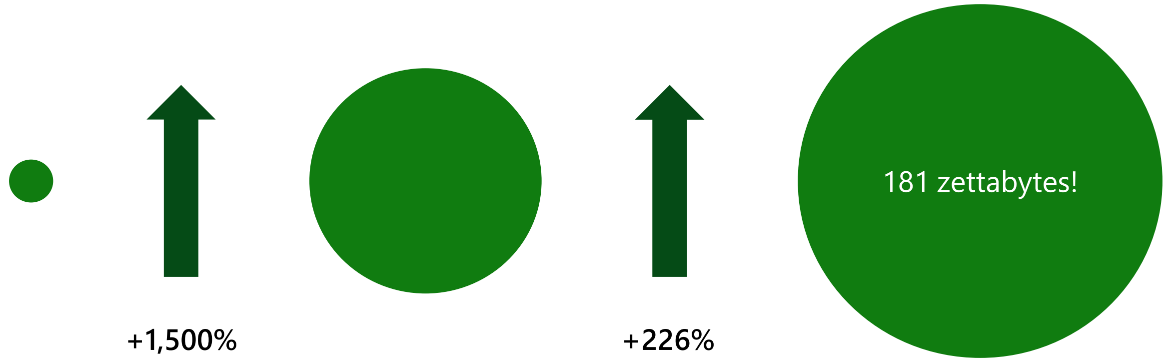
Microsoft Security

Streamline eDiscovery with Microsoft Purview

A growing body of data

Businesses generate an increasing amount of data each year. In fact, the volume of data created, captured, and consumed has increased 1,500% in the past ten years. The rate of data capture is expected to increase another 226% from 2021 to 2025 from 80 zettabytes to 181 zettabytes per year.

Digital transformation is adding to the challenge of data management by increasing the complexity of storing and consuming data. Corporate legal teams are feeling the pain as they are required to search ever-increasing bodies of information including emails, spreadsheets, messaging, and other file types.



63%

expect their company to conduct more investigations over the next three years

71%

are considering leveraging technology and/or best practices to improve legal operations

95%

of legal professionals believe cloud-based eDiscovery will become the industry norm in the next 2 years

Sixty-three percent of legal professionals in the corporate legal field expect their company to conduct more investigations over the next two to three years.[1] The increased workload could be difficult to manage for legal teams already running at capacity. It's no surprise that 71% of legal professionals across organizations of all sizes are considering leveraging technology such as case management and eDiscovery to help improve legal operations. [1] Furthermore, 95% surveyed recognize that cloud-based eDiscovery—the process of finding digital evidence within emails, business communications, and other data—will become the industry norm in the next two years. [1]

Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium is a comprehensive solution, built on the Electronic Discovery Reference Model (EDRM), allowing discovery and collection of relevant data within Microsoft 365 tenants. Managing legal workflows within one platform accelerates the eDiscovery process, quickly getting to smaller, more relevant data sets. Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium provides a comprehensive review and analysis experience, from the built-in preview of content to the powerful machine-learning capabilities that can significantly reduce the time needed to conduct a legal review.

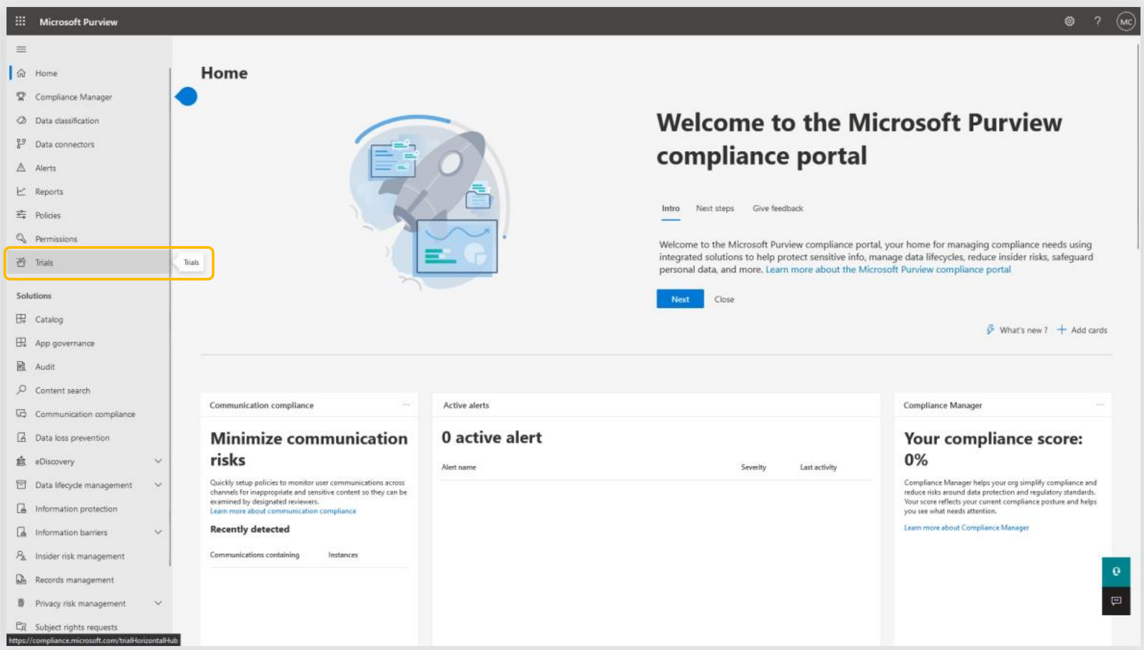
- Insights earlier in the eDiscovery process.
- Custodian management and communications.
- Deep crawling and indexing across platforms.
- Review and manage case data from one place.
- Intelligent data culling with machine learning.

Getting started with eDiscovery

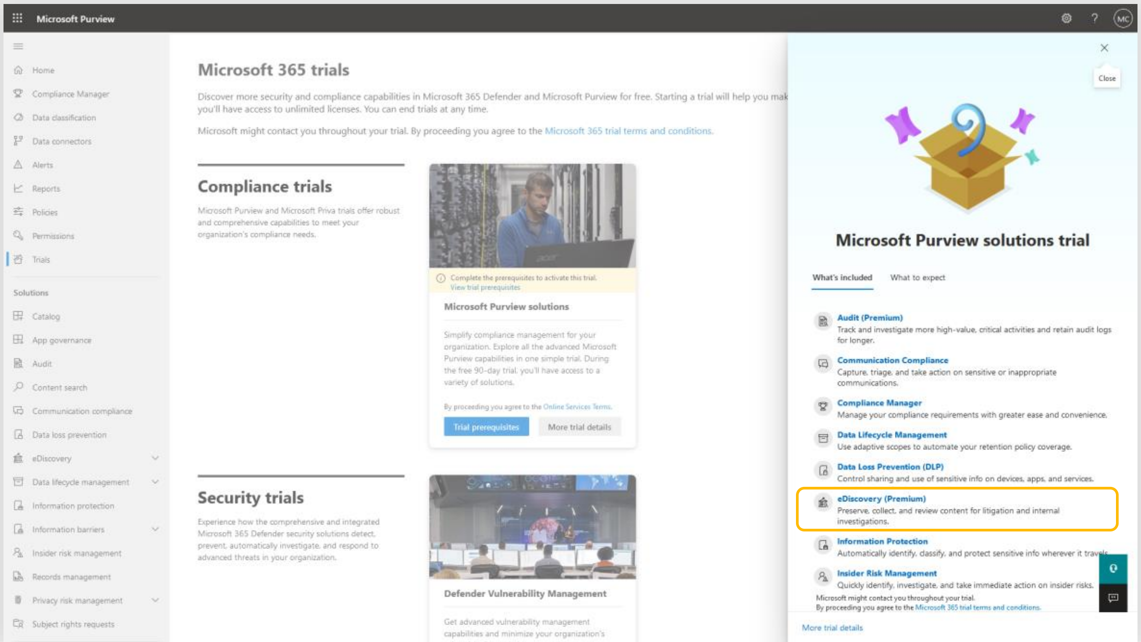
Step 1: Start a trial of eDiscovery

Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium provides an end-to-end workflow to preserve, collect, analyze, review, and export content in alignment with the Electronic Discovery Reference Model. It can also help legal teams manage the entire legal hold notification workflow to communicate with and track acknowledgement from custodians involved in a case.

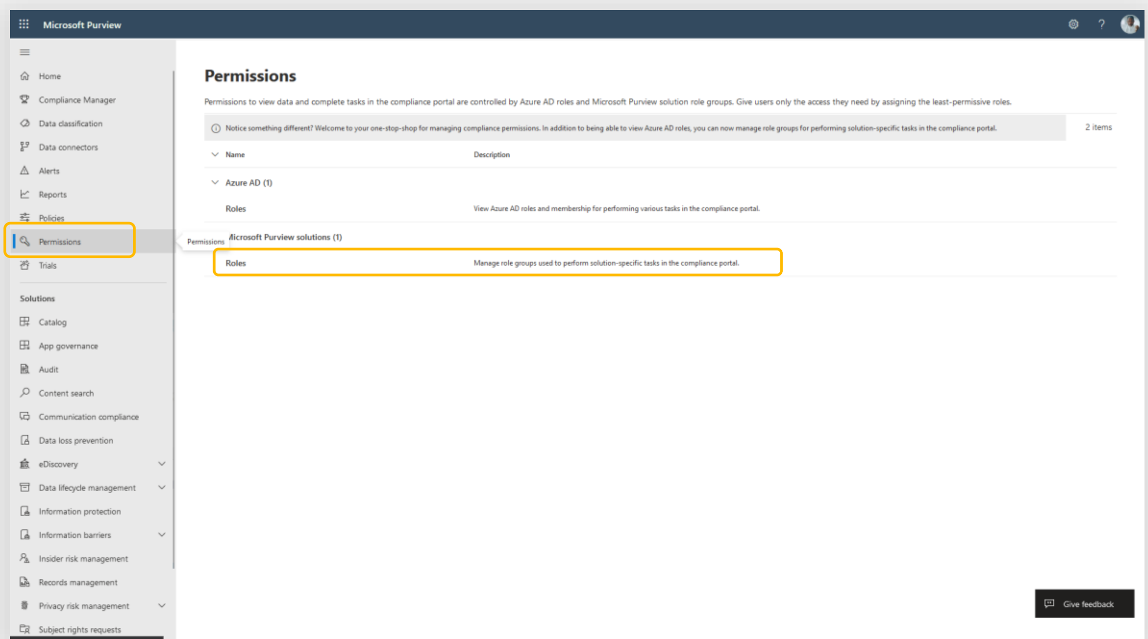
To begin, start by navigating to the Microsoft Purview portal. Sign in using the appropriate credentials, then choose **Trials** from the left navigation bar.



Choose **eDiscovery (Premium)** from the trial menu.



Next, choose **Permissions** from the left navigation menu, and click **Roles**. You must assign Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium licenses to user custodians whose data will be searchable. Legal team members also need the appropriate permissions to access data for eDiscovery.

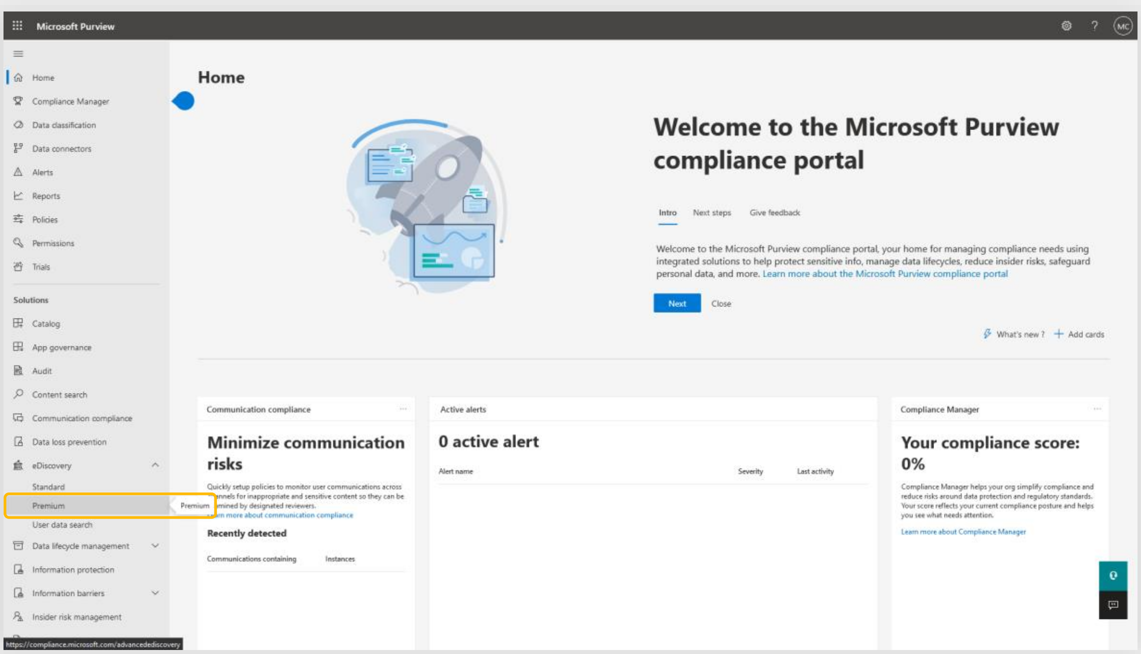


The following table summarizes the relevant eDiscovery role groups and the role permissions associated with each one. To access the key capabilities of Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium, members of your team will need to be added to either the eDiscovery manager or eDiscovery administrator role group. Where necessary, you can create [custom role groups] to reflect the needs of your organization.

