

M365 Email Building Blocks

SHHA uses four distinct patterns for email addresses in Microsoft 365. Before requesting any new address, understand which pattern fits your need. This page is the reference for anyone planning new committees, roles, or special-purpose addresses.

The Four Patterns at a Glance

Pattern	What it is	Example	When to use it
Personal mailbox first.last@sandiahomeowners.org	A licensed M365 account owned by one person. Has its own login, calendar, OneDrive, etc.	anna.smith@sandiahomeowners.org	Office staff and IT admins who need to <i>log in</i> to Microsoft 365 and perform admin tasks. Costs a license.
Shared mailbox role@sandiahomeowners.org	A mailbox tied to a <i>position</i> , not a person. Multiple licensed users can open it from their own account. Retains full email history across holders.	president@sandiahomeowners.org cscchair@sandiahomeowners.org	Any role where you need: (a) a stable address that survives personnel changes, (b) email history inherited by the next holder, (c) the ability for multiple people to send/receive as that address.
Mailing list (Microsoft Group) committee@sandiahomeowners.org	A distribution group. Email sent to the address is delivered to every current member — including external guests who have no M365 license.	csc@sandiahomeowners.org shha-all@sandiahomeowners.org	Any group of people who need to receive the same email. Most committees have one. No license cost for external members.
Alias (additional address on an existing mailbox or group)	An extra email address that delivers to an existing mailbox or group. Not a separate mailbox — just an alternative address for the same destination.	wildfire@sandiahomeowners.org → delivers to the ESC group or a specific shared mailbox	One-off or special-purpose addresses (task forces, events, topical inboxes) where you do not need a separate mailbox with its own history. Use when you want a memorable address that maps to something that already exists.

Which Pattern Do I Need?

Walk through these questions when planning a new email address:

1. **Does one specific person need to log in to M365 and perform admin tasks?**
 - Yes → **Personal mailbox** (requires a license; talk to IT admin)
 - No → continue
2. **Does the address need its own persistent inbox that survives personnel changes?**
 - Yes → **Shared mailbox**
 - No → continue
3. **Does the address need to deliver to a group of people?**
 - Yes → **Mailing list (Microsoft Group)**
 - No → continue
4. **Do you just need a convenient address that routes to an existing mailbox or group?**
 - Yes → **Alias** on the appropriate existing mailbox or group
 - No → talk to IT admin to figure out the right approach

Combining Patterns

For a full committee setup you typically create **all three**:

What	Pattern	Example for a new "Wildfire Preparedness" task force
Committee mailing list	Microsoft Group	WPC@sandiahomeowners.org
Chair inbox	Shared mailbox	WPCChair@sandiahomeowners.org
Friendly alias (optional)	Alias on the group	wildfire@sandiahomeowners.org → delivers to WPC@

You generally do **not** need to create personal mailboxes for the members — external volunteers receive group email at their personal addresses (Gmail, Yahoo, etc.) at no license cost.

Archive Rule

Every mailing list (Microsoft Group) **must** include `itadmin@sandiahomeowners.org` as a member. This is the archive account that preserves all committee email for continuity and records. It is not monitored for support.

Cost Summary

Pattern	License cost
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Personal mailbox	Requires a paid M365 license
Shared mailbox	Free (up to 50 GB; no license unless it exceeds the limit)
Mailing list (Group)	Free
Alias	Free (added to an existing mailbox or group)

Where to Go Next

- **Need to create a new user or shared mailbox?** See *SOP: Add a New User & Create a Shared Mailbox* (next page in this chapter).
- **Need to add/remove members from an existing group?** See the SOPs in *M365 Email Groups, Role Inboxes & Responsibilities*.
- **Not sure what you need?** Email ithelp@sandiahomeowners.org with a description of the goal and IT admin will recommend the right pattern.

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