

Identity Source: Captive Portal

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Captive portal identity source

A captive portal identity source is an active authentication method that

- presents a login page to users and authenticates HTTP and HTTPS traffic to enable secure access to network resources
- requires authentication to access the internet or to access restricted internal resources
- differs from passive authentication by presenting users with a login page on the managed device rather than querying the authentication realm.

You typically use captive portal to require authentication to access the internet or to access restricted internal resources; you can optionally configure guest access to resources. After the system authenticates captive portal users, it handles their user traffic according to access control rules. Captive portal performs authentication on HTTP and HTTPS traffic only.

Captive portal authentication details

Captive portal is one of the authoritative identity sources supported by the system. Active authentication differs from passive authentication in that the user is presented with a login page by the managed device, whereas passive authentication queries the authentication realm (for example, Microsoft AD) to authenticate the user.

After the system authenticates captive portal users, it handles their user traffic according to access control rules. Captive portal performs authentication on HTTP and HTTPS traffic only. You can optionally configure guest access to resources.

Note HTTPS traffic must be decrypted before captive portal can perform authentication.

Captive portal also records failed authentication attempts. A failed attempt does not add a new user to the list of users in the database. The user activity type for failed authentication activity reported by captive portal is **Failed Auth User**.

The authentication data gained from captive portal can be used for user awareness and user control.

Hostname redirect

A hostname redirect uses the managed device's fully-qualified domain name (FQDN) instead of an IP address for authentication redirections.

(Snort 3 only) An active authentication identity rule redirects to the captive portal port using its configured interface. Because the redirect is typically done to an IP address, the user gets an untrusted certificate error. As this behavior is similar to a man-in-the-middle attack, users might be reluctant to accept the untrusted certificate.

To avoid this problem, you can configure the captive portal to use the managed device's fully-qualified domain name (FQDN). With a properly configured certificate, users will not get an untrusted certificate error, and the authentication will be more seamless and appear to be more secure.

License requirements for captive portal

This reference provides the license requirements for captive portal functionality.

Threat Defense License

Any

Classic License

Control

Requirements and prerequisites for captive portal

This reference provides the requirements and prerequisites for captive portal implementation.

Supported domains

Any

User roles

- Admin
- Access Admin

- Network Admin

Best practices for captive portal guidelines and limitations

Captive portal and policies

You configure captive portal in your identity policy and invoke active authentication in your identity rules. Identity policies are associated with access control policies and access control policies define access to resources in the network. For example, you might exclude users in the US-West/Finance group to access Engineering servers or you can prohibit users from accessing nonsecure applications on the network.

You configure some captive portal identity policy settings on the identity policy's **Active Authentication** tab page and configure the rest in the identity rule associated with the access control policy.

An active authentication rule has either an **Active Authentication** rule action, or a **Passive Authentication** rule action with **Use active authentication if passive or VPN identity cannot be established** selected. In each case the system transparently enables or disables TLS/SSL decryption, which restarts the Snort process.

Caution Adding the first or removing the last active authentication rule when TLS/SSL decryption is disabled (that is, when the access control policy does not include a decryption policy) restarts the Snort process when you deploy configuration changes, temporarily interrupting traffic inspection. Whether traffic drops during this interruption or passes without further inspection depends on how the assigned device handles traffic. Refer to Snort restart traffic behavior.

When the captive portal authenticates users that match an identity rule, any user in a Microsoft Active Directory or LDAP group that has not been downloaded is identified as Unknown. To avoid users being identified as Unknown, configure the realm to download users in all groups you expect to authenticate with captive portal. Unknown users are handled according to the associated access control policy; if the access control policy is configured to block Unknown users, these users are blocked.

To make sure the system downloads all users in a realm, make sure the groups are in the Available Groups list in the realm's configuration.

Microsoft Azure AD SAML realm configuration

To use a Microsoft Azure AD (SAML) realm as a captive portal, see Create a Microsoft Azure AD (SAML) realm for active authentication (captive portal).

Routed interface requirements

Ensure that captive portal active authentication is performed only by a device with a routed interface configured. If you are configuring an identity rule for captive portal and your captive portal device contains inline and routed interfaces, you must configure interface rule conditions in the access control policy to target only the routed interfaces on the device.

If the identity policy associated with your access control policy contains one or more captive portal identity rules and you deploy the policy on the Secure Firewall Management Center that manages one or more devices with routed interfaces configured, the policy deployment succeeds and the routed interfaces perform active authentication.

For more information about synchronizing users and groups, see Synchronize users and groups.

Required certificates and certificate authorities

Before you can use the captive portal for user control and awareness, you must have all of the following:

- To authenticate with Microsoft AD, export the server's root certificate and import it into the Secure Firewall Management Center as a trusted CA certificate.
- An internal certificate object for authenticating with the managed device to which the identity policy is deployed.
- An internal certificate authority for the required decryption rule.