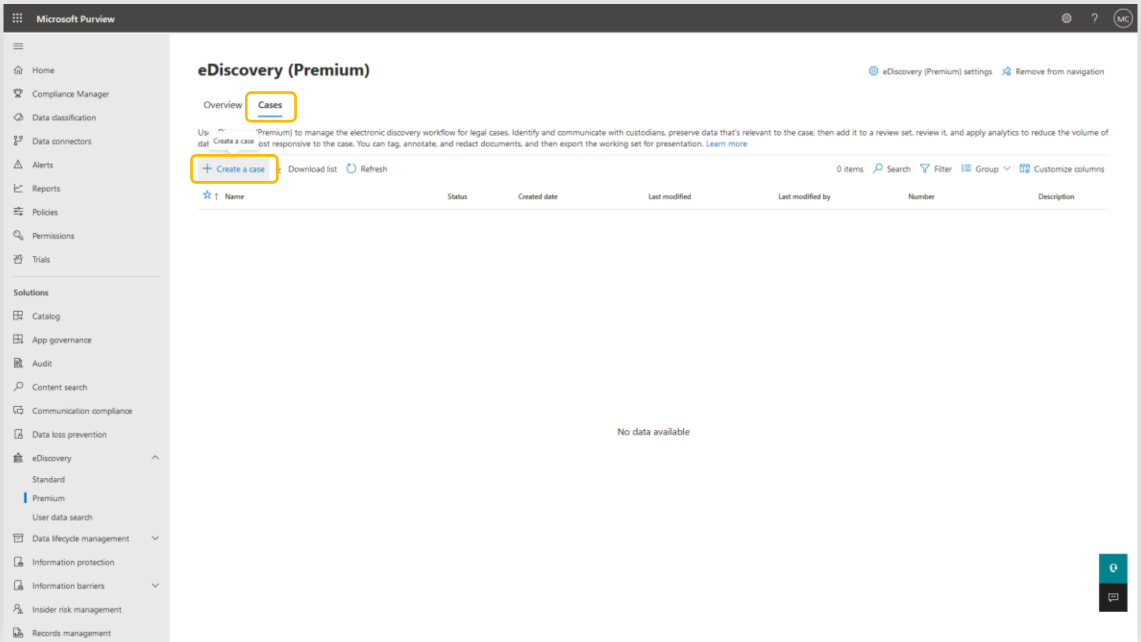
Role	Compliance Administrator	eDiscovery Manager & Administrator	Organization Management	Reviewer
Case Management	✓	✓	✓	
Communication		✓		
Compliance Search	✓	✓	✓	
Custodian		✓		
Export		✓		
Hold	✓	✓	✓	
Preview		✓		
Review		✓		✓
RMS Decrypt		✓		
Search And Purge			✓	

Step 2: Create a new case

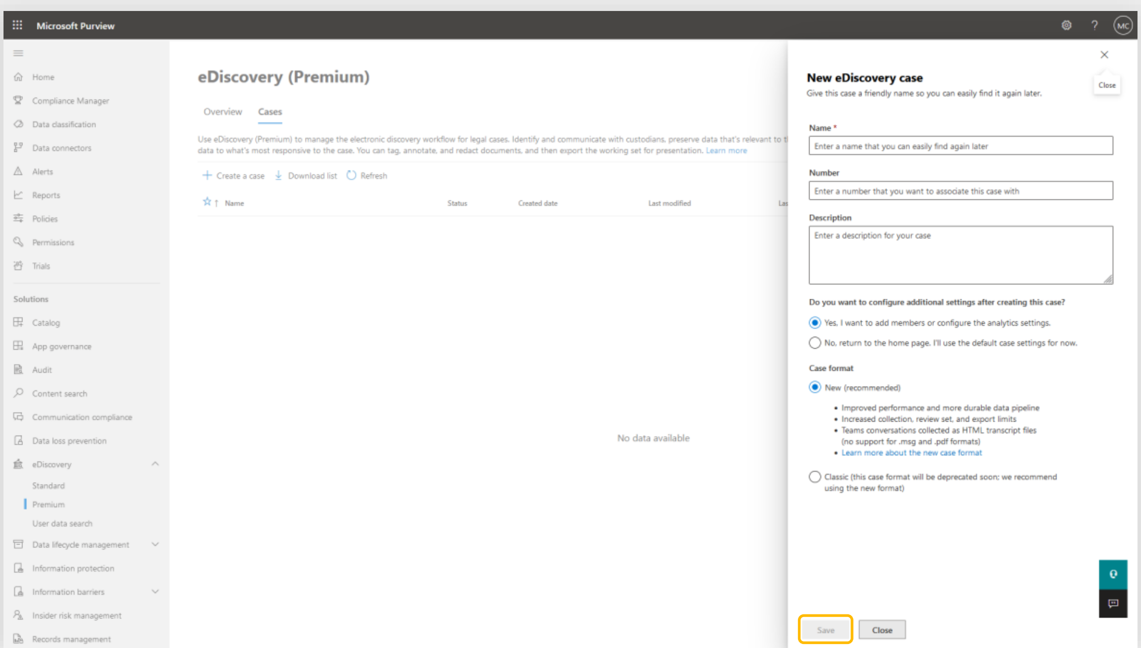
With the initial setup complete, you can create your first case. Start by selecting **Premium** from the left navigation, under eDiscovery, in the Microsoft Purview compliance portal.



Click on the **Cases** tab, then click **Create a case**.

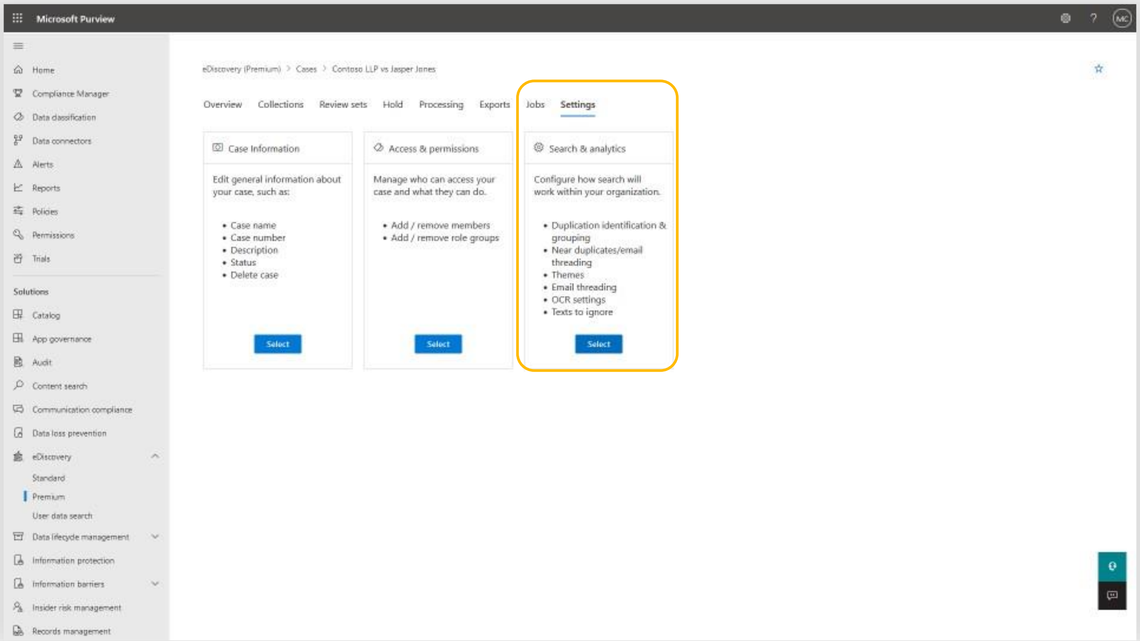


Provide a name, reference number, and description of your case. Keep the default settings for configuration and case format, then click **Save**. Your new case will appear in the list.

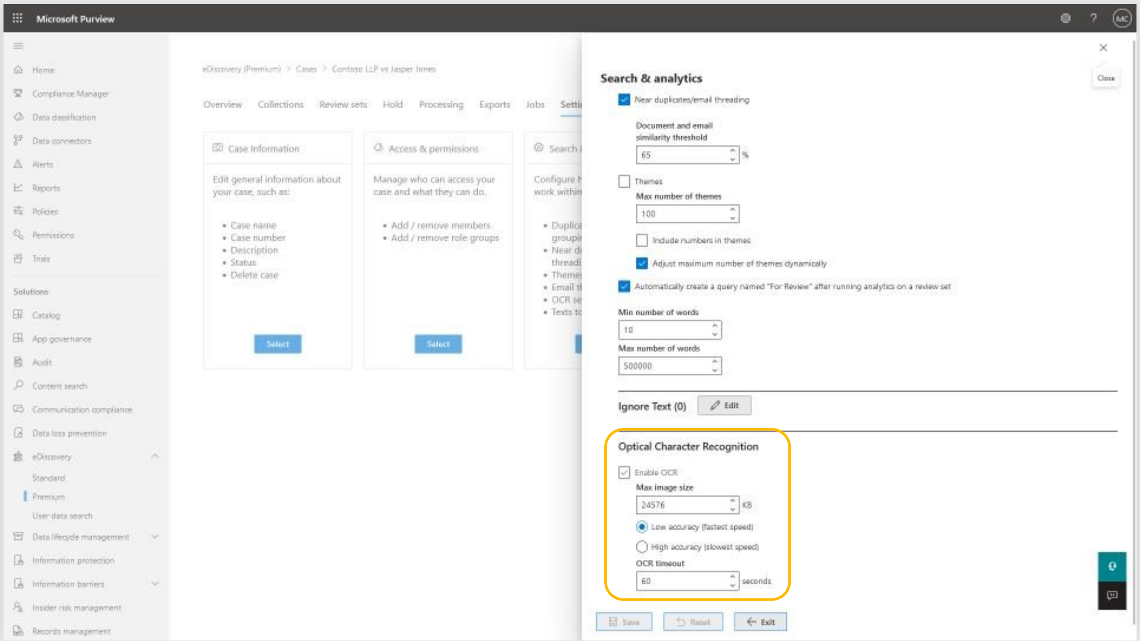


Step 3: Configure case settings

Click on the new case in the list view and navigate to the **Settings** tab. In the **Search & Analytics** card, click the **Select** button.



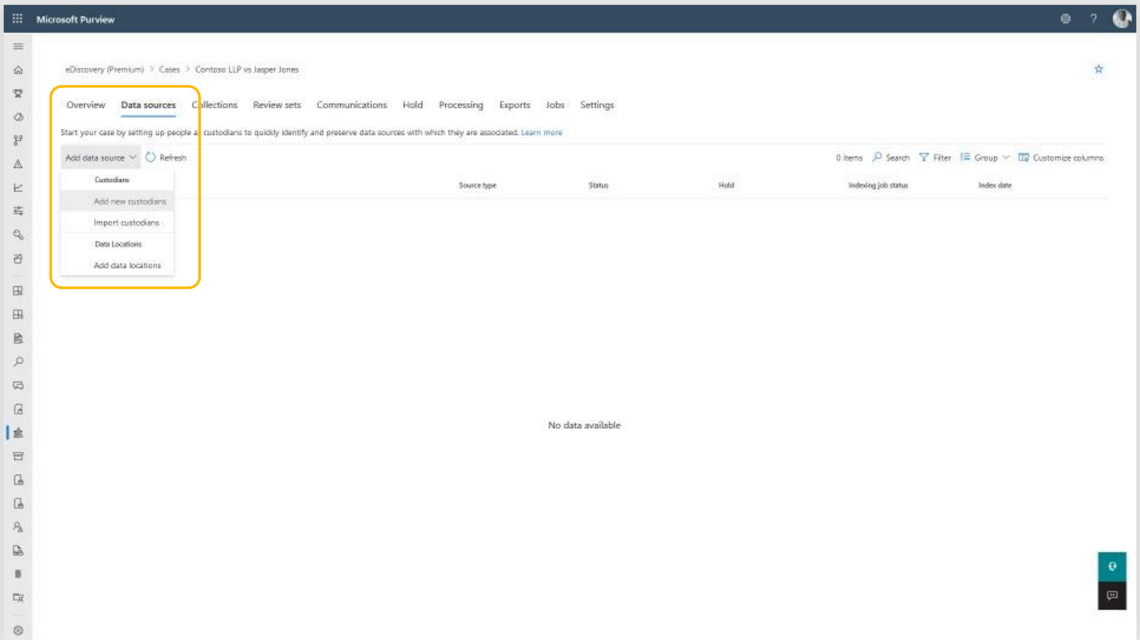
Enable the **Optical Character Recognition (OCR)** option by clicking on the checkbox. When OCR is applied to image files and scanned documents, the text in those files will become searchable during a collection. Enabling this option informs the solution to include this content during the [Advanced indexing]() process.



Step 4: Configure data sources

Next, you must identify the data sources relevant to the case. Traditionally, this process takes significant effort to compile a complete list via custodian interviews, permission lookups, and network scans. With Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium, you can efficiently identify data custodians and their associated custodial data sources such as Exchange email mailboxes, OneDrive document accounts, and SharePoint and Teams collaborative workspaces.

