

Is Microsoft 365 GCC High right for you?

Microsoft 365 Government Community Cloud High (GCC High)

VETERAN-OWNED ♦ MICROSOFT CSP DIRECT BILL PARTNER ♦ PITTSBURGH, PA

A separate, sovereign cloud for your most sensitive government data.

Microsoft 365 GCC High is a separate, sovereign cloud environment, not the commercial Microsoft cloud. It is typically the right fit for organizations that handle CUI, are subject to DFARS 252.204-7012, or handle ITAR or EAR export-controlled data.

That protection comes with trade-offs: more limited collaboration with outside commercial tenants, specialized licensing, and a full migration. Walk through this checklist with your Sierra Experts rep to see whether you need GCC High and whether you're ready for it.

GCC HIGH AT A GLANCE

- ♦ Separate, sovereign cloud environment
- ♦ Typically the right fit for CUI, DFARS 7012, and ITAR/EAR data
- ♦ More limited collaboration with outside commercial tenants
- ♦ Specialized licensing; cost and seat minimums usually higher
- ♦ Microsoft validates eligibility before tenant provisioning
- ♦ Typical timeline: about 2 to 3 months, with a full migration and cutover to a separate tenant

ORGANIZATION	CONTACT	SIERRA EXPERTS REP	DATE
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How to use: check every box that applies. Each item carries a tag: **E** Eligible **G** Points to GCC **H** Points to GCC High **R** Ready for GCC High **!** Talk to us first

1 WHO QUALIFIES: OUR ORGANIZATION IS...

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ A U.S. federal government agency or department E | ☐ A state, local, or tribal government entity E |
| ☐ A contractor or partner holding a government contract E | ☐ A contractor or partner pursuing a government contract E
Be ready to show Microsoft supporting documentation. |

Microsoft validates eligibility before it provisions a GCC High tenant. If none of these apply, you likely won't qualify.

2 DATA YOU HANDLE

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ We handle Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) H | ☐ We handle ITAR export-controlled data
Defense articles and technical data on the U.S. Munitions List. H |
| ☐ We handle EAR export-controlled data
Items and technical data controlled by the Commerce Department. H | ☐ A prime or government customer requires an
environment for CUI or export-controlled data H |
| ☐ We handle Federal Contract Information (FCI) only ; no
CUI or export-controlled data G | ☐ Not sure which data types we handle !
We'll help you sort it out with your compliance advisor. |

3 CONTRACT CLAUSES & CMMC

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Our contracts include DFARS 252.204-7012 H | ☐ We are working toward CMMC Level 2 (protects CUI) H |
| ☐ A prime contractor flows down CUI or DFARS 7012 to us H | ☐ We only need CMMC Level 1 (protects FCI) G |
| ☐ Not sure which clauses are in our contracts ! | |

4 EXTERNAL COLLABORATION (READINESS)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ We can work with more limited Teams, guest access, and
B2B sharing with outside commercial companies R | ☐ Our key primes or partners also use GCC High , or we can
share with them in a controlled way R |
| ☐ Daily guest access and B2B sharing with commercial
companies is essential to us !
We'll map which scenarios work across clouds. | ☐ We depend on specific third-party or Marketplace apps !
Many apps aren't available in GCC High; we'll check yours. |

5 SEATS, BUDGET & TIMELINE (READINESS)

- ☐ We know our seat count: _____ users needing GCC High
Not every user may need it; we'll help you scope. R
- ☐ Our budget can support **specialized licensing**, usually higher than Commercial or GCC R
- ☐ Our seat count can meet **seat minimums**, which are usually higher; we'll confirm R
- ☐ We can plan **about 2 to 3 months** for migration and cutover to a separate tenant R
- ☐ We have a **date driver** (contract award, CMMC assessment, prime deadline) !
Start early so the migration isn't rushed.

6 GCC VS. GCC HIGH: QUICK COMPARE

	MICROSOFT 365 GCC	MICROSOFT 365 GCC HIGH
Cloud environment	Same commercial Microsoft cloud infrastructure, with government data handling and screened U.S. personnel	Separate, sovereign cloud environment
Typical data fit	FCI; CMMC Level 1	CUI, DFARS 252.204-7012, ITAR/EAR; CMMC Level 2
Outside collaboration	Closer to Commercial	More limited with outside commercial tenants
New features	Some arrive later than in Commercial	Some arrive later than in Commercial
Licensing & cost	Government licensing; Sierra Experts will quote	Specialized licensing; cost and seat minimums usually higher
Typical timeline	A few weeks, mostly waiting on Microsoft validation	About 2 to 3 months: full migration and cutover to a separate tenant

6 WHERE YOU LAND

Count your checked boxes: E ☐ G ☐ H ☐ R ☐ ! ☐

At least one E box, any H box, and most R boxes	GCC High is typically the right fit You're ready to plan. Next steps: scoping, licensing, and a migration and cutover plan with Sierra Experts.
Any H box, but few R boxes or several ! boxes	GCC High, with planning first Your data likely calls for GCC High. Work through budget, collaboration, and timeline with us before cutover.
At least one E box, G boxes, and no H boxes	Microsoft 365 GCC is likely enough FCI-only work and CMMC Level 1 usually fit GCC. Ask your rep for our GCC checklist.
No E boxes, or no G or H boxes	Microsoft 365 Commercial You may not qualify for, or need, a government cloud. We'll confirm with you and your advisors.

Matching security monitoring: Microsoft Sentinel in Azure Government (FedRAMP High) pairs with GCC High. We can help plan it alongside your migration.

Talk to Sierra Experts before you choose a cloud.

Call 412.722.0707 · sierraexperts.com

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