

Azure Naming Standards and Governance

Northwind Health — Recommended Standard

Version 1.0 — February 2026

Purpose

This document establishes the official naming convention and tag governance framework for all Azure resources in the Northwind Health environment. Consistent naming and tagging improves discoverability, enables accurate cost allocation, supports automation, and reduces operational risk.

Adoption of this standard is recommended for all new resources immediately, with a phased remediation plan for existing resources.

Naming Convention

General Pattern

```
{resource-type}-{organization}-{application}-{environment}-{instance}
```

Example: app-nwh-portal-prod-001

Pattern Components

Component	Description	Values
resource-type	Abbreviated prefix for resource type	See prefix table below
organization	Company abbreviation	nwh
application	Application or workload name	portal, api, notifications
environment	Deployment environment	prod, dev, test, stage
instance	Three-digit instance number	001, 002, etc.

Resource Type Prefixes

Azure Resource	Prefix	Example
Resource Group	rg-	rg-nwh-prod-web-eastus
App Service	app-	app-nwh-portal-prod-001

Azure Resource	Prefix	Example
App Service Plan	plan-	plan-nwh-portal-prod-001
Function App	func-	func-nwh-notifications-prod-001
Storage Account	st	stnwhpatientdocs001
SQL Server	sql-	sql-nwh-main-prod-001
SQL Database	sqldb-	sqldb-nwh-patients-prod
Key Vault	kv-	kv-nwh-prod-001
Service Bus	sb-	sb-nwh-prod-001
Container Registry	acr	acr-nwhprod001
AKS Cluster	aks-	aks-nwh-prod-001
App Insights	ai-	ai-nwh-prod-001
Log Analytics	log-	log-nwh-prod-001
Virtual Network	vnet-	vnet-nwh-prod-eastus-001
Subnet	snet-	snet-nwh-prod-web
Private Endpoint	pep-	pep-nwh-sql-prod-001
Private DNS Zone	pdnsz-	pdnsz-privatelink-sql
Network Security Group	nsg-	nsg-nwh-prod-web
Public IP	pip-	pip-nwh-portal-prod-001
Virtual Machine	vm-	vm-nwh-legacy-001
Managed Disk	disk-	disk-nwh-vm001-os
Managed Identity	id-	id-nwh-portal-prod

Special Naming Rules

Storage Accounts (24-character limit, no hyphens)

```
st{org}{purpose}{instance}
```

Example: stnwhpatientdocs001

Container Registries (50-character limit, no hyphens)

```
acr{org}{env}{instance}
```

Example: acrnwhprod001

Resource Groups (include region)

```
rg-{org}-{env}-{function}-{region}
```

Example: rg-nwh-prod-web-eastus

Environment Codes

Environment	Code	Usage
Production	prod	Live customer-facing workloads
Staging	stage	Pre-production validation
Test	test	Integration and QA testing
Development	dev	Developer sandboxes

Region Codes

Region	Code
East US	eastus
East US 2	eastus2
West US 2	westus2
Central US	centralus
West Europe	westeurope

Required Tags

All resources must have the following tags applied at creation:

Tag	Description	Example Values
env	Environment	prod, dev, test, stage
app	Application name	patient-portal, notifications, shared

Tag	Description	Example Values
owner	Technical owner (email)	j.martinez@northwindhealth.fake
costcenter	Financial cost center	CC-4100, CC-4200
data_classification	Data sensitivity	PHI, Confidential, Internal, Test
lifecycle	Resource lifecycle status	active, review, temporary, deprecated

Optional Tags

Tag	Description
created_by	Creation method (terraform, manual, pipeline)
created_date	Resource creation date
expiry_date	For temporary resources
compliance	Compliance requirements (HIPAA, SOC2)

Data Classification Values

Classification	Description	Handling
PHI	Protected Health Information	Encryption required, access logging, HIPAA BAA
Confidential	Sensitive business data	Encryption required, need-to-know access
Internal	Internal business use	Standard access controls
Public	Publicly shareable	No special controls
Test	Test/synthetic data only	No production data allowed

Examples: Good vs. Bad Names

App Services

✓ Good	X Bad	Issue
app-nwh-portal-prod-001	PatientPortal	Missing prefix, environment, instance
func-nwh-notifications-prod-001	myfunction	Generic, unidentifiable

Storage Accounts

✓ Good	X Bad	Issue
stnwhpatientdocs001	st-nwh-docs	Hyphens not allowed

✓ Good	X Bad	Issue
stnwhbackups001	storageaccount1	Generic, no context

SQL Resources

✓ Good	X Bad	Issue
sql-nwh-main-prod-001	SQLServer	Generic, uppercase
sqldb-nwh-patients-prod	database1	No context

Resource Groups

✓ Good	X Bad	Issue
rg-nwh-prod-web-eastus	ResourceGroup1	Generic
rg-nwh-dev-api-eastus	rg-portal	Missing environment, region

Implementation Plan

Phase 1: New Resources (Immediate)

- Apply naming standard to all newly created resources
- Configure Azure Policy to enforce tag requirements
- Document exceptions in governance register

Phase 2: Existing Resources (Next Maintenance Window)

- Inventory resources requiring rename
- Plan remediation during scheduled maintenance
- Update automation scripts and documentation

Phase 3: Policy Enforcement (This Quarter)

- Enable deny policies for non-compliant names in Production
- Implement automated compliance reporting
- Schedule quarterly governance reviews

Governance Enforcement

Azure Policy Recommendations

1. **Require tags on resource creation** — Deny creation without required tags
2. **Enforce naming patterns** — Custom policy to validate naming convention
3. **Audit non-compliant resources** — Monthly compliance report

Exception Process

Deviations from this standard require:

1. Documented technical justification
 2. Approval from cloud governance lead
 3. Entry in exceptions register with review date
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Ownership Reference

Cost Center	Department	Primary Owner
CC-4000	Infrastructure	m.thompson@northwindhealth.fake
CC-4100	Patient Portal	j.martinez@northwindhealth.fake
CC-4200	Messaging	s.chen@northwindhealth.fake
CC-4300	Data Platform	d.patel@northwindhealth.fake
CC-4500	Container Platform	l.garcia@northwindhealth.fake

This standard is based on Microsoft Cloud Adoption Framework recommendations, adapted for Northwind Health requirements.