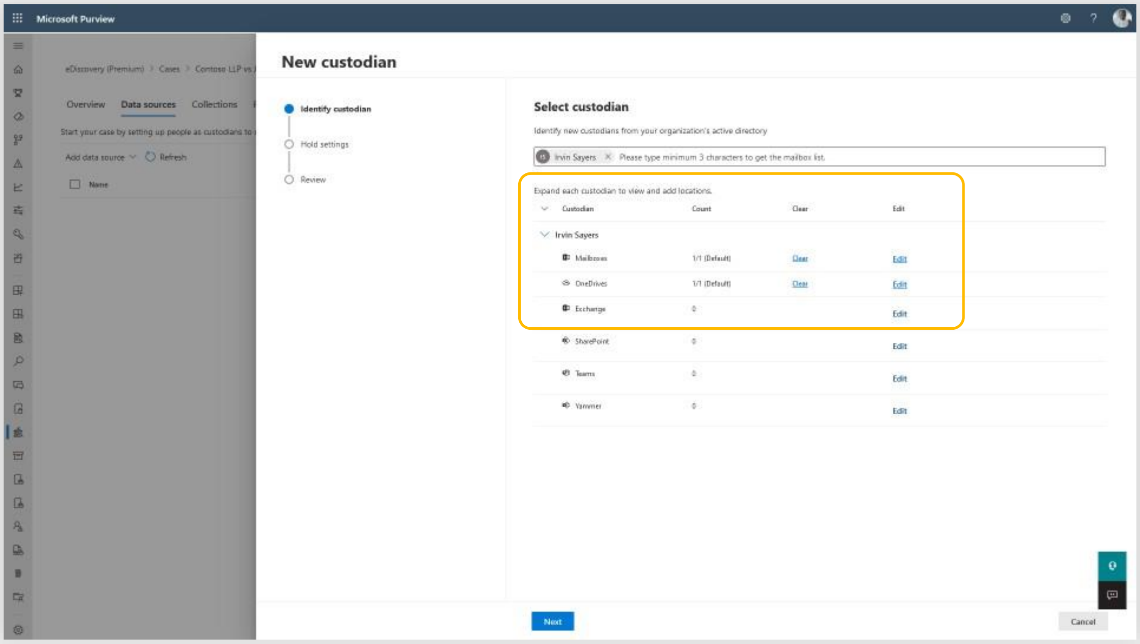
Add custodians to your new case by selecting the **Data sources** tab from the top navigation, then select **Add data source > Add new custodian.**



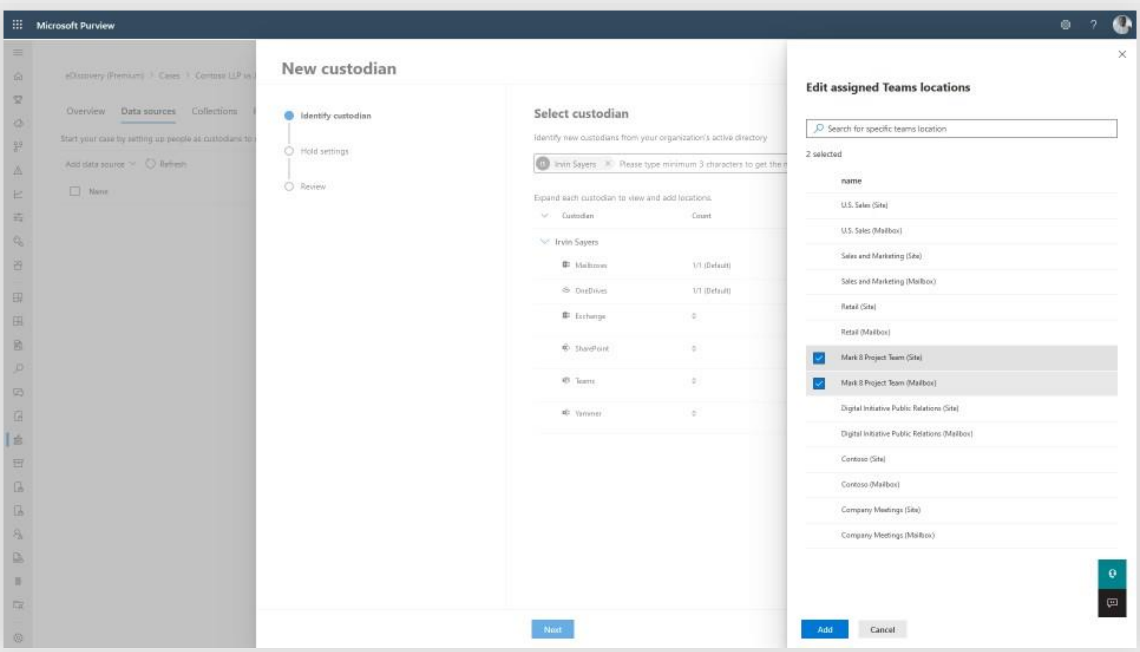
Using the built-in custodian management tool, you can add and manage custodians in three steps:

1. Identify the custodians and their relevant data locations.
2. Configure hold settings.
3. Review and complete the custodian selection process.

In the first step, search for one or more data custodians in your organization by typing the first three letters of their name or email address. The relevant data sources such as an active mailbox or OneDrive will be displayed.

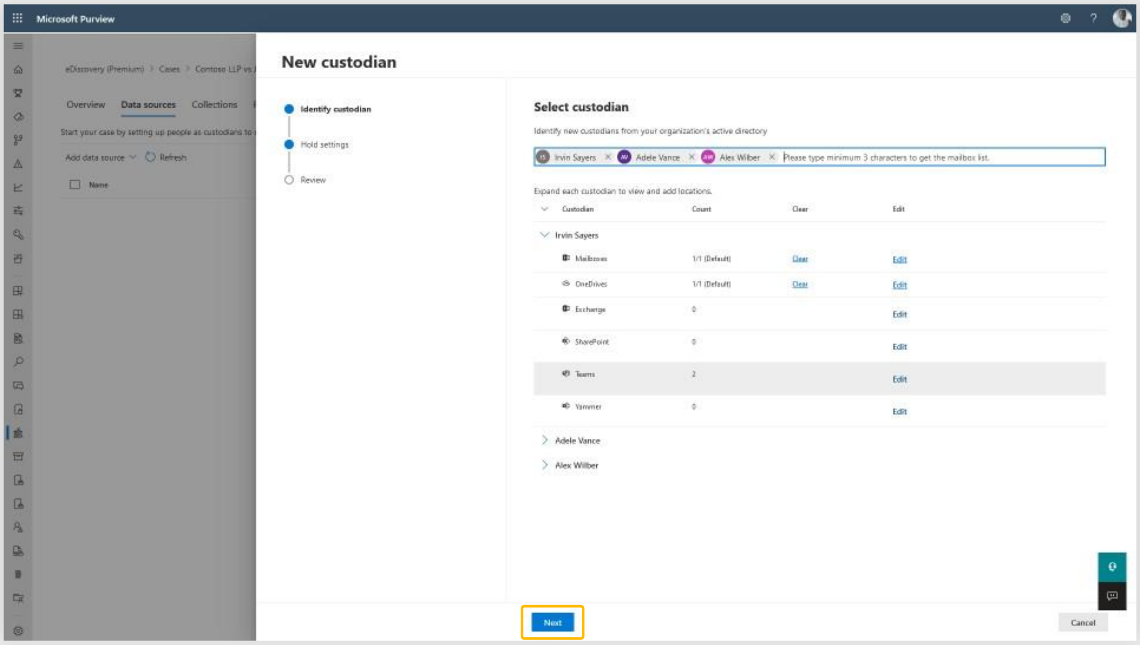


The system also creates a map of the custodian's access to any shared resources, such as SharePoint and Microsoft Teams collaborative workspaces. [Add additional] shared access locations by clicking the **Edit** option next to each resource.

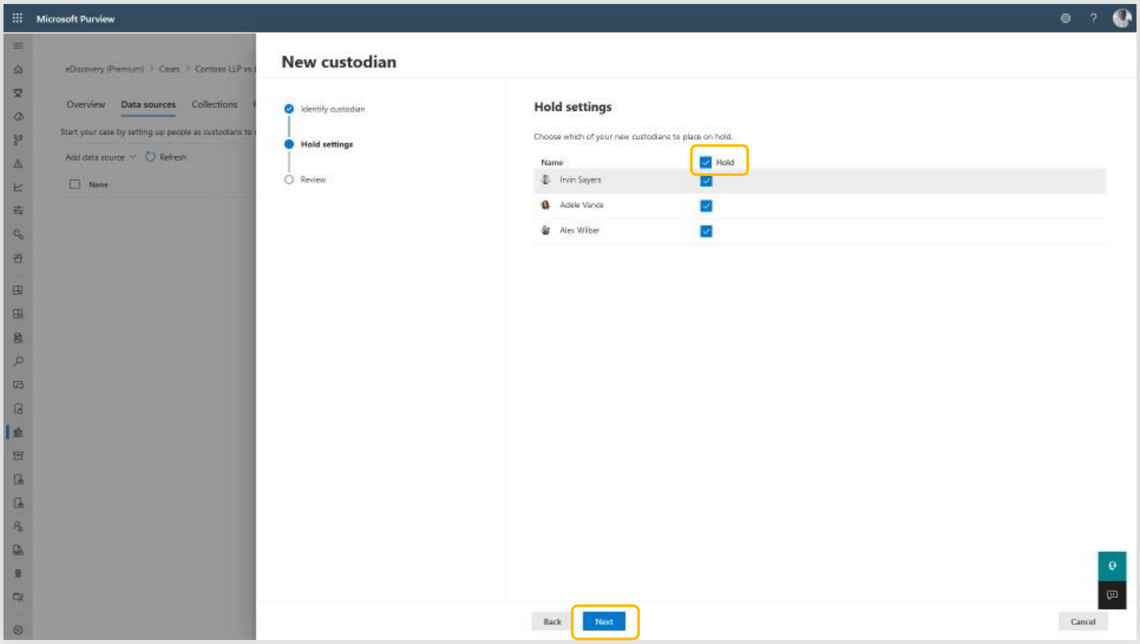


You can add additional custodians in the same manner. The data sources associated with each name will appear in the list. Click **Next** at the bottom of the screen to move on to defining hold settings for each data source.

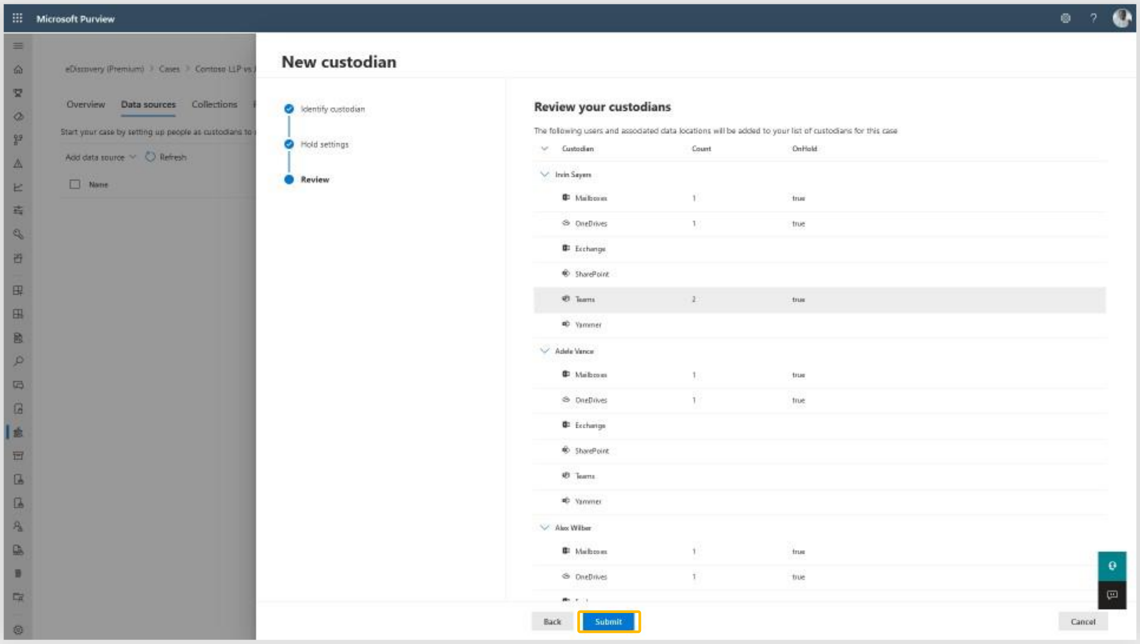
As is typical in many litigation cases, potentially responsive content is required to be retained for the duration of the investigation, or longer.



