

# OIT Device Support Standards

## Overview

Due to rapidly changing technology and in order to protect the university from the security and operational risks of maintaining older, unsupported devices, operating systems and applications on the UAH network, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) will no longer support hardware or software that is considered End of Life (EOL) or End of Support (EOS), and these products should not be used on UAH networks or on any information system that stores, processes, or transmits UAH data.

In accordance with the [06.01.02 Security of IT Resources Policy](#), hardware, and software must be fully supported to be used on the UAH networks.

<b>Definitions of Fully-Supported Assets</b>	
Hardware	Hardware is considered fully supported for 5 years from the date of purchase from the manufacturer.
Software	Receiving regular and timely security updates and patches from the original manufacturer and not announced as EOL.

## Why is this important?

It is often time-consuming and a security risk to attempt to support aging UAH-owned devices. Each year, OIT evaluates the current technologies and establishes a level of obsolescence.

Devices that are not fully supported will no longer be provided with replacement parts and software, and OIT will only be able to provide extremely limited support on such devices.

With the decreasing cost of computer hardware and the increase in the number of computers on campus, it is often much more cost-effective for the university to replace obsolete equipment than attempt to repair or support it after the manufacturer or vendor no longer can.

We understand that there may be some reluctance to upgrade hardware and software. It is in the best interests of UAH to utilize a more modern and secure IT infrastructure. Some of the important reasons OIT is requiring fully supported hardware and software are:

- Reduced support costs
- Improved security
- Requirement for cybersecurity compliance
- Available fixes for known problems, bugs, and security gaps

- Access to the latest features
- Better compatibility with UAH solutions
- Better device performance
- Vendor support in the event of service outages
- Increased productivity and efficiency

## Exceptions

OIT acknowledges that there may be situations where maintaining an older, unsupported solution can be a reasonable and justifiable choice for business or research purposes.

To have an exception considered and approved, a valid business case must be submitted, accompanied by a clear plan outlining the reasons why the specific unsupported hardware or software is crucial for your operations. The CIO will assess the business case's feasibility for UAH to support the request, taking into account the university's support costs versus the cost of replacement.

Before an exception can be granted, a plan that outlines the intended timeline for either replacing or discontinuing the device must be provided alongside the business case. This plan may also address budgetary concerns if they are pertinent.

## Obtaining an Exception

To request an exception to the limits described above, please visit <https://uah.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2075/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=54036> and click the **Request the Exception** form. Submitting that request will create a help desk ticket. Your request will be reviewed as soon as possible, and you will receive a response through the ticket.

## Implications of Non-Compliance

If an approved exception does not exist, OIT reserves the right to take appropriate action to protect the UAH network and OIT resources. Responses for support of this not-fully-supported hardware or software may include but are not limited to:

- Inability for OIT to support the hardware or software
- Removal of the hardware or software from the network entirely
- Relocation of the hardware or software into a protected subnet with limited or no access to the Internet.

# Definitions

**EOL** - Stands for "End Of Life" and is commonly used in information technology to describe a product that is no longer maintained or supported by the original vendor or manufacturer. It may refer to either hardware or software.

**EOS** - Stands for "End Of Support" and indicates a company has ceased support for a product or service.

**Fully supported** means hardware or software that is still updated, supported, marketed, or sold by the manufacturer/vendor and has not gone End of Life (EOL). This means that the vendor is still issuing security updates and patches for the software, hardware, or firmware.

**IT Resources** include computing, networking, communications devices, applications, telecommunications systems, infrastructure, hardware, software, data, databases, personnel, procedures, physical facilities, cloud-based vendors, Software as a Service (SaaS) vendors, and related materials and services