

Quest[®] Identity Defense

Updated May, 2026

These release notes provide information about Quest[®] Identity Defense deployments.

Identity Defense is an integrated Security Management Platform solution that helps you keep the Active Directory domains and Entra ID tenants in your organization secure.

You can:

- Identify Tier Zero objects in Active Directory.
- Identify Privileged objects in Entra ID.
- Certify that objects are indeed Tier Zero or Privileged and, when Quest Change Auditor version 7.4 is integrated, protect Active Directory Tier Zero objects against unauthorized or accidental modification or deletion.
- Run pre-defined Security Assessments to identify vulnerabilities in Active Directory and Entra ID and create your own Assessments.
- Investigate Findings for Tier Zero and Privileged objects, vulnerabilities identified through Assessments, and Critical Activity from Audit.
- Have Findings forwarded to a SIEM tool and alerts sent to selected email recipients.
- Lock down critical Active Directory objects, preventing unauthorized or accidental changes using Shields Up. This feature enforces a highly restrictive, pre-configured lockdown on Tier Zero objects—such as users, groups, computers, and policies. While intended for temporary emergency use, Shields Up can also be deployed continuously as a proactive security measure.
- Audit and monitor critical activities and real-time alerts on important changes across Microsoft 365 services, including Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, Teams, OneDrive for Business, and Microsoft Entra.
- Integrate with Quest Change Auditor to search and correlate identities across both on premises and in the cloud to give a seamless view of activity in hybrid Microsoft environments. Specifically auditing enables:
 - Fast and flexible searches for easy investigation and accurate results across tenants and on premises environments.
 - Interactive visualizations and dashboards to summarize audit activity.
 - Easy to use customizable alerts based on audit event searches.
 - Long term storage of audit events outside of Microsoft 365 and Change Auditor for a retention period of up to 10 years.
- Review service principals and their associated security posture within your Entra ID environment to identify risky permissions, assess sign-in status, and monitor compliance with security.

- Monitor and analyze activity across both your on-premises and cloud-based Microsoft environments from a single, unified interface using Hybrid Audit.
- Use Identity Defense Intelligence AI assistance to:
 - Help you ask focused questions tailored to your environment.
 - Gain valuable insights into the security posture of your organization's Active Directory and Entra ID systems.
 - View critical vulnerabilities and issues identified during assessments and offers practical recommendations for remediation.

New Features

- The ability to see the following critical activity in the dashboard: (Note: The following critical activity will only be available if Identity Defense is configured for Hybrid Audit.)
 - Suspicious changes to dMSA migration attributes (BadSuccessor)
- Ability to detect Tier Zero Foreign Security Principals to help identify and reduce high-risk access paths in Active Directory.

When a Foreign Security Principal is identified as Tier Zero, detailed information is provided to support investigation and remediation. You can escalate the finding, collaborate with others to investigate, and review Tier Zero relationships in your Active Directory environment to understand why the foreign security principal has Tier Zero access.

Foreign security principals can be identified in one of two ways:

- Automatically identified as a Tier Zero foreign security principal because it is a member of a Tier Zero group.
- Manually identified as a Tier Zero user because it was added by a user.
- Ability to use meta-field search filters to group related properties, helping you quickly narrow down search results. For example, the Who meta-filter includes fields such as User (Actor), Actor Name, and Actor ID.

Resolved issues

The following is a list of issues addressed in this release.

Resolved Issue	Issue ID
Resolved an issue where the vulnerability check for "User accounts in protected groups that are not protected by AdminSDHolder (SDProp)" could return false positives when user objects had the same Distinguished Name value.	598855

Known issues

The following is a list of issues, including those attributed to third-party products, known to exist at the time of release.

Assessment known issues

Known Issue	Issue ID
Due to the complexity of the query, an Assessment can evaluate a maximum of 10,000 Tier Zero objects for a vulnerability. If this limit is surpassed, results will be marked as Inconclusive with the following message: <i>Syntax error: Query length (2162372) too large (max: 2097152)</i>	497529

Release History

The following lists the new features, enhancements and resolved issues by deployment.

Current Deployment

May 2026

- The ability to see the following critical activity in the dashboard: (Note: The following critical activity will only be available if Identity Defense is configured for Hybrid Audit.)
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- Automatically identified as a Tier Zero foreign security principal because it is a member of a Tier Zero group.
- Manually identified as a Tier Zero user because it was added by a user.
- Ability to use meta-field search filters to group related properties, helping you quickly narrow down search results. For example, the Who meta-filter includes fields such as User (Actor), Actor Name, and Actor ID.