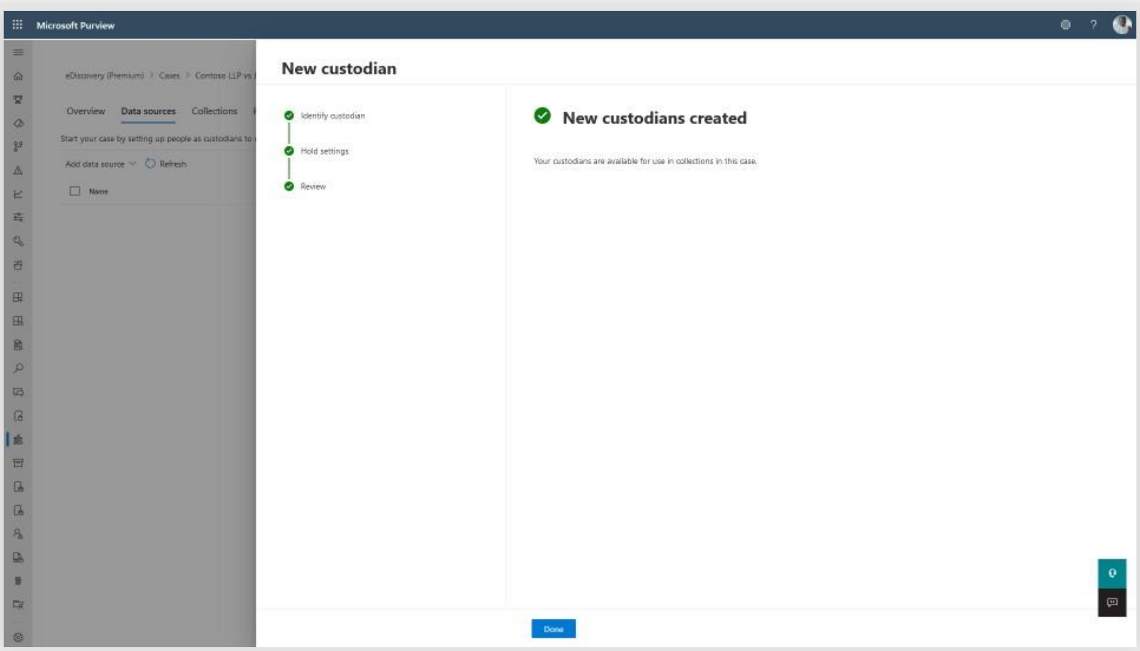
Check the **Hold** checkbox to place each custodian under a legal hold. The system will ensure that the associated custodial data is preserved for the duration of the case, or until released. Click **Next** at the bottom of the screen to review your selections.

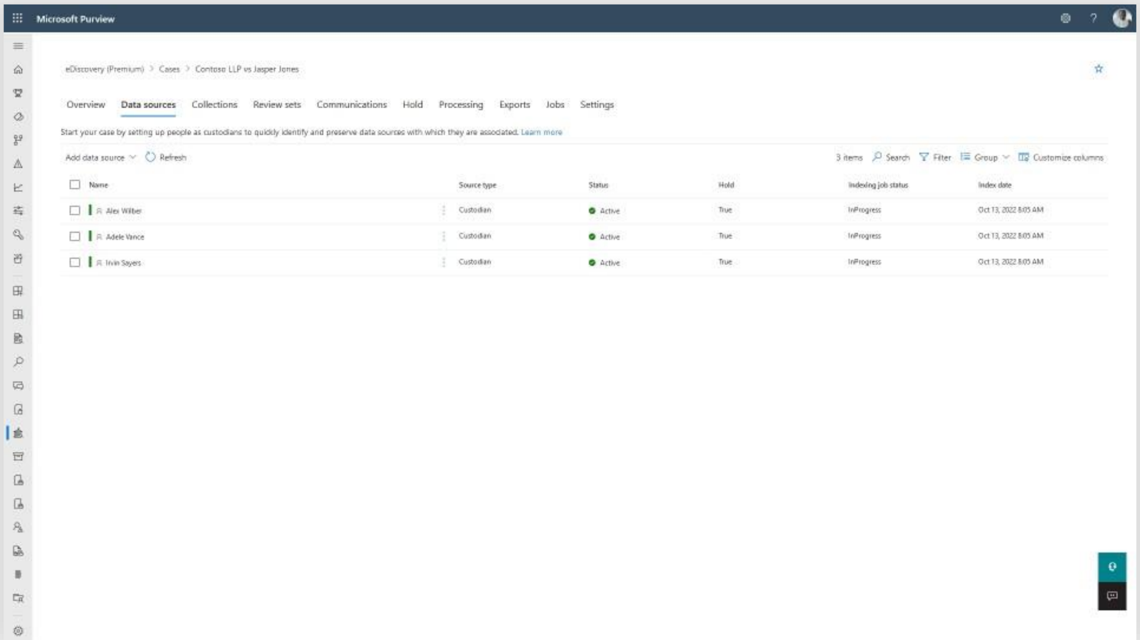


When you are satisfied that all custodians and data sources have been added to the case, click **Submit**.



When a custodian is added to a case, any content that is partially indexed will be reindexed in a process called [Advanced indexing](). This improves the quality of search results by optimizing the search experience for eDiscovery use.





Notifying custodians of legal hold

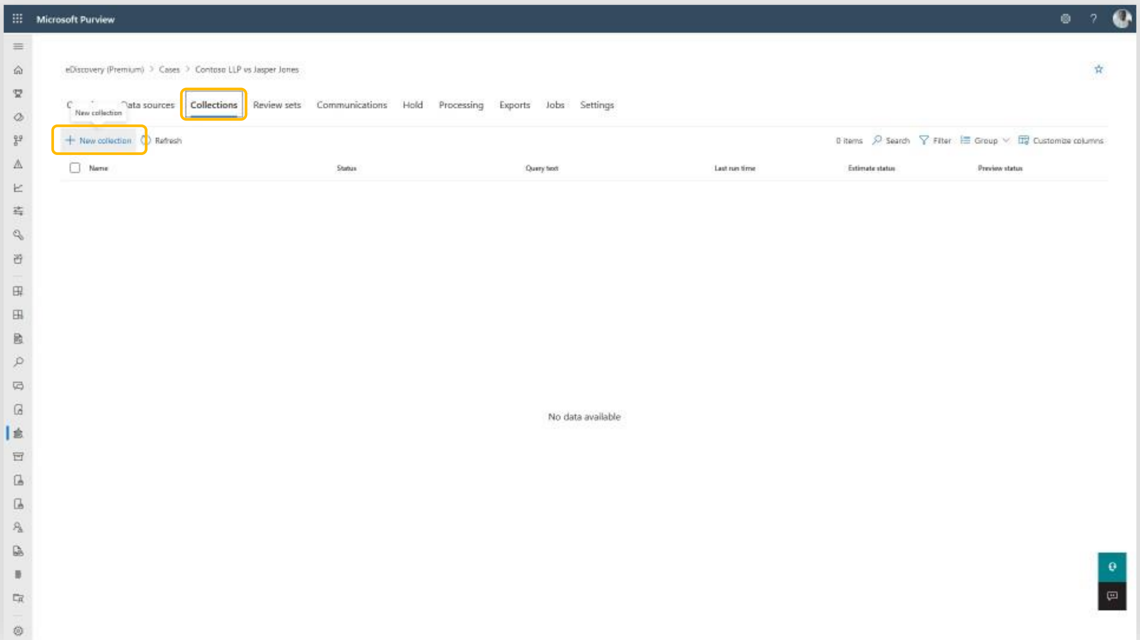
The legal process typically requires custodians to be notified when their data is placed under a legal hold. Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium enables legal teams to manage and automate the process of distributing and tracking legal hold notifications.

Configure legal hold notifications based on templates, acknowledgement management, reminders, and escalations.

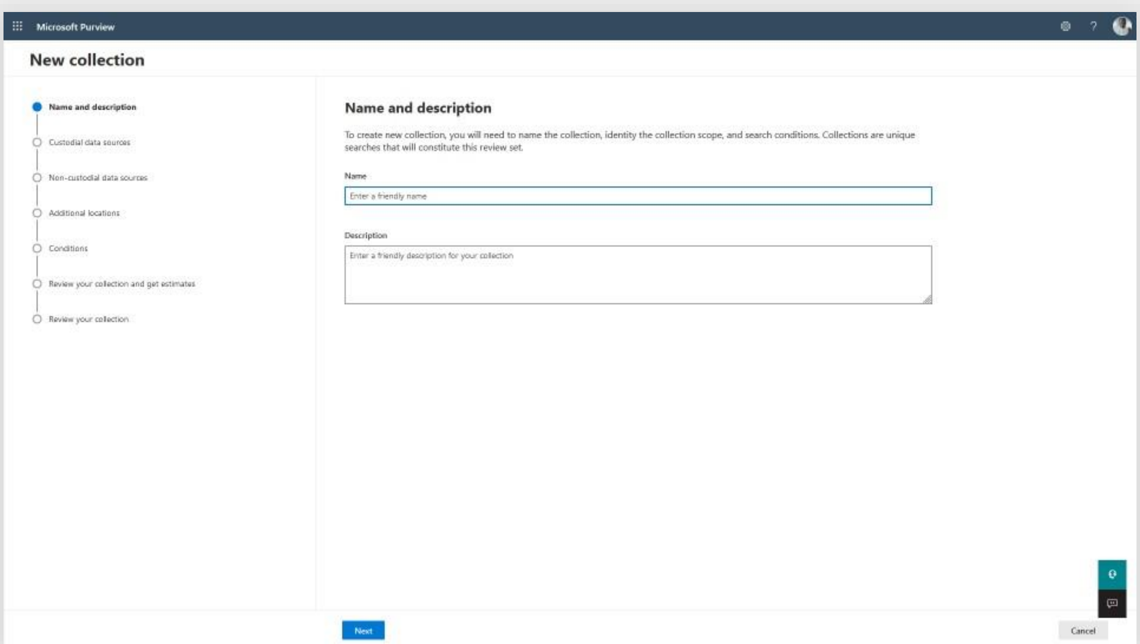
To learn more, please review Microsoft Learn: Work with communications in Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium.

Collecting relevant content

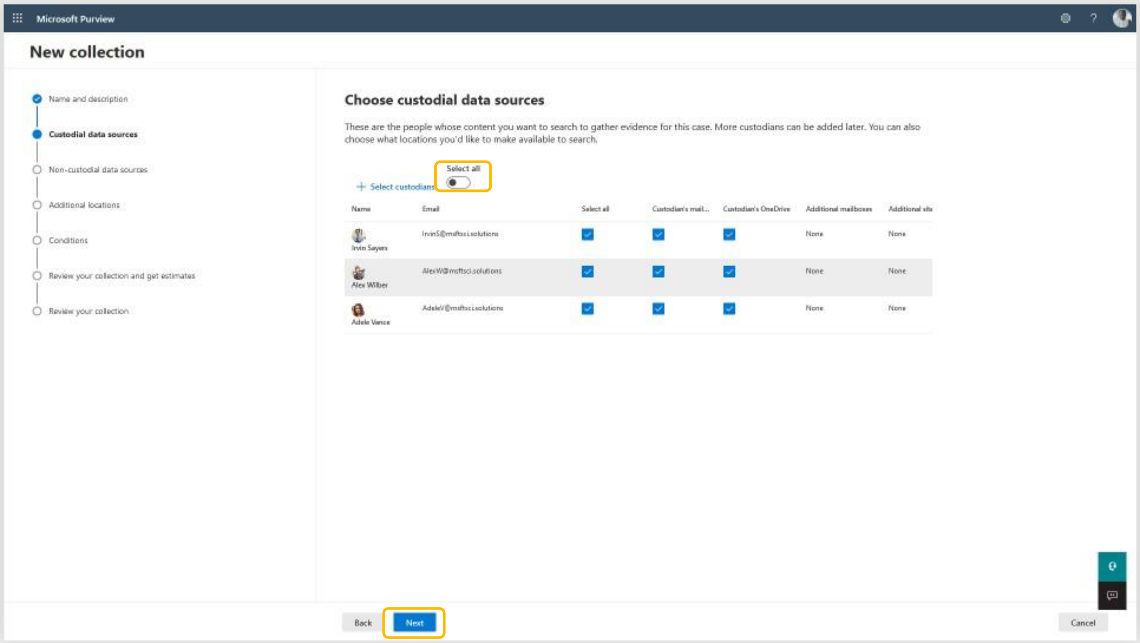
Now that custodians and data sources have been identified, you can begin to collect content based on search criteria. Select the **Collections** tab in the top navigation of the case and create a new search by clicking the **New collection** button.



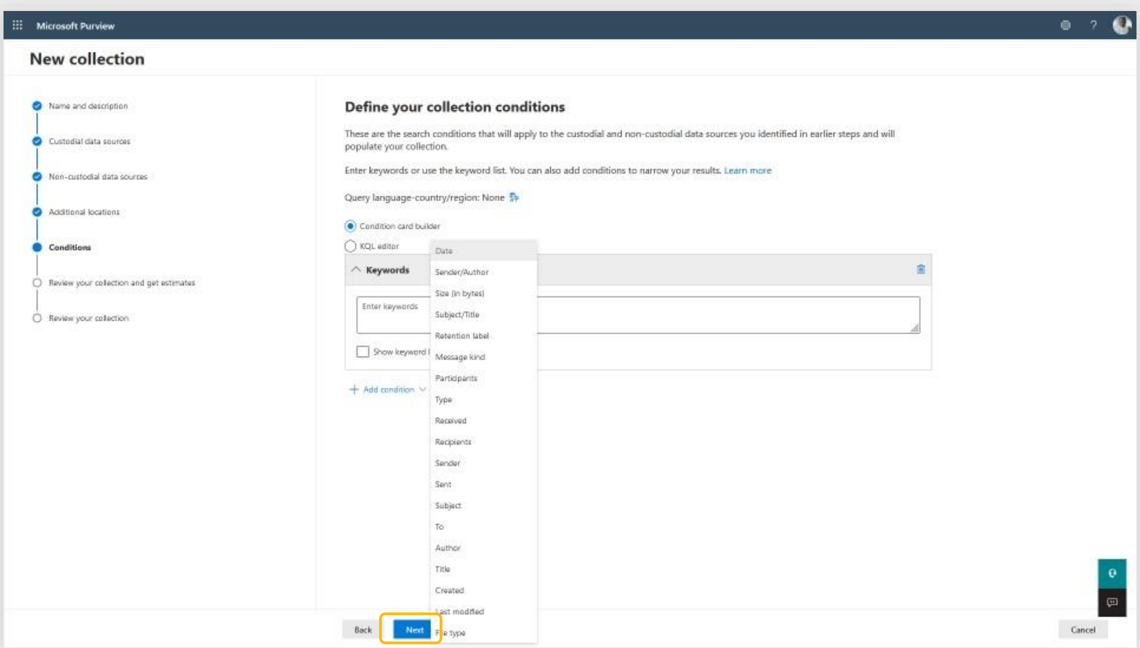
Create multiple collections for each case and manage them easily from the Collections dashboard. This empowers legal team members to work effectively and collaboratively on active cases with complex requirements. Give each collection a name and description to differentiate it from other existing or future collections that may be necessary for this case.



