

VLSC Software Assurance Guide

Contents

Welcome to Software Assurance	2
Step 1: Get to know your benefits	2
Familiarize yourself with Software Assurance.....	2
Check your benefits through the Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC)	2
Step 2: Establish Software Assurance Managers.....	2
Tips for choosing Software Assurance Managers.....	2
Register Software Assurance Managers.....	3
How to register	3
Step 3: Claim your benefits through the VLSC	4
New Version Rights.....	4
Home Use Program	4
License Mobility through Software Assurance.....	5
Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP)	5
Problem Resolution Support.....	5
Phone incident award.....	5
Unlimited email support.....	5
To set up Problem Resolution Support through the VLSC.....	5
To initiate a support incident through Microsoft Support.....	6
To convert phone support incidents to Premier Support.....	6
Planning Services	7
Training Vouchers.....	8
Activate a Training Voucher.....	8
To locate classroom training	8
What you should know about Training Vouchers.....	8
Additional benefits.....	9
Get help in the VLSC	9

Welcome to Software Assurance

Software Assurance for Volume Licensing offers a range of tools and resources to help your organization deploy, manage, and maximize your Volume Licensing purchases. The program covers Microsoft technologies and services, and includes benefits such as new product version rights, home use program, and support.

This guide will show you how to administer your Software Assurance benefit activation, download, and implementation procedures.

Step 1: Get to know your benefits

Familiarize yourself with Software Assurance

Software Assurance offers updated software releases, unique technologies, and support. This guide supplies fundamental information; you can learn more about each benefit on the [Software Assurance website](#).

Check your benefits through the Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC)

Your Software Assurance benefits are determined by your Volume Licensing agreement (such as an Enterprise Agreement or Open Value agreement) and the number of qualifying licenses that you have with Software Assurance. To determine your Software Assurance benefits, use the [Volume Licensing Service Center](#). You must be registered to use this site (see [Step 3: Claim your benefits through the VLSC](#) for more details).

If your organization has a Microsoft Products and Services Agreement (MPSA), your Software Assurance benefits are managed through the Microsoft Business Center. Sign in to the [Microsoft Business Center](#) for instructions on how to access and use your Software Assurance benefits through your MPSA.

Software Assurance benefits are subject to change at any time.

Step 2: Establish Software Assurance Managers

Before you can use your Software Assurance benefits, there must be at least one registered VLSC Administrator or designated Software Assurance Manager for that license ID. Any registered VLSC Administrator can manage Software Assurance benefits or an Administrator can assign a specific Software Assurance benefit manager. If you already have Manager Permissions, skip ahead to [Step 3: Claim Your Benefits through the VLSC](#).

If you do not have Manager Permissions, you can request these by first [registering](#) to use the VLSC and then requesting Software Assurance Manager Permissions. The VLSC routes such requests to your organization's VLSC Administrator. You can review the [training videos](#) for complete instructions.

Tips for choosing Software Assurance Managers

A consideration when choosing whether to have one or more individuals manage your organization's Software Assurance Benefits is the size of your organization and the scope of benefits available to you. A large enterprise that

will access multiple benefits across multiple organizations may find decentralized benefits management most effective. A midsize organization may find it more efficient to centralize benefits management with one individual or department.

Here are some typical manager recommendations for Software Assurance:

IT Manager

- New products and unique license rights (for example, New Product Versions, Step-up Licenses, Windows to Go Use Rights)
- Deployment resources and tools (for example, Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack, License Mobility)
- Support (for example, Problem Resolution Support)

Staff Development/ HR Manager/IT Manager

- Home Use Program

Register Software Assurance Managers

To begin, register and sign in to the VLSC. After you are registered and signed in, you will need appropriate permissions granted by your organization's VLSC Administrator. The VLSC Administrator grants permission either by approving permission requests submitted by individuals or by proactively assigning permissions to individuals. Visit the [VLSC Training and Resources](#) page to review the "Managing Permissions" demo, or download the VLSC User Guide for detailed instructions.

How to register

Managing your volume licensing agreements in the VLSC is possible only if you are a registered user of the site. Registration requires a valid organization (work) email address. This is the email address provided on your Volume License Agreement or Open License Order.