Captive portal requirements and limitations

Note the requirements and limitations when configuring captive portal:

- Captive portal does not support HTTP/3 QUIC connections.
- The system supports up to 20 captive portal logins per second.
- A failed login attempt is counted toward the maximum login attempts only if it occurs within five minutes of the previous failed attempt. The five minute limit is not configurable.

  Connection events show the number of maximum login attempts. (**Analysis** > **Connections** > **Events**.)

  If more than five minutes elapse between failed logins, the user is redirected to captive portal for authentication and will not be designated a failed login user or a guest user, and will not be reported to the Secure Firewall Management Center.
- Captive portal does not negotiate TLS v1.0 connections. Only TLS v1.1, v1.2, and TLS 1.3 connections are supported.
- You *cannot* use a realm sequence with the captive portal.
- To securely log a user out of captive portal and prevent the user from logging in again, an administrator can close their session: **Analysis** > **Users heading** > **Active Sessions**. If the user closes their browser, the browser does not reauthenticate automatically.
- If a realm is created for a parent domain and the managed device detects a login to a child of that parent domain, the user's subsequent logout is not detected by the managed device.
- To limit the amount of non-HTTP or HTTPS traffic that is allowed through the managed device, you should enter typical HTTP and HTTPS ports in the identity policy's **Ports** tab page.
- Your access control rule must allow traffic destined for the IP address and port of the device you plan to use for captive portal.
- To perform captive portal active authentication on HTTPS traffic, you must use a decryption policy to decrypt the traffic from the users you want to authenticate. You cannot decrypt the traffic in the connection between a captive portal user's web browser and the captive portal daemon on the managed device; this connection is used to authenticate the captive portal user.
- The managed device changes a previously unseen user from **`Pending`** to **`Unknown`** when it determines that the incoming request does not use the HTTP or HTTPS protocol. As soon as the managed device changes a user from **`Pending`** to another state, access control, Quality of Service, and decryption policies can be applied to that traffic. If your other policies don't permit non-HTTP or HTTPS traffic, configuring ports on the captive portal identity policy can prevent undesired traffic from being allowed through the managed device.

Kerberos prerequisites

If you're using Kerberos authentication, the managed device's host name must be less than 15 characters (it's a NetBIOS limitation set by Windows); otherwise, captive portal authentication fails. You set the managed device host name when you set up the device. For more information, see an article like this one on the Microsoft documentation site: Naming conventions in Active Directory for computers, domains, sites, and OUs.

DNS must return a response of 64KB or less to the hostname; otherwise, the AD connection test fails. This limit applies in both directions and is discussed in RFC 6891 section-6.2.5.

Configure the captive portal for user control

Configure captive portal active authentication to enable user authentication through the portal by setting up the necessary components and associating them with access control policies.

To use the captive portal for active authentication, you must set up an LDAP realm; or a Microsoft AD realm ; Microsoft Azure AD (SAML) realm; access control policy; an identity policy; a decryption policy; and associate the identity and decryption policies with the same access control policy. Finally, you must deploy the policies to managed devices. This topic provides a high-level summary of those tasks.

Before you begin

Perform these tasks first:

- Confirm that your Secure Firewall Management Center manages one or more devices with a *routed* interface configured.
- To use encrypted authentication with the captive portal, either create a PKI object for the authenticating managed device or have your certificate data and key available on the machine from which you're accessing the Secure Firewall Management Center. To create a PKI object, see PKI objects.

Follow these steps to configure the captive portal for user control:

Procedure

Step 1 Create and enable an LDAP realm; or a Microsoft AD realm as discussed in these topics:

- Create an LDAP realm or an Active Directory realm and realm directory
- Synchronize users and groups

A realm sequence is not supported for the captive portal.

To make sure the system downloads all users in a realm, make sure the groups are in the Available Groups list in the realm's configuration.

For more information, see Synchronize users and groups.

Step 2 Get required certificates and certificate authorities.

You must have all of these:

- To authenticate with Microsoft AD, export the server's root certificate and import it into the Secure Firewall Management Center as a trusted CA certificate.

- An internal certificate object for authenticating with the managed device to which the identity policy is deployed.
- An internal certificate authority for the required decryption rule.

Step 3 Create a network object with an associated trusted certificate authority.

See Create a network object, on page 6.

Step 4 Create identity policy with an active authentication rule.

The identity policy enables selected users in your realm access resources after authenticating with the captive portal.

For more information, see Create an identity policy and active authentication rule, on page 8.

Step 5 Configure an access control rule for the captive portal that allows traffic on the captive portal port (by default, TCP 885).

You can choose any available TCP port for the captive portal to use. Whatever your choice, you must create a rule that allows traffic on that port.