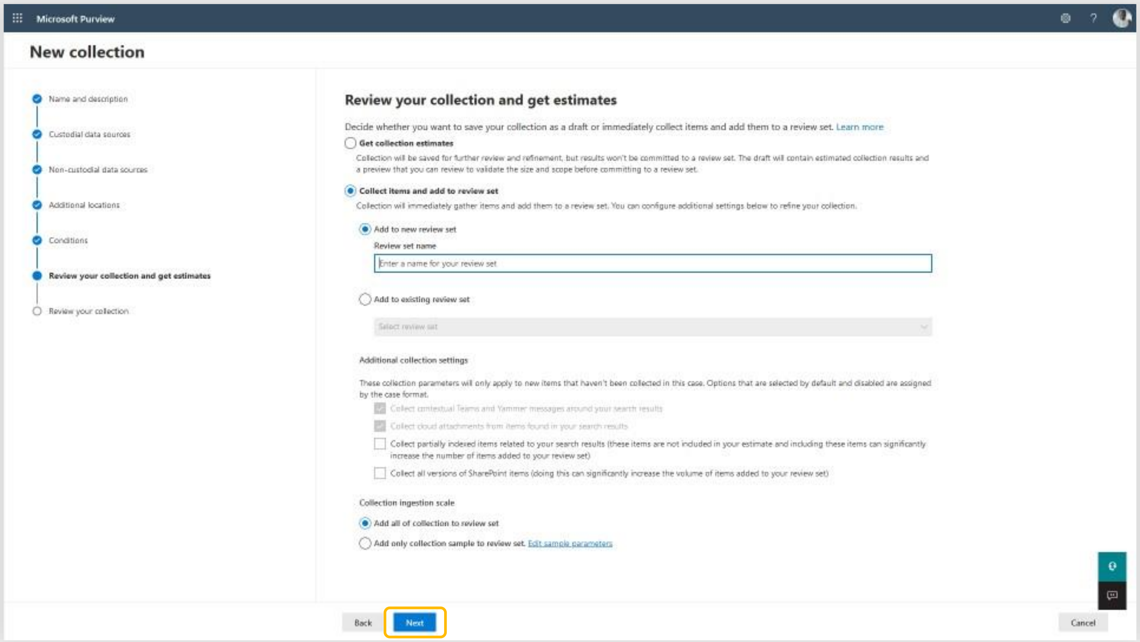
Some searches may pertain to only a subset of the custodians or data sources included in your case. Within the collection, you can select specific data sources by checking or unchecking the checkboxes next to each custodian. If all sources should be searched, turn on the **Select all** toggle, then click **Next**.

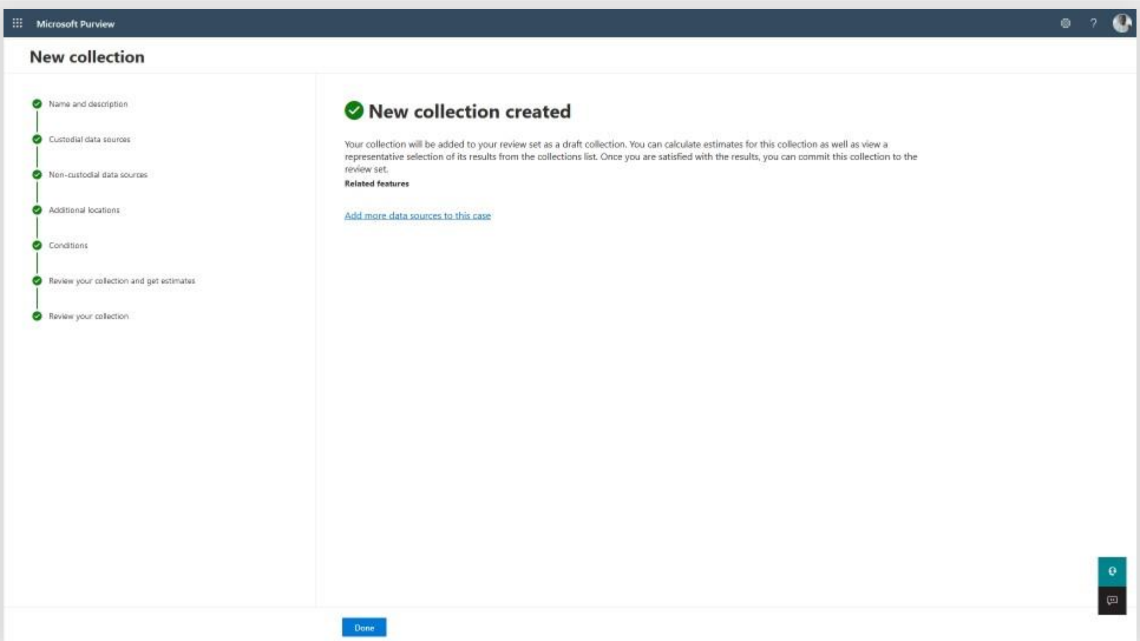


Define the conditions of your content search in the next step. For standard queries, the built-in condition card builder makes it easy to map out desired parameters. For more complex queries, the [Keyword Query Language (KQL) editor](#) provides experienced legal teams the full flexibility and a broad range of [metadata search attributes](#) in query composition. When all conditions have been added, click **Next**.

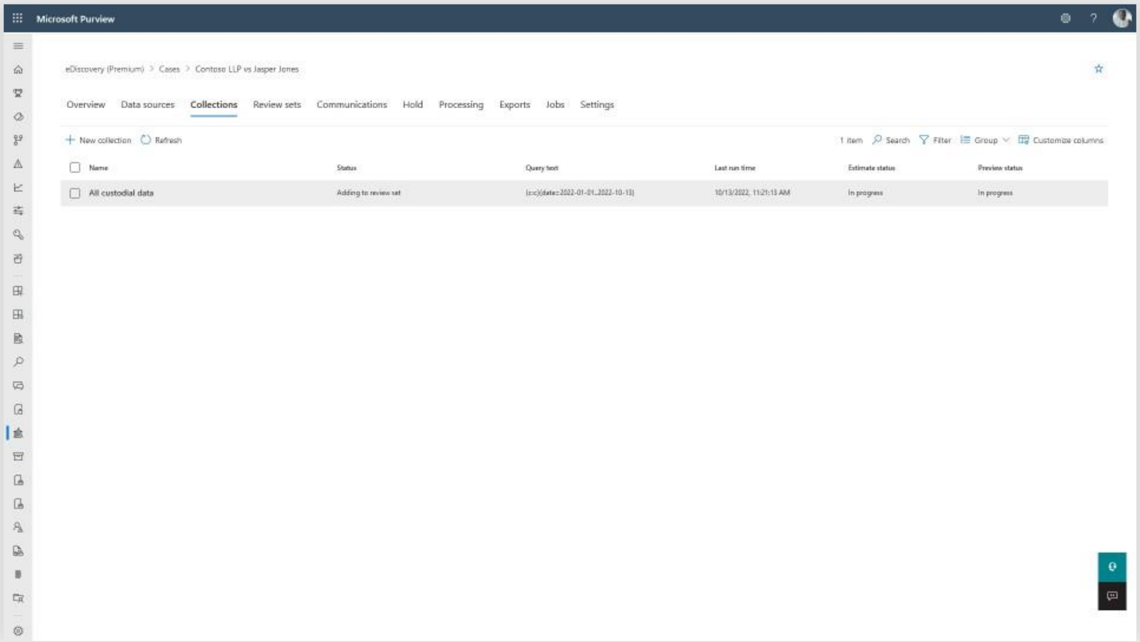


Complete the collection creation workflow by adding the results to a review set for further triage and analysis. Do this by providing a name for a new review set, or by selecting an existing review set from the drop-down list, then click **Next**.

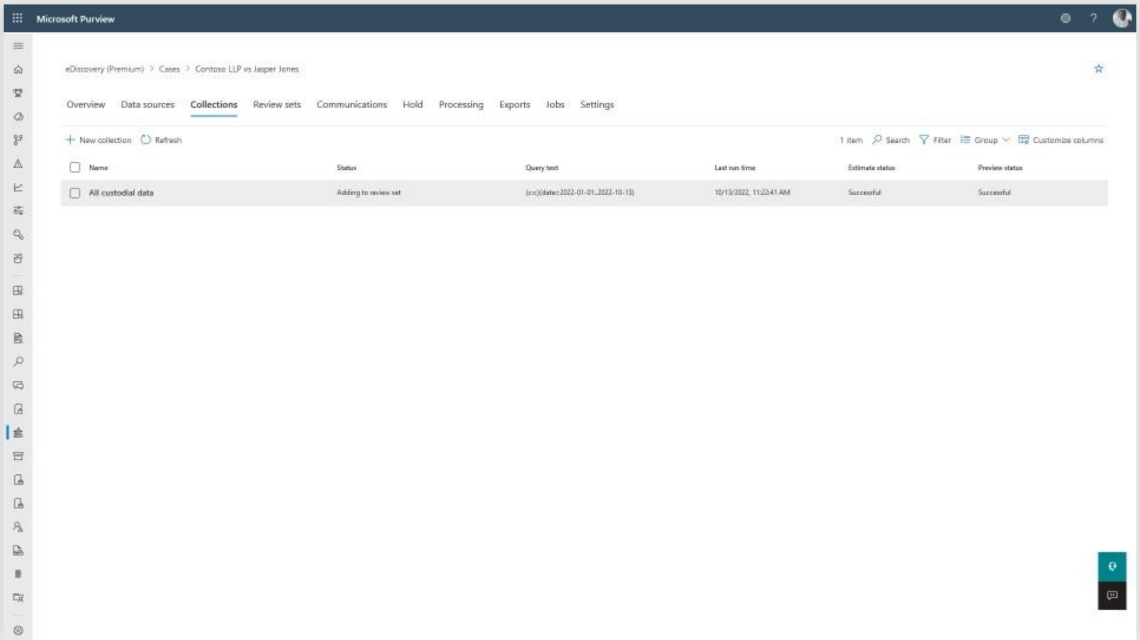




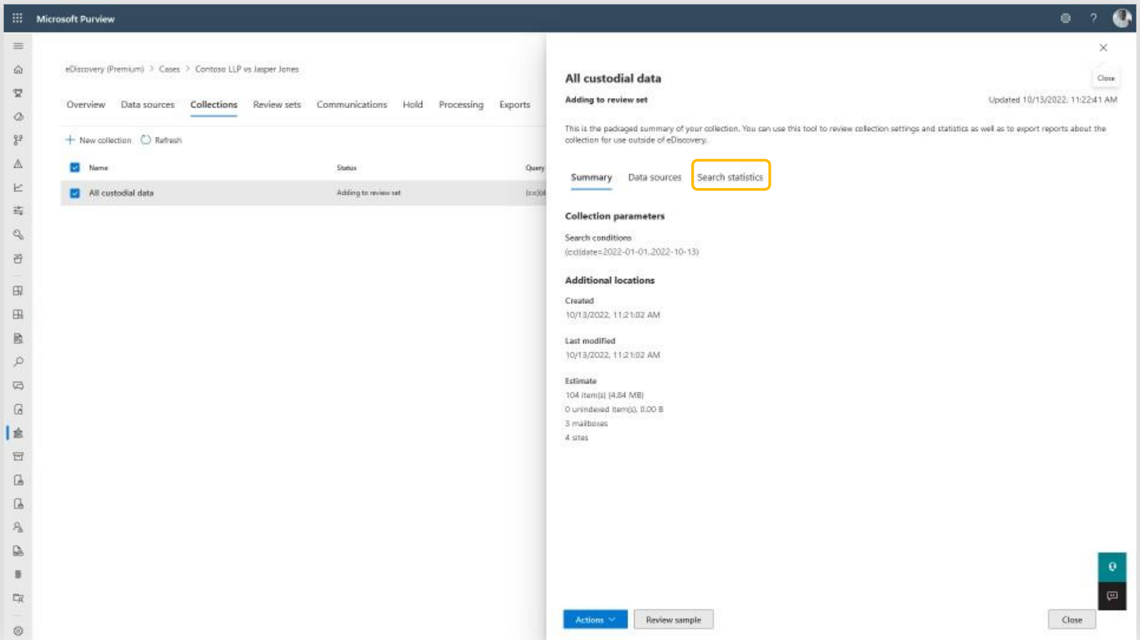
Depending on the number of data sources, new collections may take some time to complete. During this process, the system performs a search estimate and prepares a sampling of the items for preview. The status of the estimate and preview is noted beside the name of the collection.