To register for the first time as a VLSC user:

- 1) To start the registration process, click the Sign In button and select Sign in with your work account.
- 2) Enter your organization email address and click Submit.
- 3) The VLSC will bring you through the Sign In or Sign Up process of creating a VLSC User ID with a work account (organization email).
- 4) If it is your first time to sign in to the VLSC, you are required to input the business email address where you received the invitation to register.
- 5) If the organization email address listed on the agreement is different to the organization email you used to Sign In with, a verification email will be sent to the email address listed on the agreement. You should access that email account, find the email titled "Thank you for Registering with the Volume Licensing Service Center" and Click the link in the e-mail to confirm your ownership of the business e-mail address. Allow up to 48 hours to receive this validation email and gain access to your agreements in the VLSC. If you see a message in the VLSC telling you that no permissions are associated with your account, do not re-register until you have waited 48 hours. Then you may try to register again.

For further information see [Frequently Asked Questions for sign-in](#).

Step 3: Claim your benefits through the VLSC

Follow these steps for specific benefits. Whether you want to download the latest version of Windows software, get Problem Resolution Support, or see your benefit allocation, you will need to claim your benefits through the VLSC.

After you are signed in, select the **Software Assurance** tab at the top of the home page. You will see a complete list of the benefits currently available to you. An overview of the Software Assurance benefits can be found on the [Software Assurance](#) website. Note that you will follow different steps depending on the specific benefit.

New Version Rights

This benefit provides new software versions, when available, to help you stay up-to-date and take advantage of productivity gains from the latest technology.

- 1) Sign in to the [VLSC](#).
- 2) Select Downloads and Keys.
- 3) Select your chosen product link and select **Download** to start the download process.
- 4) Choose **Download Method, Language and Operating System Type** from the drop-down boxes.
- 5) Select **Continue**.

When the consulting partner confirms the engagement, the Planning Services voucher will show as "Reserved" in the VLSC. When the engagement ends, the consulting partner works directly with Microsoft to redeem the Planning Services voucher and receive payment.

Home Use Program

The Home Use Program provides your employees with the latest version of Microsoft Office for use on their home computer through a low-cost download. To learn more about the Home Use Program benefit, review [A Guide to the Home Use Program](#).

The Home Use Program is managed through the Microsoft Store for Business. Home Use Program is automatically activated in Store for Business once a VLSC Administrator or Software Assurance Administrator has signed in to the VLSC using a work account and has registered the agreement with relevant Software Assurance licenses.

To activate the Home Use Program benefit:

- 1) **Sign in to the VLSC** with a work or school account and select the **Software Assurance** tab.
- 2) On the Software Assurance Summary Page click **Home Use Program**, upon which you will be brought to the [Microsoft Store for Business](#).
- 3) Once the agreement is registered in the VLSC, administrators can navigate straight to **Microsoft Store for Business** to manage Home Use Program.

For MPSA-only customers, Home Use Program is activated when the Purchase Administrator has signed in to the Business Center with a work account.

License Mobility through Software Assurance

License Mobility through Software Assurance gives you the ability to deploy certain server applications with active Software Assurance on-premises or in the cloud, without having to buy additional licenses. For information on using this benefit, visit [License Mobility through Software Assurance](#).

Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP)

MDOP offers innovative technologies, including application virtualization, asset management, policy control, and device diagnostic and recovery tools.

- 1) Sign in to the [VLSC](#).
- 2) Select **Downloads and Keys**.
- 3) Select the **Windows** check box under the All Products list.
- 4) Select your chosen MDOP product link and select **Download** to start the download process.
- 5) Choose **Download Method, Language and Operating System Type** from the drop-down boxes. Select **Continue**.

Problem Resolution Support

Phone Support Incidents may be allocated based on server and desktop Software Assurance spend under a qualifying agreement. See the [Microsoft Product Terms](#) for details on both Web Based and Phone Support Incidents available under Software Assurance. Problem Resolution Support provides around-the-clock phone support for business-critical issues or business hours phone support for non-critical. Unlimited email support can be used for non-critical problems.

Phone incident award

You may submit your support request via the web or by phone to receive a call back from support. Your phone support incident will be decremented from your Software Assurance total phone incident award entitlements when you select phone as the contact method during support incident submission.

