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Microsoft Teams Private Channels: Migration Deadline Extended IT Action Now Required by End of July 2026

Microsoft's migration of Teams private channel data to a new storage model may have stalled in your environment. Although the original June 5, 2026 deadline has passed, Microsoft has extended the remediation window: **IT administrators now have until the end of July 2026** to act or risk permanent data loss. Below, we summarize the issue, the risks, the steps your IT team should take now, and what will happen if the new deadline passes without action.

Background: What Changed and Why the Migration Stalled

In 2025, Microsoft changed how Teams private channel data is stored. Previously, each member's personal Exchange Online mailbox held a copy of private channel messages. Under the new model, a single private channel group mailbox stores all messages. This simplifies compliance by allowing retention, legal hold, DLP, and eDiscovery policies to apply at the team level rather than across individual mailboxes.

Microsoft originally projected the migration would complete automatically by December 2025. However, on April 30, 2026, Microsoft disclosed via Message Center notification MC1134737 that some tenants have private channels that cannot migrate. Two scenarios block migration: (1) private channels with empty rosters, and (2) private channels whose only members are guests with no in-tenant owner. There is no warning in Teams or Microsoft Purview—the only way to discover this issue is to run a specific PowerShell command.

The Deadline: What Is at Stake

Microsoft originally set a June 5, 2026 deadline, but on June 2, 2026, extended it to the **end of July 2026**. The consequences for inaction remain the same: if no action is taken by then, impacted channels will be soft-deleted and recoverable for only 30 days. After that window closes, the channels and their contents will be permanently deleted. Microsoft has confirmed that all deletions will honor applicable retention policies and legal holds, but operational access to the channel itself will be lost.

For organizations subject to litigation holds, regulatory retention obligations, or internal governance policies, the permanent loss of private channel data could create significant legal exposure.

What Your IT Team Should Do Now

The extended deadline provides a second chance, but organizations should complete the following steps as soon as possible:

- **Run the migration status check.** Use the PowerShell command `Get-TenantPrivateChannelMigrationStatus` to determine whether your tenant's migration is complete, in progress, or stalled.
- **Assign owners to affected private channels.** Any private channel lacking an in-tenant owner, including guest-only channels, must have one assigned before the end of July 2026. Channels flagged with a "RequiresAdminAttention" status in the migration report need immediate remediation.
- **Unarchive Teams with private channels.** Private channels in archived Teams will not migrate automatically. Unarchive the Team and add an in-tenant owner before the deadline.
- **Update compliance policies.** Re-scope eDiscovery, legal hold, DLP, and retention policies in Microsoft Purview to include the new private channel group mailboxes in addition to individual user mailboxes. For Teams already on legal hold, add the private channel Exchange Online mailbox to that hold.
- **Preserve existing user mailbox holds.** Microsoft's migration process will not remove pre-migration messages from user mailboxes already on hold. Keep those holds in place until they expire to ensure no historical data is lost.

What Happens If the Extended Deadline Passes

If the end-of-July 2026 deadline passes without remediation, affected private channels will be soft-deleted but remain recoverable for 30 days. During that window, administrators can restore channels and assign an in-tenant owner to allow migration. After 30 days, the data will be permanently deleted.

Regardless of recovery status, organizations should still complete the compliance steps described above. Going forward, eDiscovery searches on any Microsoft Team must cover individual user mailboxes (for pre-migration history), the Team group mailbox, the private channel group mailbox(es), and SharePoint sites associated with the Team and its private channels. A single retention policy attached to the Team now governs standard, shared, and private channel messages together.

Data governance and records management obligations do not pause for software migrations. If you have questions about how this change affects your litigation holds, retention policies, eDiscovery processes, or data governance strategy, please reach out to [Jessica K. Robinson](mailto:Jessica.K.Robinson@clinewilliams.com) or another member of Cline Williams' Litigation Section at www.clinewilliams.com.

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