Cisco Live Protect

Reduce vulnerability exposure before the next patch window

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Product overview

Attackers are moving faster from vulnerability disclosure to exploit attempts. At the same time, critical network and security infrastructure cannot always be patched immediately without business risk.

Cisco Live Protect gives operators another option. When Cisco validates runtime protection for a supported platform, release, policy, and mode, teams can reduce exposure while they complete the permanent software fix. The value is not avoiding patches. The value is reducing exposure days while patching moves through the right operational process.

Features and benefits

Cisco Live Protect helps teams reduce exposure before patching, continue operations during the protection action, and govern the protection lifecycle.

Feature	Benefit
Reduce exposure	Reduce exposure before patching with validated runtime protections for supported Cisco products.
Continue operations	Apply a shield and continue operations; no reboot is required during the protection action.
Govern the lifecycle	Govern the Shield lifecycle through integrated workflows: monitor, enforce, disable, and retirement.

From advisory to protection to patch

Live Protect uses Cisco-provided policies to address vulnerabilities on supported Cisco products. Teams can begin in monitor mode to assess potential impact before transitioning to enforcement, helping ensure security measures align with existing operational workflows.

Stage	Description
Advisory	Critical vulnerability guidance identifies exposure and the fixed-software path.
Validated policy	Cisco validates whether a supported Vulnerability Shield can reduce exposure.
Monitor or enforce	Teams observe impact and apply enforcement where supported and appropriate.
Patch and retire	Teams deploy the permanent fix and retire the temporary protection when no longer needed.

A Vulnerability Shield is a Live Protect policy for a selected, validated vulnerability condition. These policies serve as temporary compensatory controls. Once a permanent software fix is applied, teams should disable or retire the policy, following Cisco-provided retirement guidance to ensure ongoing system integrity.

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Supported products and requirements

Live Protect availability and behavior vary by supported Cisco product platform, software release, policy, mode, delivery path, management surface, and lifecycle support.

Supported Live Protect products: Cisco 8000 Series Routers.

Product specifications

Specification	Description
Protection type	Runtime protection for supported Cisco products and releases.
Purpose	A compensating control that can reduce exposure before patching.
Validation	Cisco-provided, Cisco-validated protection tied to supported policy, mode, and lifecycle behavior.
Monitor mode	Where supported, monitor mode records matching events without active enforcement, enabling assessment of potential operational impact.
Patch relationship	Cisco Live Protect supports your patching strategy; it does not replace permanent patches or fixed software releases.

System requirements

All of the supported routers in the Cisco 8000 series.

Licensing and ordering information

No additional licensing is needed for supporting Live Protect on Cisco 8000 Series Routers.

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Stay current on Cisco security guidance

We recommend that customers consult Cisco security advisories and product documentation to identify the specific protections available for their infrastructure.

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Document history

Revision	Description of Change	Date
Version 1.1	Updated product description and scope to align with public Live Protect information.	October 2026

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