Unlimited email support

Email support is available for server products which have the required Software Assurance coverage for server software and related CALS. Software Assurance coverage will be covered under your contract's unlimited online support request provision for non-critical support. You must submit your support request via the web and select Email as the contact method during support incident submission. Responses to your email support requests will occur during support team business hours which may be in a different time zone than your own.

Note: As a Software Assurance Manager, you will need to use the VLSC to set up a list of approved personnel who are authorized to initiate support requests and equip them with appropriate Software Assurance access IDs (SAIDs).

To set up Problem Resolution Support through the VLSC

- 1) Sign in to the [VLSC](#).
- 2) Select **Software Assurance** from the top menu.

- 3) Select **Problem Resolution Support**. This will take you to the Manage Software Assurance Benefits page.
- 4) Select the **LicenseID** for which you want to manage Problem Resolution Support. This will take you to the Benefit Summary page.
- 5) Select **Problem Resolution Support**.
- 6) Review the Terms and Conditions, enter your name, and select **I Accept**.
- 7) Set up a list of users approved to submit support incidents.
- 8) Find the **SA Access ID** (on the Problem Resolution Support Benefits Details page) and give this information to your IT staff.

To initiate a support incident through Microsoft Support

- 1) Go to Microsoft Software Assurance Support [page](#) and click on **Submit Request**
- 2) Select the product and problem for which you need support.
- 3) On the Create an incident - select a payment option page, select **Use my Software Assurance Agreement**.
- 4) Type your **Software Assurance Access ID** and **email address** you use to access the VLSC and click continue.
- 5) Enter your incident details and contact information and select if you would like to receive **email support** for non-critical server issues, or **phone support** for business-critical support for all products.

Tip: If you are a Microsoft Services Premier Support customer, you may convert your allotted Software Assurance phone support incidents into Premier Problem Resolution Services to extend support from trusted experts you already know.

To convert phone support incidents to Premier Support

- 1) Sign in to the VLSC.
- 2) Select **Software Assurance** from the top menu.
- 3) On the Software Assurance Summary page click on **24x7 Problem Resolution Support**. This will take you to the Manage Software Assurance Benefit Details Page.
- 4) Click on the **License ID** for which you want to manage 24x7 Problem Resolution Support.
 - a. (If the benefit is not yet activated you will need to accept the Terms and Conditions).
 - b. On the Benefit Details tab you will see your Phone Support Incident Balance
- 5) Click on **Premier Reservations** tab
- 6) The **Incident Reservations Details Table** displays the number of incidents available to transfer to Premier, as well as any Schedule IDs available to transfer to that were already added.
- 7) To add a Schedule ID, click the **Add Premier Contract** button underneath the Incident Reservation Table
 - a. Input the Schedule ID (provided to you by your TAM). Alternatively, leave it blank. It will display as unknown, but you can Edit it later.
 - b. **Special Instructions** is an optional free form text field that can make it easier to differentiate Schedule IDs, such as by adding a Department or Subsidiary or Geographical reference. (You can also edit Special Instructions directly in the Incident Reservations Details Table.)

- c. Once the Scheduled ID is added, click the **Reserve Incidents** button and use the drop downs to select the quantity of Incidents you wish to reserve, and the schedule ID you wish to reserve the Incidents for.
- d. The Available Incidents for SA and Incidents Reserved totals in the Incident Reservation Table will be adjusted and the Reservation will appear in the Incident Transfer History table.
- e. Now proceed to the **Premier Contacts** tab to specify how the Support Incidents can be used.
 - i. In Step one, you can restrict Premier Managed contacts with a specific email domain to a specific support type (Phone only, Web only) or allow them use Phone and Web.
 - ii. Step 2 allows you to further restrict usage of Support to Premier Managed Contacts who have an eligible email AND a Scheduled ID that is eligible for that support type.
 - iii. Click **Save** to save your changes.

Once this is complete, contact (or ask your IT Department lead to contact) your organization's Microsoft Technical Account Manager (TAM) so they can finalize the conversion process.

Planning Services

Planning Services provide structured, on-site consulting engagements from qualified partners or Microsoft Services to help you plan your deployment, whether on-premises or in the cloud. These structured engagements help you plan your deployment of the latest Microsoft technology and are available for many products and services.

Note: Planning Services is being retired as a Software Assurance benefit in January 2022. New Deployment Planning Services allocation ends on January 31, 2021. Vouchers for planning services can be created until June 30, 2021.