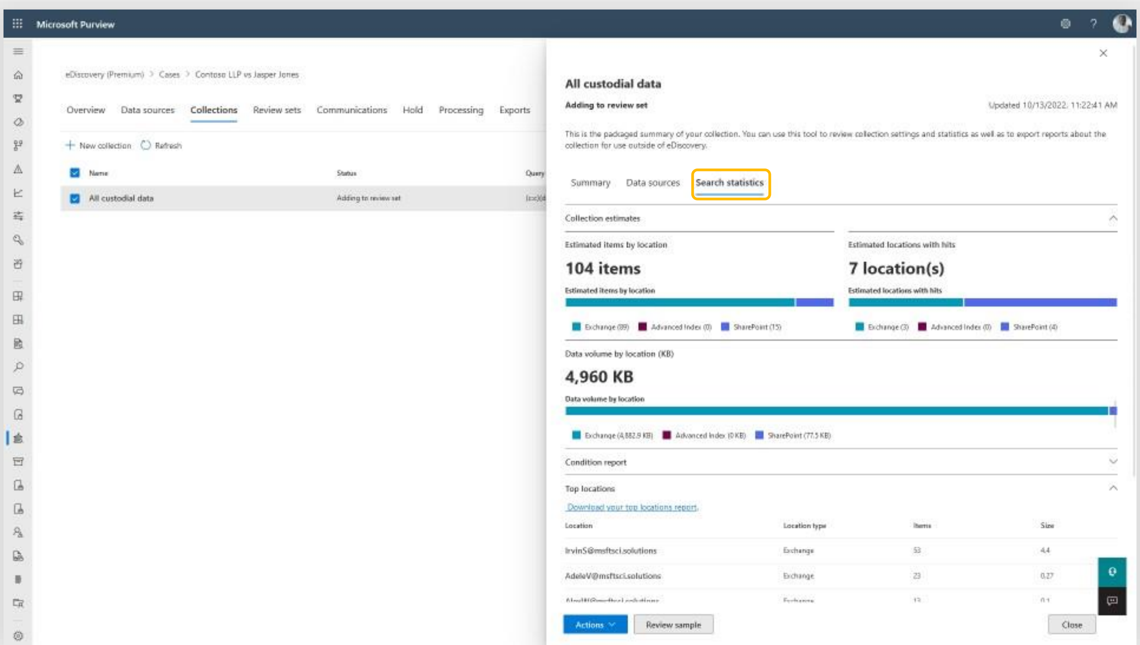
A copy of the search results is made to ensure that the content of the review set being analyzed remains consistent. Changes can be added to the review set in a supplementary batch as needed.



When the estimation and preview process is complete, you can access details of the search by selecting the collection name. This information is often helpful in validating whether it is prudent to continue to the review stage or determining if further fine-tuning is required to reduce the initial result set for the query.

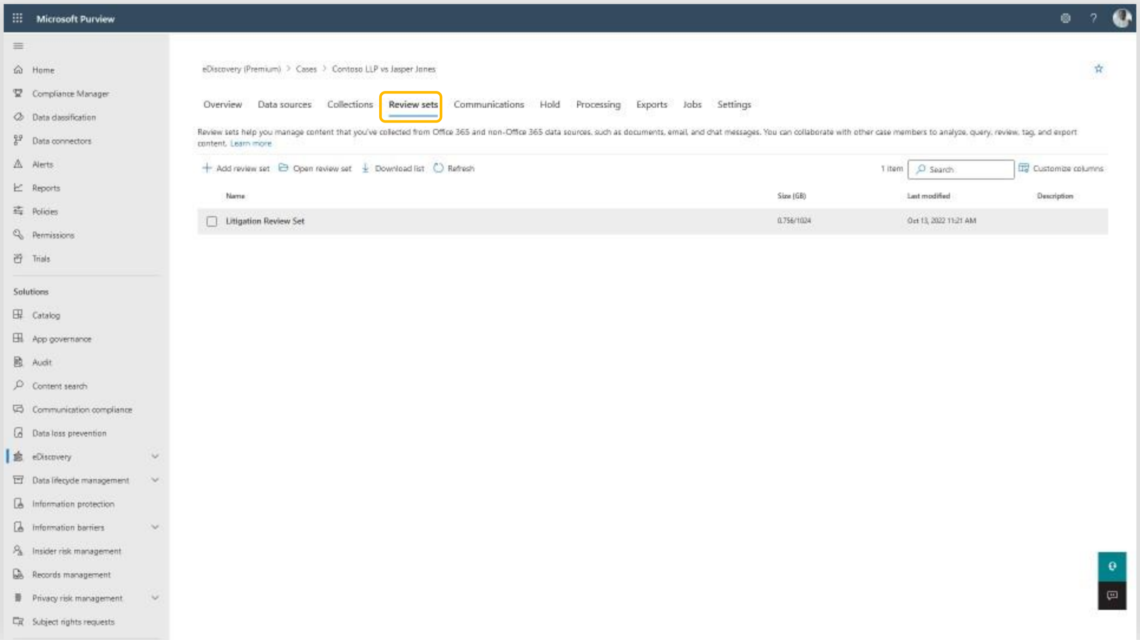


Click the **Search statistics** tab to further help in determining whether further refinement is needed. The statistics provide you with a detailed breakdown of the items in the result set, such as by location or volume of data.



Review collected results

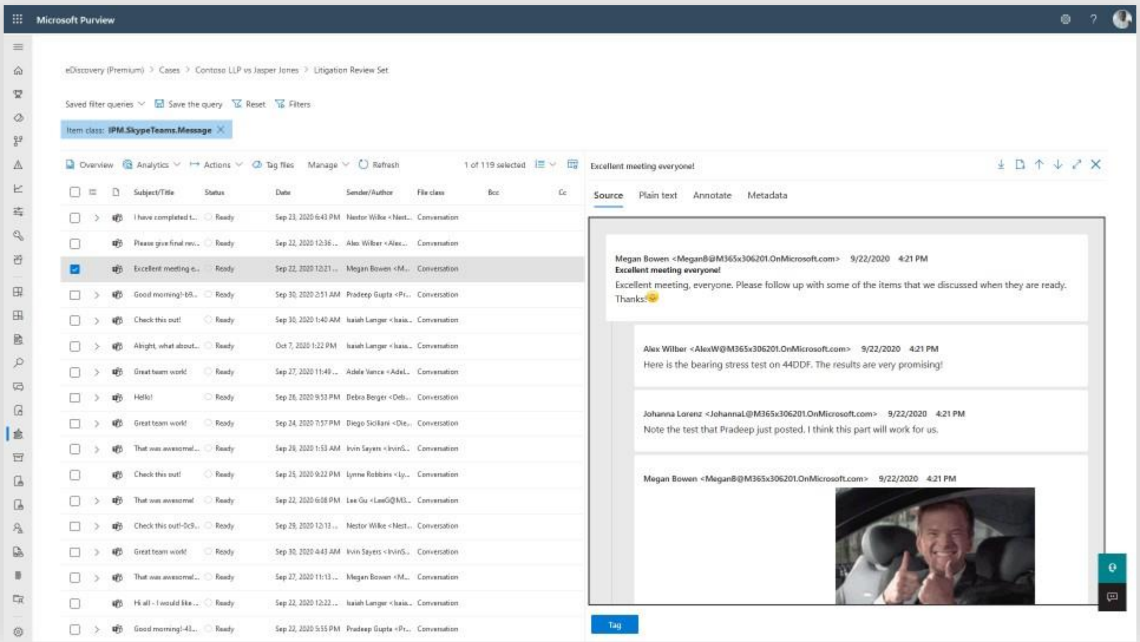
Start by navigating to the **Review sets** tab in the top navigation of the open case, and selecting the review set that was automatically created in the previous step.



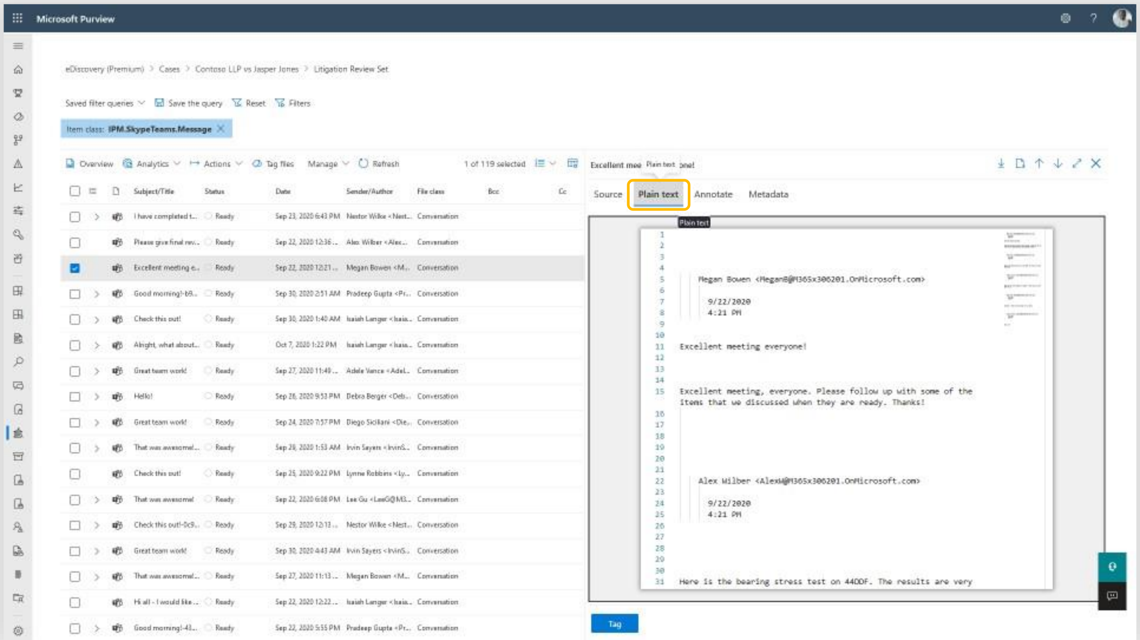
Analyzing review sets

Navigate to the **Review sets** tab at the top of the case page, and choose a review set by clicking on the name. The review set may contain multiple data sources, making it difficult to review. To quickly focus on content from a particular source, select **Filters** > **Item Class** and choose a data source—for example, Microsoft Teams messages.

Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium streamlines the review of communication content such as Teams chats and channel messages by intelligently bringing into context the topic thread before and after the item that matches our search query. This provides an inclusive view of the conversation and can include important elements such as reactions, emojis, polls, and media, such as pictures and animated gifs.

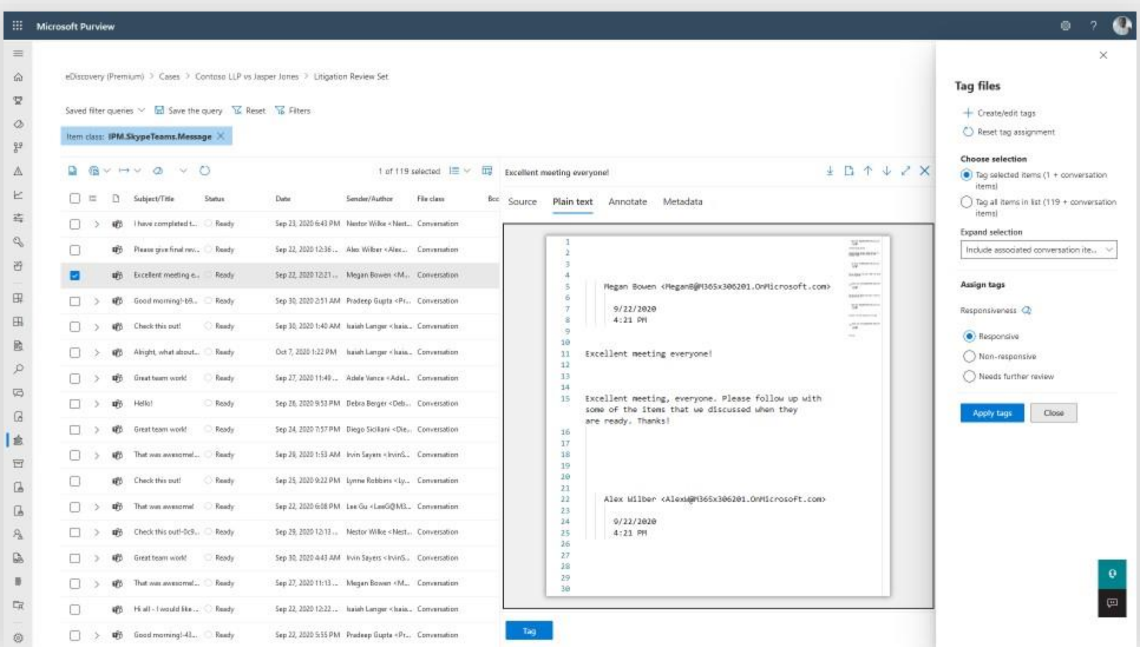


If these additional elements are less important to the relevancy of the content, you can easily simplify the view by choosing the **Plain text** tab located above the search results.



