

## Standard and enhanced IBM software support lifecycle policies

This page describes the standard and enhanced IBM Software Support Lifecycle Policies. Additional details and answers to commonly asked questions regarding the IBM Software Support Lifecycle policy can be found on our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.

- [View the Continuous Delivery support lifecycle policy](#)
- [Go to the software support lifecycle overview page](#)

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## Your Success Is Our Passion—IBM Software Support Lifecycle Policy

### Dedication

For more than 100 years, IBM has offered world class support for our products in an effort to afford you maximum value from your investments. Every day, a global team of highly skilled support professionals and software developers provides technical support to our Software Subscription and Support (S&S) customers for the licensed IBM software that runs their enterprise. IBM's ability to provide help when you need it, across your entire covered IBM software portfolio, is second to none.

### Trust

Given the accelerating pace of innovation and change, it's important to know you can rely on your most trusted vendor to be there as you manage the systems that run your business. IBM support is delivered through variety of support offerings, but in many cases our support comes to you via your annually renewed S&S for Passport Advantage or through SupportLine agreements. Based on input from our clients, we're continuing to enhance our software support offerings.

### Protection

Our policies and practices for supporting your success with our software are based on your feedback and the following principles.

- **Establishing a 'new normal' for support duration.** Historically, we've provided standard (defect and non-defect) product technical support for a minimum of three years from the date the product release was made generally available by IBM, with the option to get support extensions for at least an additional two years following a product's End of Support (EOS) date for an extra charge set by IBM (so-called Standard '3+2' support). Over the past few years we have aggressively moved many of the products in our software portfolio to Enhanced '5+3' support – a minimum of five full years of standard support from the date the product release was made generally available by IBM, with the option to get support extensions for at least an additional three years following a product's EOS date for an extra charge set by IBM. In line with your feedback, we intend to continue to apply our **Enhanced Support** policy to an increasing number of our International Program License Agreement (IPLA) and IBM Customer Agreement (ICA) software products (refer to the EOS link for the support period that applies). *You have more flexibility to migrate to new versions on the*

*schedule dictated by your business needs, without worrying that you will 'run out of support'.*

- **Providing value across multiple versions of software.** We know that you want to exact the maximum value from your investment in the software you use to run your business. One of our new initiatives will be to support, on a going-forward basis for select IBM branded products that have not previously announced an EOS date, not only the 'current' version of the product, but also up to two previous versions, in an effort to limit disruptive technology transitions. In this context, a 'version' is a major functional enhancement level. While not every IBM software product will be subject to this new initiative, our initial focus is to support key products from all of our software brands, and expand the number of products over time. This initiative may help customers reduce the number of products for which they need to acquire extended support. The aim is to give you time to 'catch up' to the current version while being covered by support under an attractive pricing structure.

Of course, to realize maximum value from IBM's innovation and the ongoing delivery of technical enhancements, you should download and install the newest version of products covered by your S&S terms. While not possible in all cases, we strive to provide technical compatibility across versions and give you easy ways to upgrade. But sometimes, your business constraints delay upgrading. *When you need to keep older versions in service, our growing portfolio of software which is supported across the two most recent prior versions may help provide you with the flexibility you need until you can upgrade.*

- **Supporting 'acquired' products.** Over the past few years, IBM has acquired a wide range of excellent software products and innovative companies – a pattern we expect to continue as we seek to provide broader and deeper solutions. Our practice has been to hire the inventors, developers and support technicians who built these industry leading capabilities. Those same teams produce and support new IBM versions of these products and integrate the technology with IBM's pre-existing products as needed. Although acquired company software products are not subject to this Policy until they become IBM branded products, we encourage you to contact your IBM sales representative if you have specific questions about a particular acquired software product. *IBM takes your support needs into account when integrating acquired software products.*
- **Keeping you in the loop regarding support changes.** We'll continue to give customers at least 12 months notice prior to an IBM branded product release's EOS date and the availability of support extensions for an extra charge set by IBM. To make planning easier, we endeavor to coordinate most EOS dates to occur on 30 April or 30 September. We also plan to make it easier to understand the support implications of changes to the portfolio. For example, when we combine products into a single offering, we'll work to explain how that affects the support you're counting on for the products you have installed. *We want you to have time to put plans in place to upgrade to new versions or decide to purchase a support extension.*
- **Expanding electronic support options.** The [IBM Support Community](#) is your gateway to 24x365 software support—it brings together all IBM online support resources and tools for hardware, software and services in a consistent interface that is tuned to your specific needs. IBM has developed many smart online tools and proactive features that can help you prevent problems from occurring in the first place, or quickly and easily troubleshoot problems when they occur. The Portal is free to IBM

customers and a key resource for your entire IT organization because it provides extensive search capabilities, links to education resources, the ability to tailor the Portal to reflect your IBM software portfolio and access to fixes. Be sure to register online to take full advantage of all the features the Portal has to offer. Through Passport Advantage, you decide who and how many people in your organization are authorized to submit support requests. You even identify a severity level for your support request. More and more customers prefer to submit support requests electronically—documenting questions and problems with details that go directly to skilled support specialists. *Your team has direct access to support resources.*

- **Providing support beyond the extended lifecycle when needed.** Special circumstances can delay your ability to move to new versions, perhaps even beyond the support timeframe for any particular product. Or maybe IBM has already announced the EOS for some versions of products you use. Or, you may be uncertain whether support will be available until you can upgrade all of your systems. **If you find yourself in this kind of situation, please contact your IBM sales representative,** preferably prior to the end of the existing support period for the product of interest. **We want to work with you** to ensure your critical business systems are supported by IBM's unique experience and abilities. *As a software customer of IBM, you should never have to feel like you're 'going it alone'.*

For more information on IBM software support topics, check out the following resources:

- [IBM Support Community](#)
- [Passport Advantage](#)
- [IBM Software License Agreements](#)
- [Software Subscription and Support home page](#)
- [Accelerated Value Program](#)
- [IBM software support lifecycle](#)

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**Exception:** Some IBM products may not adhere to the policies outlined above and will be flagged with an exception. IBM Software that is sold "as is" and products recently acquired by IBM, which may still adhere to legacy lifecycle agreements, will also be flagged.