For more information, see Create a TCP port access control rule, on page 10.

Step 6 Add another access control rule to allow users in the selected realm to access resources using the captive portal.

For more information, see Create a user access control rule, on page 11.

Step 7 Configure a decryption policy with a **Decrypt - Resign** rule for the **Unknown** user so captive portal users can access web pages using the HTTPS protocol.

The captive portal can authenticate users only if the HTTPS traffic is decrypted before the traffic is sent to the captive portal. The captive portal itself is seen by the system as the **Unknown** user.

Create a decryption policy with an outbound rule, on page 12

Step 8 Associate the identity and decryption policies with the access control policy from step 3.

This final step enables the system to authenticate users with the captive portal.

For more information, see Associate Identity and decryption policies with the access control policy, on page 16.

What to do next

See Create a network object, on page 6.

Create a network object

Create a network object to enable access using a fully qualified domain name for captive portal authentication.

This task discusses how to start configuring the captive portal as an identity source.

Before you begin

(Snort 3 only.) Create a fully-qualified host name (FQDN) using your DNS server and upload the Firewall Threat Defense's internal certificate to the Firewall Management Center. You can consult a resource such as this one if you've never done it before. Specify the IP address of a routed interface on one of the devices managed by your Firewall Management Center.

For more information about the network object, see Redirect to host name network rule conditions.

Procedure

Step 1 If you haven't already done so, log in to your Firewall Management Center and click **Objects** > **Object Management**..

Step 2 Expand **PKI**.

Step 3 Click **Internal Certs**.

Step 4 Click **Add Internal Cert**.

a) In the **Name** field, enter a name to identify the internal cert (for example, **`MyCaptivePortal`**).

b) In the **Certificate Data** field, either paste the certificate or use the **Browse** button to locate it.

The certificate Common Name must exactly match the FDQN with which you want captive portal users to authenticate.

c) In the **Key** field, either paste the certificate's private key or use the **Browse** button to locate it.

d) If the certificate is encrypted, select the **Encrypted** check box and enter the password in the adjacent field.

e) Click **Save**.

Step 5 Click **Network**.

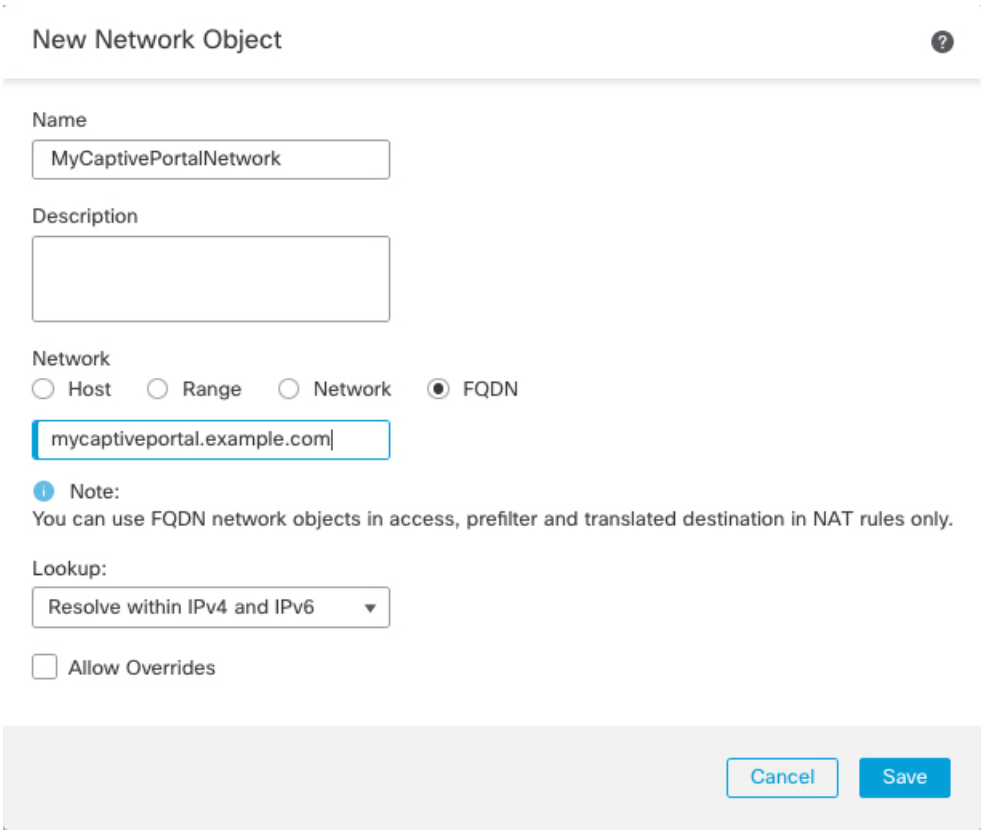
Step 6 Click **Add Network** > **Add Object**.

a) In the **Name** field, enter a name to identify the object (for example, **`MyCaptivePortalNetwork`**).

b) Click **FDQN** and, in the field, enter the name of the captive portal's FDQN.

c) Click an option for **Lookup**.