Previous Deployments

April, 2026

- On Demand has been renamed to Security Management Platform and Security Guardian has been renamed to Identity Defense.
- Active Directory Workload Identity: The ability to include Active Directory objects under Workload Identities gives administrators clear visibility into service principals and their security posture across the Active Directory environment. It helps identify risky permissions, review sign-in activity, and monitor compliance with security best practices.
- The following Active Directory vulnerability has been added to Discoveries:
 - User or computer Active Directory workload identities that are Tier Zero
- The ability to assess vulnerability prevalence by organization size to provide meaningful benchmarks, allowing you to see not just what vulnerabilities you have, but how common they are among organizations like yours—helping you focus your security efforts where they matter most.
- When protection is enabled for a Tier Zero object, it is removed from investigation findings and immediately marked as Applying Protection until it is confirmed that protection is applied.
- The ability to see the following critical activity in the dashboard: (Note: The following critical activity will only be available if Identity Defense is configured for Hybrid Audit.)
 - User sIDHistory updates using a migration tool
 - Group sIDHistory updates using a migration tool
 - Failed delegated managed service account migrations
 - Successful delegated managed service account migrations

March, 2026

- The following Active Directory vulnerability has been added to Discoveries:
 - User accounts with Service Principal Names using default encryption type
- Ability to take control of what you audit in Active Directory. The Hybrid Audit | Audited Event page now lets you create custom audit events tailored to your organization's needs. Easily define new events by selecting an Active Directory object class, choosing an attribute, and assigning a severity level. Once saved, your custom event is immediately created and monitored—giving you greater visibility, flexibility, and precision in your auditing strategy.
- Ability to exclude users, computers, or service accounts (MSA, gMSA, dMSA) from auditing, ensuring events related to those objects are no longer captured.
- Ability to duplicate, enable and disable, and delete protection templates.
- Ability to manually install the Hybrid Audit agent for on-premises systems, as an alternative to automated or centralized deployment methods.

January 15, 2026

Override Access for Protected Objects

Ability to grant service accounts permission to access objects protected by Shields Up. This allows for controlled exceptions during a Shields Up activation, ensuring that essential accounts retain access to critical resources.

January 7, 2026

The following Entra ID vulnerability has been added to Discoveries:

- Entra ID service principals that violate Microsoft Services Agreement

December 16, 2025

Resolved an issue where the vulnerability check for "User accounts in protected groups that are not protected by AdminSDHolder (SDProp)" could return false positives when user objects had the same Distinguished Name value.

December 12, 2025

You now have the ability to view the trends by day (7, 30, 60, or 90), by weeks (26, 52, or 78), or by months (12, 24, 36, or 48). When the selected range is greater than 7 days, the chart shows average values for the chosen time unit (such as day, week, or month).

December 9, 2025

- Ability to see "AD security changes that can prevent object enumeration detected" as critical activity in the dashboard.
- Ability to specify whether you require the system to send email notifications.
- Ability to add notification recipients by role.

November 25, 2025

- Workload Identity columns renamed. "Total owners" changed to "Owners" and "Total Risky Permissions" changed to "Risky Permissions".

November 18, 2025

- Hybrid Audit which allows you to monitor and analyze activity across both your on-premises and cloud-based Microsoft environments from a single, unified interface.
- Ability to view and edit the templates used to protect Active Directory and Group Policy objects.

November 4, 2025

The following Active Directory vulnerability has been added to Discoveries:

- Security changes that can prevent object enumeration detected.
- Previously reported inactive Tier Zero Users that may have become active.

October 16, 2025

- Ability to gain visibility into service principals and their associated security posture within your Entra ID environment. The Workload Identity feature helps administrators identify risky permissions, assess sign-in status, and monitor compliance with security standards.
- Users can build searches using clause groups with support for AND/OR logical operators both within and between groups, enabling more flexible and precise query construction.

September 9, 2025

An AI-powered Assessment Summary report that interprets your organization's assessment data to highlight trends and deliver a clear, high-level overview of results.

August 11, 2025

The following Active Directory Assessments have been added to Discoveries:

- Privilege Escalation
 - Non-Tier Zero account with write or extended permission on Tier Zero object

For certain vulnerabilities, you can click the Principal Name or Display Name link to view detailed information about the object. This may include object properties, any affected Tier Zero objects, and group members (for group objects only).

July 31, 2025

Addition of Identity Defense Intelligence which is a powerful new feature that uses AI assistance to enhance your organization's security management. With this feature, you can:

- Ask focused questions tailored to your specific environment.
- Gain valuable insights into the security health of your Active Directory and Entra ID systems.
- View critical vulnerabilities and issues identified during assessments.
- Receive practical, actionable recommendations for remediation.

New Identity Defense built in searches:

- Shields Up enabled in the past 30 days
- Shields Up disabled in the past 30 days
- Shields Up override account changes in the past 30 days

July 23, 2025

Shields Up is a new rapid-response feature that helps organizations protect their most critical Active Directory assets during periods of elevated cyber risk or active security incidents. It applies a strict, pre-configured lockdown to Tier Zero objects—such as privileged users, groups, computers, and policies—blocking unauthorized changes, deletions, or policy updates. While designed for short-term emergency use, Shields Up can also be enabled continuously as a proactive defense strategy.

