

Which Microsoft 365 plan is right for your organisation?

Canadian nonprofits that qualify for Microsoft's nonprofit program can access up to 300 free Microsoft 365 Business Basic licences, with significant discounts on paid plans above that baseline. This guide helps you choose the right plan for your team's needs and data obligations. All prices are approximate CAD — verify current pricing at nonprofit.microsoft.com before making any purchasing decision.

Pricing Disclaimer — All prices shown are approximate CAD estimates based on published Microsoft nonprofit pricing as of March 2026, converted at prevailing exchange rates. E3 and E5 nonprofit prices have not been independently verified from a Canadian primary source — confirm current pricing at nonprofit.microsoft.com before quoting. A July 2026 pricing increase has been announced — verify pricing at time of proposal.

Plan Overview — Pricing at a Glance

Business Basic	Business Standard	Business Premium	E3 Nonprofit	E5 Nonprofit
FREE	~\$4.10 CAD /user/mo	~\$7.50 CAD /user/mo	Verify price ~\$9–10 CAD	Verify price ~\$15–18 CAD
Up to 300 seats Grant — no cost	75% off Annual commit	75% off FSET recommended min.	75% off No seat cap	60–75% off Full security

July 2026 Pricing Update — Plan Ahead Now. Microsoft has announced commercial pricing increases effective July 1, 2026. Nonprofit prices are set as a percentage of commercial pricing — if commercial prices increase, nonprofit prices will increase proportionally. Confirm current pricing before quoting and build the July 2026 update into your budget planning.

FSET Recommended Minimum — Business Premium (~\$7.50 CAD/user/mo). For nonprofit clients handling donor data, financial records, or personal information, Business Premium is the recommended minimum. It adds Intune device management, Defender for Business, Entra ID P1 (Conditional Access and MFA), and Azure Information Protection — the security and compliance baseline appropriate for organisations with data obligations under PIPEDA or provincial privacy legislation. Many nonprofits run a mixed environment: Business Basic (free) for volunteers and admin-only roles, Business Premium for staff with data access.

Full Feature Comparison

Feature parity between nonprofit and commercial plans is identical — the plans are the same product at a reduced price. "Jul 2026" indicates a feature being added at the July 1 commercial pricing update. Business Premium column is highlighted — FSET recommended minimum for most clients.

Feature / Capability	Business Basic FREE ≤300	Business Standard ~\$4.10 CAD	Business Premium ~\$7.50 CAD	E3 Nonprofit ~\$9–10 CAD	E5 Nonprofit ~\$15–18 CAD
SEAT LIMITS & PURCHASING					
Seat cap	≤ 300	≤ 300	≤ 300	None	None
Grant seats available	300 free	—	—	—	—
CSP / NCE eligible	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EA available (>300)	—	—	—	✓	✓
PRODUCTIVITY					
Office apps (web & mobile)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Office apps (desktop install)	—	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exchange Online (email)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SharePoint / OneDrive (1 TB)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Microsoft Teams	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bookings / Forms / Planner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Power BI Pro	—	—	—	—	✓
Phone System (PSTN)	—	—	—	✓	✓
Entra ID P1 (MFA, Conditional Access, SSPR)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Entra ID P2 (PIM, Identity Protection)	—	—	—	—	✓
DEVICE MANAGEMENT (INTUNE)					
Intune MDM / MAM (Plan 1)	—	—	✓	✓	✓
Intune Remote Help (Jul 2026)	—	—	—	Jul 2026	Jul 2026
Intune Advanced Analytics (Jul 2026)	—	—	—	Jul 2026	Jul 2026
Intune Plan 2 (Jul 2026)	—	—	—	Jul 2026	Jul 2026
Intune Endpoint Priv. Mgmt. (Jul 2026)	—	—	—	—	Jul 2026
SECURITY (DEFENDER)					
Defender for Business (simplified)	—	—	✓	—	—
Defender for Office 365 P1 (email)	—	—	✓	Jul 2026	✓
Defender for Office 365 P2	—	—	—	—	✓
Defender for Endpoint P2 (EDR)	—	—	—	—	✓
Defender XDR (full threat platform)	—	—	—	—	✓
Security Copilot agents (Jul 2026)	—	—	—	—	Jul 2026
COMPLIANCE & INFORMATION PROTECTION					
Azure Info. Protection P1 (basic labels)	—	—	✓	✓	✓

Purview DLP / retention policies	—	—	Partial	Partial	✓
Purview eDiscovery (Standard)	—	—	—	✓	✓
Purview eDiscovery (Premium)	—	—	—	—	✓
Purview Insider Risk Management	—	—	—	—	✓
Purview Advanced Audit	—	—	—	—	✓
AI & COPILOT					
Copilot Chat (web-grounded, basic)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
M365 Copilot (full, Work IQ)	—	Add-on	Add-on	Add-on	Add-on
FSET NONPROFIT RECOMMENDATION					
Suitable for: admin / volunteer-only users	✓	✓	Over- spec	✓	—
Suitable for: general staff	Partial	✓	✓	✓	—
Suitable for: leadership / IT / finance	—	—	✓	✓	✓
Suitable for: regulated data handling	—	—	Partial	✓	✓

Plan Selection Quick Reference

Plan	Best for	Key limitation
Business Basic (Free)	Volunteers, admin-only, email-and-Teams-only roles	No desktop Office apps. Not suitable as primary plan for most staff.
Business Standard (~\$4.10)	General staff who need desktop Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)	No device management or advanced security. Suitable for low-risk data only.
Business Premium (~\$7.50) ★	Any staff handling donor, financial, or personal data. FSET recommended minimum.	300-seat cap. Rarely a constraint for the nonprofits FSET serves.
E3 Nonprofit (~\$9–10)	Larger organisations (300+ users) or those needing Windows 11 Enterprise or eDiscovery	Verify current CAD pricing — estimate only. Requires Enterprise Agreement above 300 seats.
E5 Nonprofit (~\$15–18)	Nonprofits with advanced security/compliance obligations, IT security staff, or Power BI needs	Verify current CAD pricing — estimate only. Typically not required for most nonprofits.

Sources

Source	URL
Microsoft Nonprofit Eligibility	microsoft.com/en-us/nonprofits/eligibility
Microsoft Nonprofit FAQ	microsoft.com/en-us/nonprofits/faq
Microsoft Nonprofit Portal (registration)	nonprofit.microsoft.com
CRA Registered Charity Registry	apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/hacc/srch/pub/dsplyBscSrch

This document is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, compliance, or financial advice. Pricing is approximate and subject to change. Eligibility criteria and plan features are set exclusively by Microsoft. Confirm current pricing and features at microsoft.com/en-us/nonprofits/eligibility before making any purchasing decision. FSET Inc is a Microsoft CSP partner and can provision and manage Microsoft 365 nonprofit licences on behalf of eligible Canadian organisations once eligibility is confirmed.