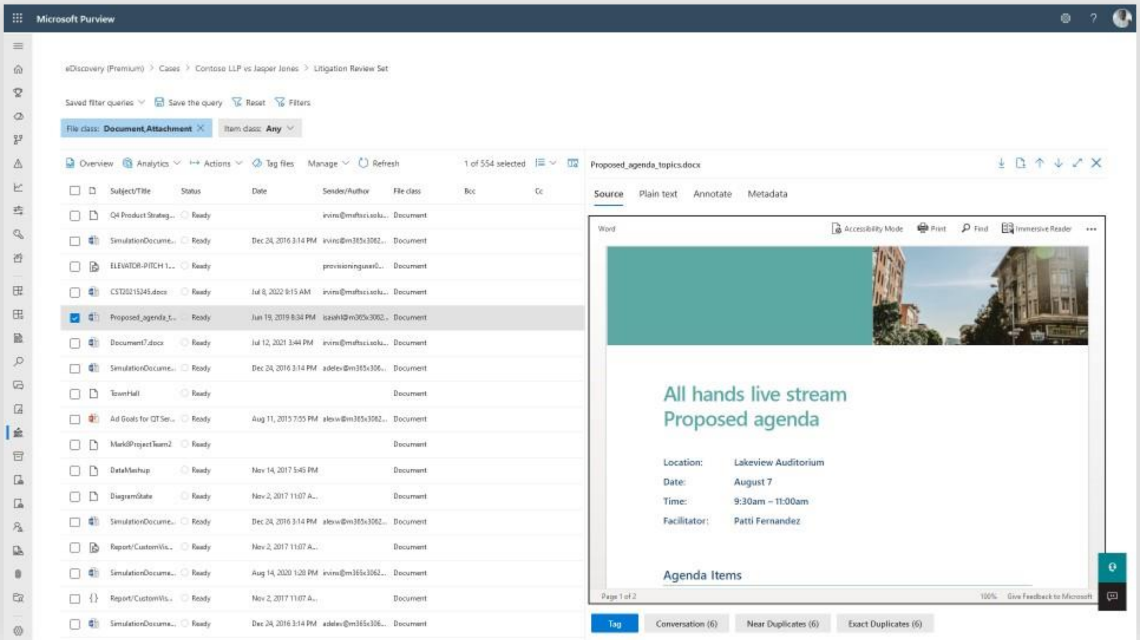
Tagging search content

During the review process, the [configurable tagging experience]() makes it simple to tag messages and documents that are responsive or may contain sensitive content, such as client/privilege information that requires further review. The available tags can be customized for each case. These tagged items can then be viewed separately using a filter query or moved into a separate review set for final review or further analysis. This is particularly helpful in streamlining a review process when working in a team of reviewers.



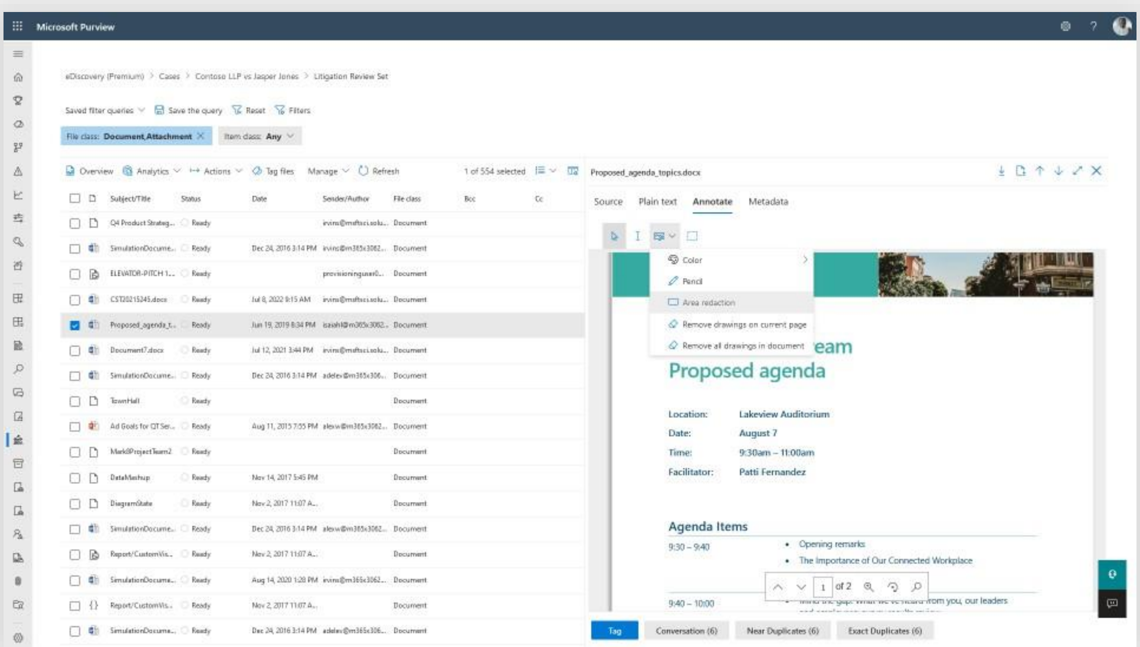
Reviewing document results

Documents are another common type of content found in review sets. Change the review filter to **File class > Document, Attachment** to focus on files only. Here you can easily view the selected document without downloading it, and without leaving the review experience.

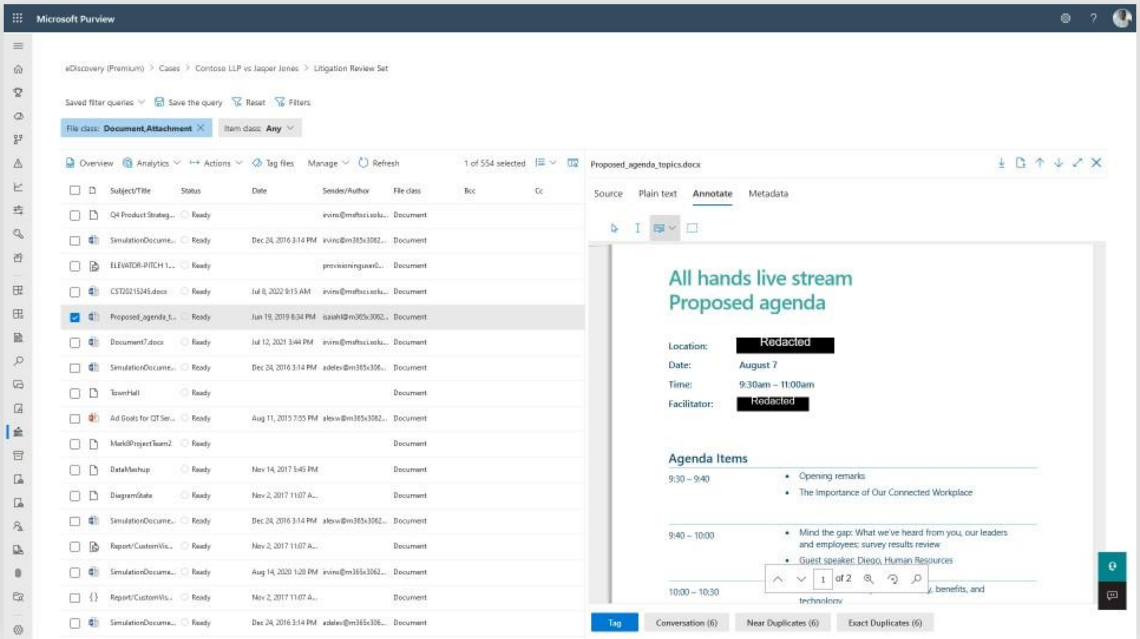


Annotate and redact

Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium also makes it easy to add annotations during the review and to redact any content that is not relevant to the case.

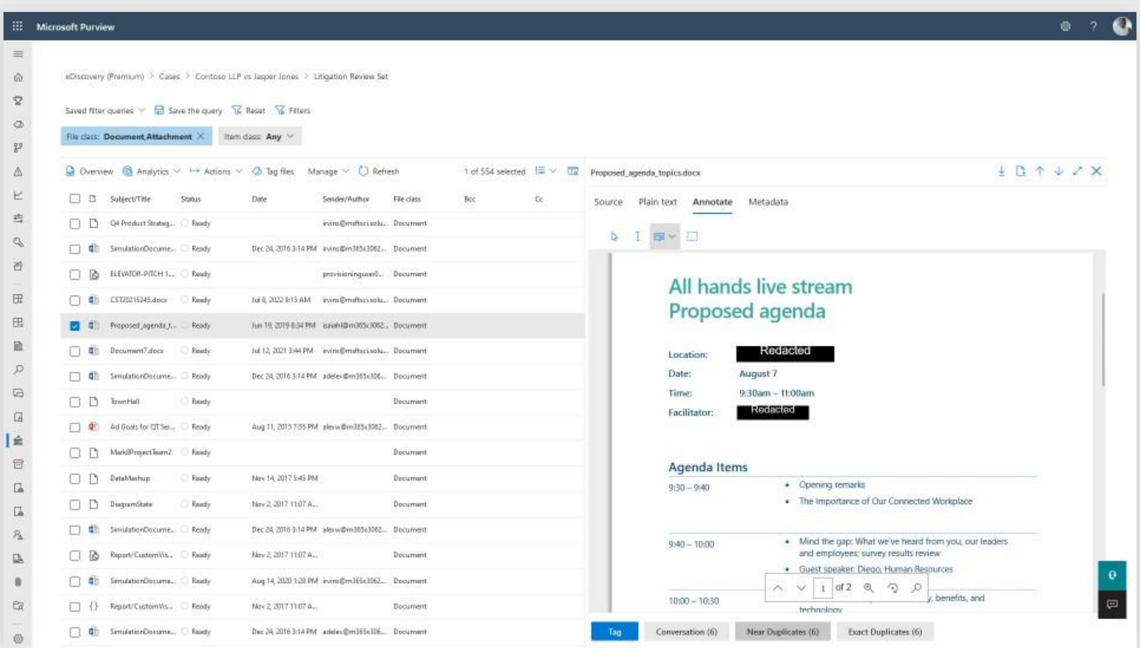


The annotations and redactions become part of the document and are included during the export or production stage of the review process.

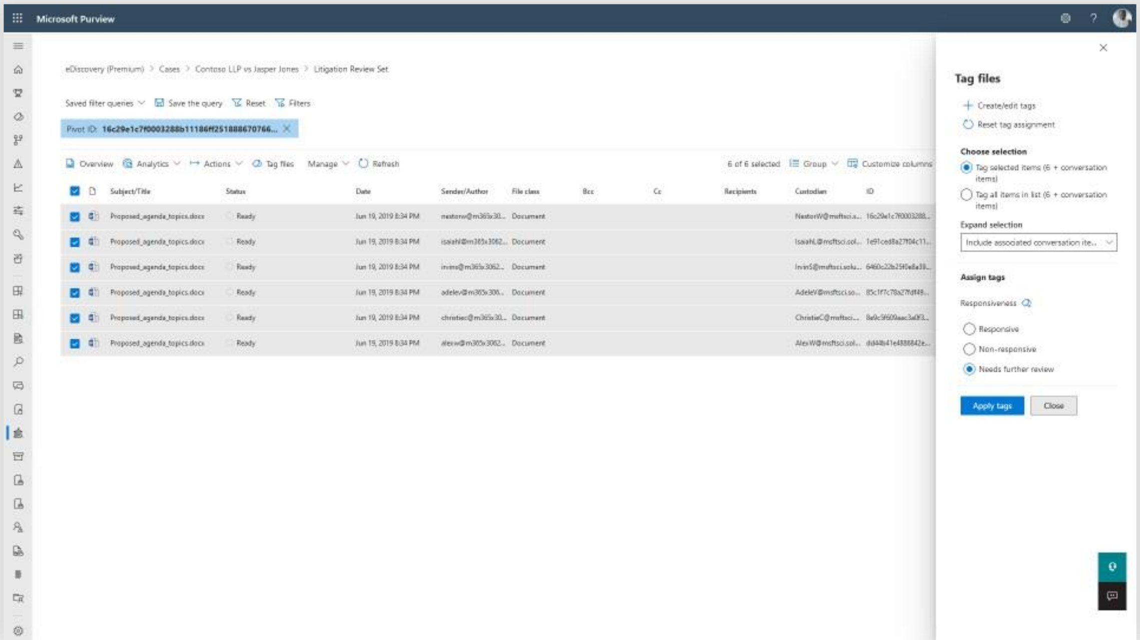


More efficient reviews

With the large volume of data that organizations generate each day, search results can become very large—even with a precise set of search parameters. Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium helps to reduce the volume of documents to be reviewed without any loss of information using machine learning models to identify duplicates and near-duplicates.