Incident response management

Quest Operations and Quest Support have procedures in place to monitor the health of the system and ensure any degradation of the service is promptly identified and resolved. Security Management Platform relies on Azure and AWS infrastructure and as such, is subject to the possible disruption of these services. You can view the following status pages:

- Quest Security Management Platform: <https://status.quest-on-demand.com/>
- Azure Services: <https://azure.microsoft.com/en-ca/status/>
- AWS Services: <https://status.aws.amazon.com/>

System requirements

The following web browsers are supported with Security Management Platform:

- Microsoft Edge
- Google Chrome (latest version)
- Mozilla Firefox (latest version)

Additional component requirements

See the Identity Defense User Guide for more details.

Component	Purpose
Hybrid Agent	Gives Identity Defense access to the Active Directory domains that you want to keep secure.
Quest Change Auditor	Sends Active Directory events to Security Management Platform for reporting in Identity Defense Findings and allows you to protect Tier Zero objects. i NOTE: A minimum of version 7.3 is required to send critical activity events to Security Management Platform, and a minimum of version 7.4 is required to protect Tier Zero objects.
Hybrid Audit Agent	Sends Active Directory events to Audit for reporting in Identity Defense Findings and allows you to protect Tier Zero objects.
SpecterOps BloodHound Enterprise (Optional)	Identifies Tier Zero assets in your organization's Active Directory domain(s), which you can monitor assess for security vulnerabilities in Identity Defense. i NOTE: If BloodHound Enterprise is not configured, Identity Defense will be used as your organization's Tier Zero provider once the Hybrid Agent is configured.
SIEM solution: • Microsoft Sentinel • Splunk Cloud or Enterprise (Optional)	Allows Identity Defense Findings to be forwarded to a configured SIEM tool for further analysis. i NOTE: Regardless of whether your organization uses a SIEM solution, you can also have Finding alerts sent via email.

Product licensing

Quest Security Management Platform is a Software as a Service (SaaS) application where application software is hosted in the cloud and made available to users through quest-on-demand.com.

Use of this software is governed by the Software Transaction Agreement found at www.quest.com/legal/sta.aspx and the SaaS Addendum at www.quest.com/legal/saas-addendum.aspx. This software does not require an activation or license key to operate.

You can sign in to Quest Security Management Platform as a Guest user and sample the solutions the product can offer. As a Guest user, you can add your Azure AD tenant and look for problems that can be solved by Quest Security Management Platform. To sign in as a Guest user, go to quest-on-demand.com and click **Continue as Guest**.

Trial licenses are available. To enable a trial license, you must use a Quest account to sign up for Quest Security Management Platform. Use one of the following procedures:

- [To enable a trial license with an existing Quest account](#)
- [To create a Quest account and enable a trial license](#)

To enable a trial license with an existing Quest account

1. Go to <https://www.quest.com/on-demand/>
2. Scroll down to the module you are interested in and click **Try Online**.
3. On the Free Trial of <Module Name> page, click **Sign In for your Free Trial**.
4. Fill in your Quest account credentials and click **Sign In**. The Welcome to Quest Security Management Platform page opens.
5. In the **Add organization name** field, enter a name for your Security Management Platform organization.
6. In the **Select Region** field, select the region where you want your data to reside.
7. Click **Create New Organization**.

You can now add your Azure AD tenant and begin using the product. See the Security Management Platform Global Settings User Guide for more information on working with Quest Security Management Platform.

To create a Quest account and enable a trial license

1. Go to <https://www.quest.com/on-demand/>
2. Scroll down to the module you are interested in and click **Try Online**.
3. To try online, you must create a Quest account and then sign up for Quest Security Management Platform.
4. Create a Quest account.
 - a. Click **Create a Trial Account**.
 - b. Fill in the fields on the Create Account page. Note that the email and password entered here will be the credentials you use to sign in to Quest Security Management Platform.
 - c. Click **Create Account**. The “We’ve sent you an email” page opens.
5. Sign in to Quest Security Management Platform.
 - a. Go to your email account and open the email from support.quest.com. Click on the verification link. The Welcome to Quest Security Management Platform page opens.
 - b. In the **Add organization name** field, enter a name for your Quest Security Management Platform organization.
 - c. In the **Select Region** field, select the region where you want your data to reside.
 - d. Click **Create New Organization**.

You can now add your Azure AD tenant and begin using the module. See the Security Management Platform Global Settings User Guide for more information on working with Quest Security Management Platform.

Third-party contributions

This product contains the following third-party components for Identity Defense. For third-party license information, go to <https://www.quest.com/legal/license-agreements.aspx>.



NOTES: For third-party contributions specific to Security Management Platform Global Settings, refer to the [Security Management Platform Global Settings Release Notes](#).

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Identity Defense Release Notes
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