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What Purview Service Limits Mean for eDiscovery Matters

How documented thresholds affect matter execution

Microsoft provides important native preservation, search, audit, collection, review, and export capabilities across Microsoft 365.

Microsoft retired the classic eDiscovery experiences on August 31, 2025, and moved those workflows into the Microsoft Purview portal. The current experience brings the work into one portal, but licensing, indexing, hold, and export thresholds still affect how legal teams plan and execute matters.

For a straightforward matter, those thresholds may have little practical effect. At greater scale, one preservation, search, or export task may need to be divided across several operations. Each additional policy, process, or package creates another point where the team must confirm what was included, identify exceptions, and reconcile the result before relying on it for review or production decisions.

Confirm feature availability at matter intake

Feature availability depends on the organization's subscription, add-ons, case settings, user and data licensing, permissions, and billing configuration. It is important to confirm preservation, search, export, review-set, analytics, and API requirements at intake. It is also important to understand that some Premium and API scenarios require additional licensing or pay-as-you-go billing.

Indexing, sampling and viewer limits can affect how content is assessed

An item may match a search through its indexed properties even when its content is not fully available to keyword search, sampling or native viewing. Search and export settings determine how partially indexed items are handled.

DOCUMENTED LIMIT	OPERATIONAL EFFECT
150 MB maximum email attachment parsed for indexing	A larger attachment is not parsed; the message is marked partially indexed.
30 seconds maximum parsing time per item	An item that exceeds the limit is marked partially indexed.
4 MB maximum Excel file size in the native viewer	Larger spreadsheets need another inspection path.
24 MB maximum file size for OCR with Premium feature support	Larger image-based files require another text-extraction or inspection path.
10 MB maximum item size in a search sample	Larger items may not appear in the sample. Use the full results, export or review-set workflow when the result is material.

Define whether partially indexed items will be included, exported, advanced-indexed where available, or inspected through another documented process. Partially indexed items cannot be previewed directly, and search-time and export-time settings are separate, so confirm the selected approach at each stage.

Source check completed October 2026. Microsoft may change service limits, licensing, and feature availability. Confirm the current Microsoft documentation and the organization's configuration when planning a matter.

Case holds require capacity and scope planning

DOCUMENTED LIMIT	OPERATIONAL EFFECT
10,000 hold policies with eDiscovery feature support; **20,000** with Premium feature support	High matter volumes require tenant-wide capacity monitoring.
1,000 mailboxes in one case hold; **2,000** with Premium feature support	Broad custodian populations may require more than one hold policy.
1,000 sites in one case hold; **2,000** with Premium feature support	Broad SharePoint and OneDrive scope may require more than one hold policy.

The higher site limit requires Premium features in the case. Microsoft also recommends separate policies for Exchange mailboxes and for SharePoint and OneDrive sites. When several policies represent one matter, keep scope, validation, changes, and release decisions aligned.

Large exports create additional reconciliation points

DOCUMENTED LIMIT	OPERATIONAL EFFECT
2 TB from one search; **5 TB** with Premium feature support	Larger result sets require more than one export.
2 TB organization-wide per day; **5 TB** with Premium feature support	Concurrent matters draw from shared daily export capacity.
2 GB per hour per mailbox	Mailbox concentration can increase elapsed time.
10 GB maximum PST size	The export process automatically divides larger results into multiple PST files.
Automatic cancellation after **seven days**	An export that has not completed after seven days is cancelled; Microsoft recommends smaller batches.

Each package adds a reconciliation point among search results, reports, files, load files, and the review platform. Record how the packages relate to scope and how exceptions were resolved.

Recognize when a matter needs limit management

- ✓ Searches are divided by custodian, location, period, or query segment.
- ✓ Several hold policies represent one preservation scope.
- ✓ Processes are rerun, supplemented, cancelled, or timed out.
- ✓ Partially indexed items follow a separate path, or exports are divided across packages or daily capacity.

A documented workflow connects the matter's scope to what each operation processed and reconciles the result before review or production decisions rely on it.

NEXT READ

Planning Around Microsoft Purview's eDiscovery Boundaries

Explore how licensing, configuration, location-based holds, audit retention, cloud attachments, indexing, and service limits affect matter-level planning.

Read the guide →

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