Azure Key Vault helps safeguard cryptographic keys and secrets used by cloud applications and services. By using Key Vault, you can encrypt keys and secrets (such as authentication keys, storage account keys, data encryption keys, .PFX files, and passwords) by using keys that are protected by hardware security modules (HSMs). For added assurance, you can import or generate keys in HSMs. If you choose to do this, Microsoft processes your keys in FIPS 140-2 Level 2 validated HSMs (hardware and firmware).

Key Vault streamlines the key management process and enables you to maintain control of keys that access and encrypt your data. Developers can create keys for development and testing in minutes, and then seamlessly migrate them to production keys. Security administrators can grant (and revoke) permission to keys, as needed.