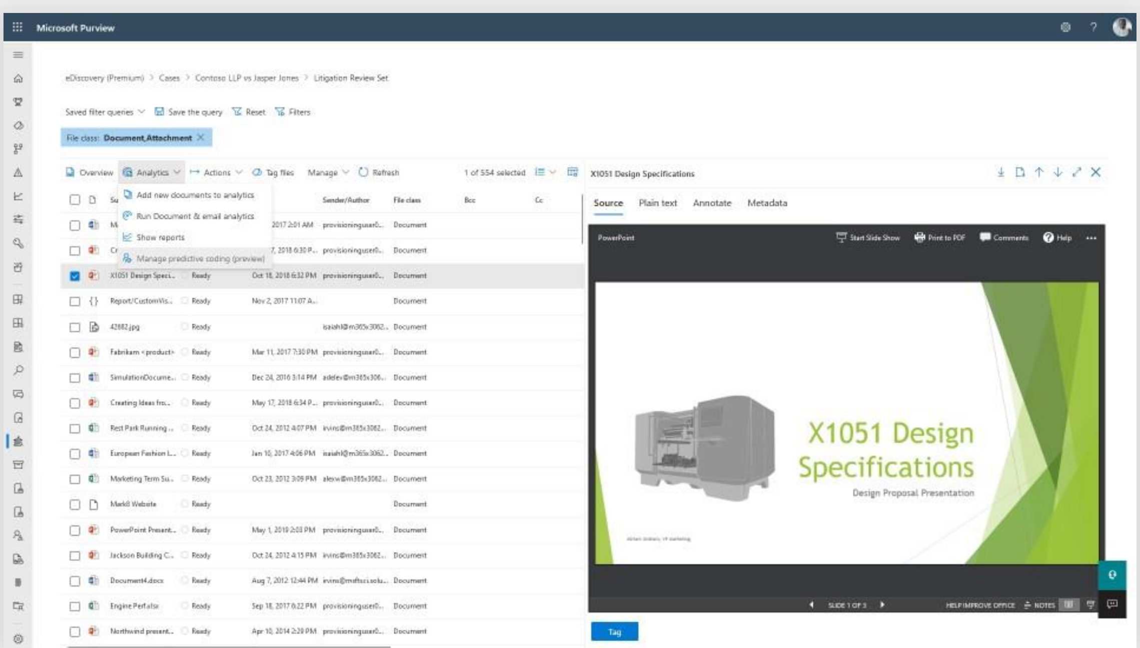


When duplicates are detected, additional options are displayed to enable the legal team to focus on the group of documents.

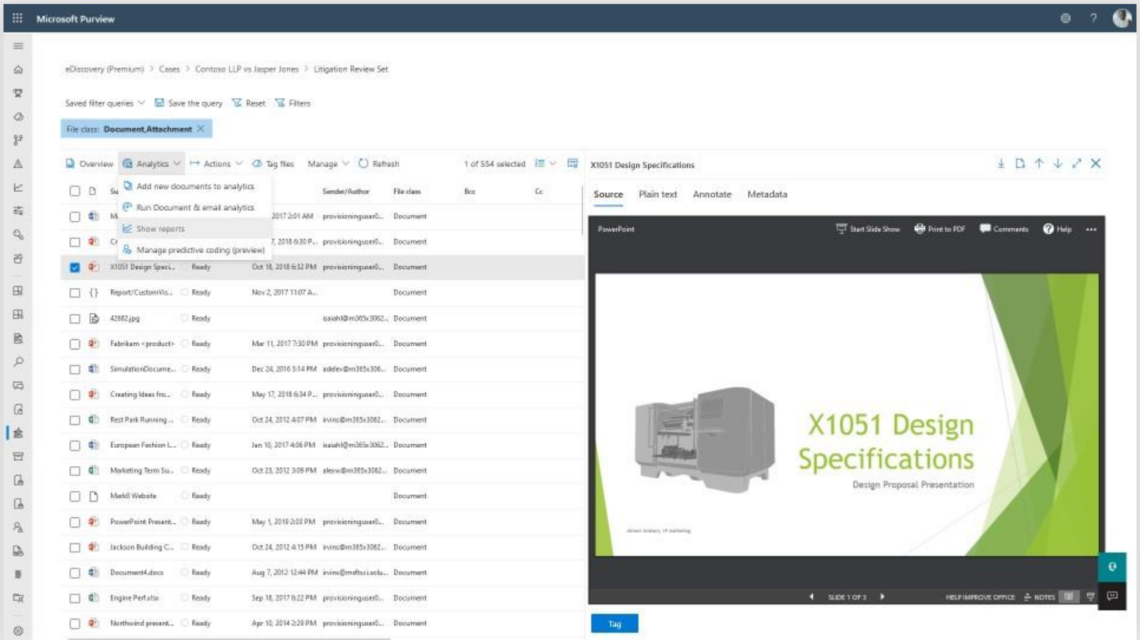


Prioritize review items automatically

The Predictive coding module in Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium uses machine learning to empower legal teams to create and train models that help to prioritize the items analyzed in review sets. Models can be created by identifying as few as 50 items as relevant or not relevant. The system uses this training to apply prediction scores to every item in the review set, filter items based on the prediction score, and review the most relevant items first. Further train models with higher accuracies and recall rates by continuing to label items in subsequent training rounds.

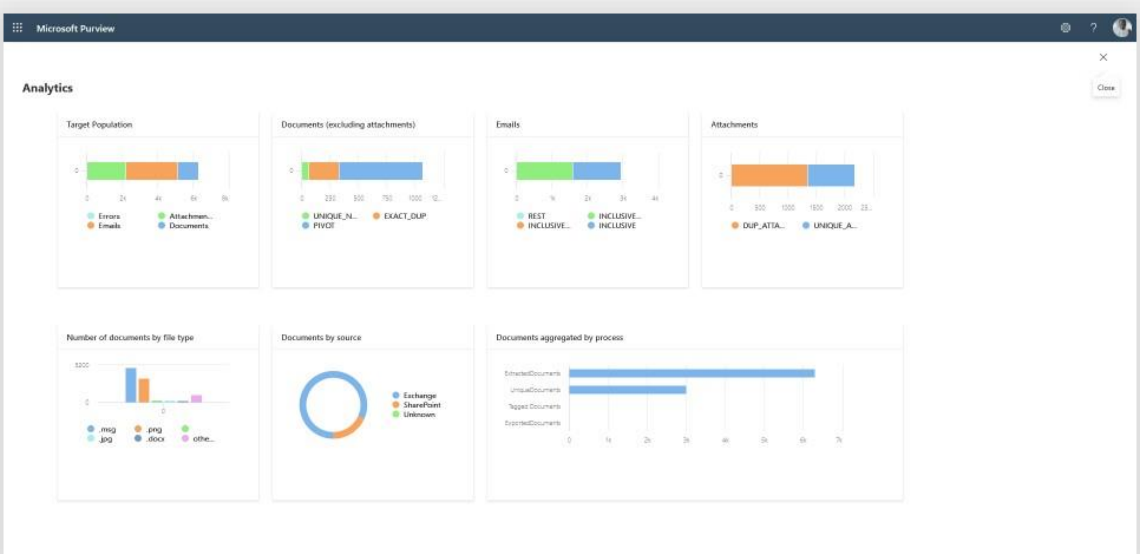


Determining how best to structure filter criteria for large volumes of collected data can be time-consuming. Creating reports with **Run the Document & email analytics** can simplify the process, allowing you to begin the review process with items with the most relevance.



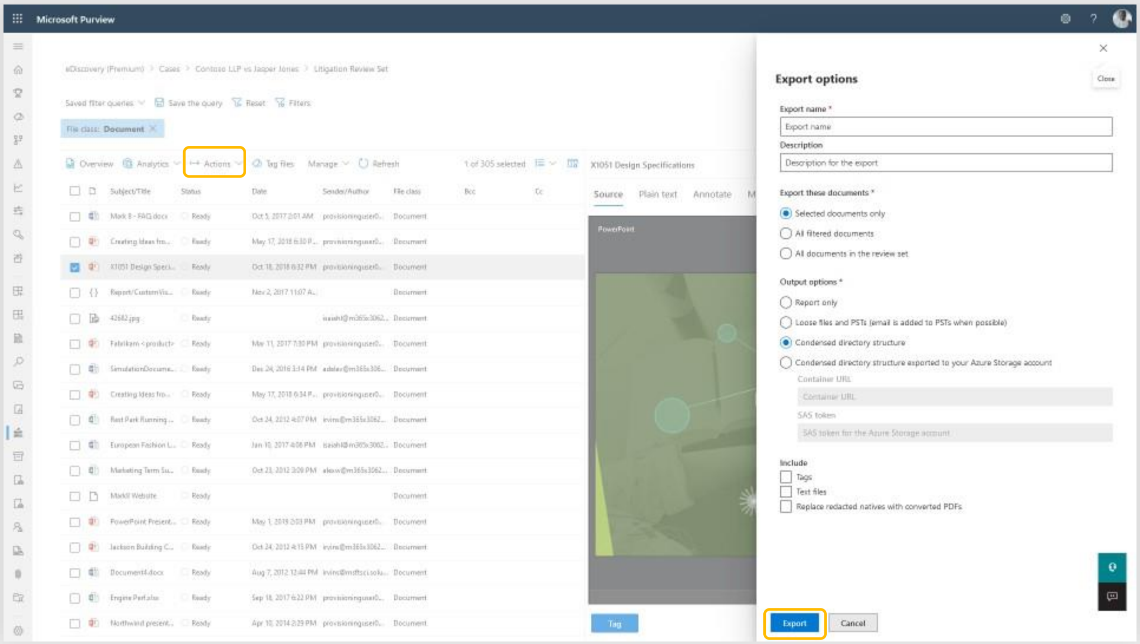
The analytics report offers details of the items in the review set including:

- The number of email messages, attachments, and documents found.
- An overview of the number of documents that are near duplicates or exact duplicates of another document.
- The number of email messages that are marked as inclusive, inclusive copy, and inclusive minus of another message.



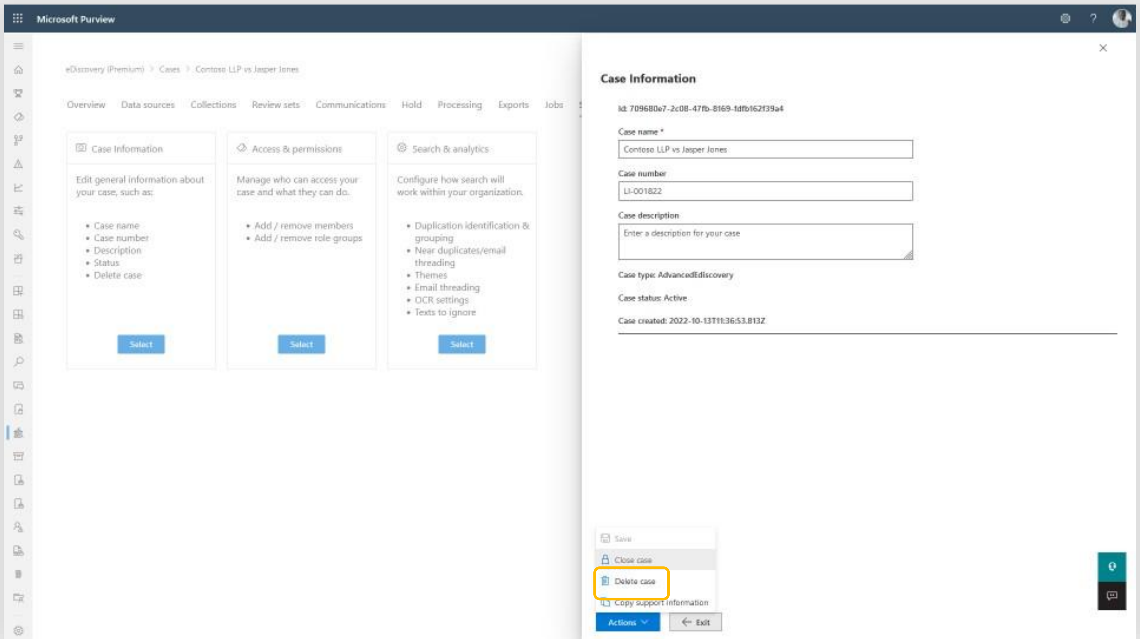
Exporting review items

Choose **Actions** in the case menu navigation, then click **Export**. Provide a name for the file to be exported and click the **Export** button at the bottom of the screen. The export process may take some time, depending on how many items and what options you specify for the export. Check the status of the export under the **Exports** tab in the case navigation. Upon completion, the option to download the exported package becomes available.



Closing a case

When the legal case is completed, you can close or delete the case by choosing **Case settings** in the main case navigation. Closing a case is important so that any content or content locations that are currently on hold are released from being preserved. A record of the closed case is retained with the ability to reopen the case in the future, if needed. To completely remove all data related to an active or closed case, select the **Delete** option. Note that deleted cases cannot be reopened.



In summary

Microsoft Purview's eDiscovery Premium helps legal teams efficiently manage legal cases from preservation and collection, analysis and review, and production of a file of relevant eDiscovery data. The solution streamlines the identification and mapping of relevant data sources using the built-in custodian management and custodial data mapping capabilities, saving time compared to traditional lookup methods. Creating holds and managing the notification process are easily managed within the same case management dashboard.

In the analysis and review stages, Microsoft Purview eDiscovery Premium offers intuitive and intelligent capabilities to help understand, focus, and prioritize the review of the results from data collections. The use of machine learning models and analytics focus in on a starting point to save time and effort. Efficiently reviewing and tagging relevant items within the platform experience alleviates the need to move between different repositories, apps, and tools to access documents, add annotations, and redact non-relevant sensitive data.

Finally, flexible export options enable the production of the tagged review output in a common industry format, with built-in support for modern cloud attachments. Further automation is possible using the available API to integrate with existing eDiscovery tools to build repeatable workflows.

Learn More

To better understand how Microsoft eDiscovery Premium and Microsoft Audit Premium can help you manage the complexity and streamline legal case management, join a partner-led, Mitigate Compliance and Privacy Risks workshop.

Sources

[1] Statista, Total data volume worldwide, 2010-2025.