- 1) Sign in to the [VLSC](#).
- 2) Select **Software Assurance** from the top menu.
- 3) Select **Planning Services**. This will take you to the Manage Software Assurance Benefits page.
- 4) Select the **LicenseID** for which you want to manage Planning Services. This will take you to the Benefit Summary page.
- 5) Select **Planning Services**.
- 6) Select the voucher type and service level (length of the engagement in days).
- 7) Assign the Planning Services voucher to a project manager within your organization by entering their name and email address, and any special instructions.
- 8) Select **Confirm Voucher Assignment**.
- 9) After the voucher is created, select **Assign Voucher**. This takes you to a benefit details page confirming voucher information, including voucher status and expiration date.

The project manager will receive an email message that provides information about the benefit. The email message will also include a link to a list of Microsoft partners or Microsoft Services so that the project manager can schedule the Planning Services engagement.

Training Vouchers

Training vouchers enable in-depth technical training for IT professionals and developers. **You must be a Software Assurance Benefits Administrator to manage vouchers.** Visit the [Software Assurance website](#) for more information about training benefits.

Note: Training Vouchers is being retired as a Software Assurance benefit in January 2022. New Training day allocation ends on January 31, 2021. Vouchers for training can be created until June 30, 2021.

Activate a Training Voucher

- 1) Sign in to the [VLSC](#).
- 2) Select **Software Assurance** from the top menu.
- 3) Select **Training Vouchers**. This will take you to the Manage Software Assurance Benefits page.
- 4) Click on the **LicenseID** under which you choose to activate your SA Training Voucher benefit and view the "Benefits for Activation" pane.
- 5) To activate the benefit, click on the SA Training Voucher benefit name and follow **the** instructions in the subsequent screens.

Once you have created, assigned, and sent the voucher details to the Training Partner, your responsibility as the customer have been completed. It is the Training Partner's responsibility to work directly with Microsoft to reserve and redeem the vouchers to receive payment.

To locate classroom training

- 1) To view the current list of Software Assurance–eligible Training Voucher courses, see the Software Assurance and Volume License [Product Catalog](#)
- 2) Under **Program Type**, select **SA**.
- 3) Under **Training Type**, select **Classroom**.
- 4) Use the [Class Locator](#) to find a Microsoft Learning Partner training site.

What you should know about Training Vouchers

Eligible licenses: The [Microsoft Product Terms](#) details Software Assurance benefit eligibility and program rules.

Customers can find the most accurate statement of their current Software Assurance benefits in the VLSC.

Cancellation: If an employee reserves a Training Voucher and can't attend the scheduled course, the employee must contact the Learning Partner to cancel. The Learning Partner's local cancellation policy applies, and the Learning Partner may impose a cancellation charge. After cancellation, the training voucher will revert to "Assigned" status. A benefits manager cannot revoke a Training Voucher in "Reserved" status.

Revocation: If the Training Voucher is in "Assigned" status, the company benefits manager can revoke it so that the training days can be reassigned. The benefits manager can then assign it to someone else. The last day to assign a training voucher is June 30, 2021.

Expiration: A Training Voucher is valid for 180 days after it is created and assigned. Training must be completed before the voucher expires and before the benefit is retired on January 1, 2022. When the organization's licensing agreement expires or the benefit retires, any unassigned training days will expire.

Benefit days vs. course days: If the benefits manager creates a Training Voucher worth more days than the course length, the extra days automatically revert to the organization's account after the voucher is paid to the Learning Partner. The benefits manager can also revoke the voucher if it has not been reserved by a Learning Partner, and then recreate it for the employee with the exact number of days needed for the desired course. If the Training Voucher does not cover all the course days, the employee must pay the difference to the Learning Partner.

Employee responsibility: The employee will receive an email confirmation that contains details about the Training Voucher (including length, voucher number, and expiration date). For more information, visit [Software Assurance Training Vouchers](#).

Additional benefits

Software Assurance spans a broad range of Microsoft software and services, including Windows, Microsoft Office, Exchange, System Center, SQL Server, and many others. For more details about each benefit, review the [Microsoft Product Terms](#) or visit the [Software Assurance website](#).

Get help in the VLSC

If you have questions or need help when you are using the VLSC, you can select the **Help** menu to view more information, read the FAQ, and get Support Center contact details.

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