated with that subscription. Instructions on how to do so can be found here.

Q: I don't need this subscription. How can I turn it off before it is scheduled to be deprovisioned?
A: Instructions on how to cancel your Office 365 and Microsoft 365 subscriptions can be found here.

Q: How can I learn more about how Microsoft supports nonprofits?
A: Our nonprofit website provides a broad overview of how we support nonprofits. To engage with Microsoft directly, contact us.

Zero Utilization

Q: I received an email from Microsoft notifying me that me that if my granted licenses are not utilized in the next 30 days they will be turned off. Why did I receive this?
A: During a recent evaluation of your organization's grant, we determined that your organization is not actively using any of your granted Office 365 and/or Microsoft 365 licenses. As a result, we believe you may have misallocated the number of licenses that your organization needs.

To maximize the number of nonprofit organizations we can serve through our grants, Microsoft Philanthropies requires nonprofits to manage within 85% active usage of all granted Assigned Licenses. Many of these unused seats may belong to former employees and/or volunteers, which poses a security threat to your organization if not properly used.

Q: I believe that I am actively using my free Office 365 and/or Microsoft 365 licenses. Why did I receive this email?
A: In our evaluation we have not seen any active usage coming from one of your granted cloud licenses over the past 60 days. Many nonprofits have both an on-premises version of Microsoft Office and a granted cloud license of Office 365 and/or Microsoft 365. If you are using an on-premises version, it is possible that you are using Microsoft products like Word, Excel, or PowerPoint that are not attached to a cloud license. It is also possible that you have multiple granted cloud licenses from Microsoft (on multiple tenants) but are not actively using all of them.

Q: I thought these licenses were free donations that renew annually from Microsoft. Why is Microsoft turning them off?
A: The granted cloud licenses that Microsoft provides to eligible nonprofits are only permitted for use by eligible staff. To better serve all nonprofits we support, we expect that each nonprofit only requests the number of free licenses that are required for day-to-day operations and adhere to user licensing rules. See our full nonprofit eligibility rules [here](#).

To ensure proper usage of these licenses we are asking you to unassign the licenses you no longer need and/or assign your existing licenses to eligible staff. If no action is taken, Microsoft reserves the right to turn off your organization's granted licenses. Please note that any paid licenses will not be affected.

Q: How can I avoid getting my granted licenses turned off?
A: To continue using your granted licenses you will need to assign your existing licenses to users in your organization and start to actively use the licenses (e.g., using Teams, Outlook, or SharePoint). You can assign your granted licenses by following [these instructions,](#) [watching this guided simulation](#), or by reaching out to a partner to get help by completing [this form](#).