The following figure shows an example.



d) Click **Save**.

What to do next

Create an identity policy and active authentication rule, on page 8.

Create an identity policy and active authentication rule

This procedure enables captive portal to perform active authentication for users in your domains using the Secure Firewall Management Center.

This multi-part procedure shows how to set up the captive portal using the default TCP port 885 and using a Secure Firewall Management Center server certificate for both the captive portal and for TLS/SSL decryption. Each part of this example explains one task required to enable the captive portal to perform active authentication.

If you follow all the steps in this procedure, you can configure captive portal to work for users in your domains. You can optionally perform additional tasks, which are discussed in each part of the procedure.

For an overview of the entire procedure, see Configure the captive portal for user control, on page 5.

Procedure

Step 1 In the Firewall Management Center, click **Policies** > **Access Control heading** > **Identity** and create or edit an identity policy.

Step 2 (Optional.) Click **Add Category** to add a category for the captive portal identity rules and enter a **Name** for the category.

Step 3 Click the **Active Authentication** tab.

a) Choose the appropriate *root* **Server Certificate** from the list or click **Add** (+) to add a certificate.

For more information, see Connect securely to Active Directory or LDAP.

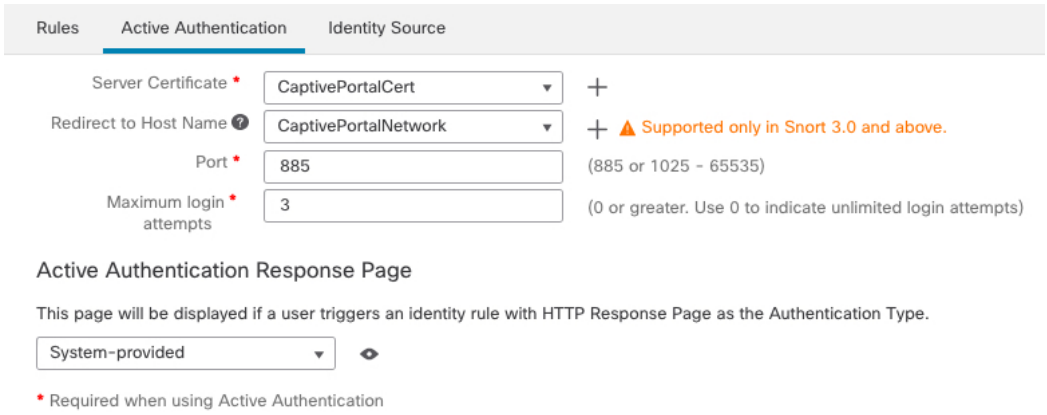
Note
Captive portal does *not* support the use of Digital Signature Algorithm (DSA) or Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm (ECDSA) certificates.

b) From the **Redirect to Host Name** field, click the network object you previously created or click **Add** (+).

c) Enter **885** in the **Port** field and specify the **Maximum login attempts**.

d) (Optional.) Choose an **Active Authentication Response Page** as described in Captive portal fields, on page 17.

This figure shows an example.



Step 4 Click **Save**.

Step 5 Click the **Rules** tab.

Step 6 Click **Add Rule** to add a new captive portal identity policy rule, or click **Edit** (✎) to edit an existing rule.

In the **Add Rule** page,

a) Enter a **Name** for the rule.

b) From the **Action** list, choose **Active Authentication**.

c) Click **Realm & Settings**.

d) From the **Realms** list, choose a realm to use for user authentication

A realm sequence is not supported.

e) (Optional.) Check **Identify as Guest if authentication cannot identify user**. For more information, see Captive portal fields, on page 17.
f) Choose an **Authentication Protocol** from the list.
g) (Optional.) To exempt specific application traffic from captive portal, see Exclude applications from captive portal, on page 17.
h) Add conditions to the rule (port, network, and so on) as discussed in Identity rule conditions.
i) Click **Add**.

Step 7 At the top of the page, click **Save**.

What to do next

Continue with Create a TCP port access control rule, on page 10.

Create a TCP port access control rule

Create an access control rule that allows the captive portal to communicate with clients using TCP port 885, enabling secure user authentication.

This part of the procedure shows how to create an access control rule that allows the captive portal to communicate with clients using TCP port 885, which is the captive portal's default port. You can choose another port if you wish, but the port must match the one you chose in Create an identity policy and active authentication rule, on page 8.

Before you begin

For an overview of the entire captive portal configuration, see Configure the captive portal for user control, on page 5.

Follow these steps to create a TCP port access control rule:

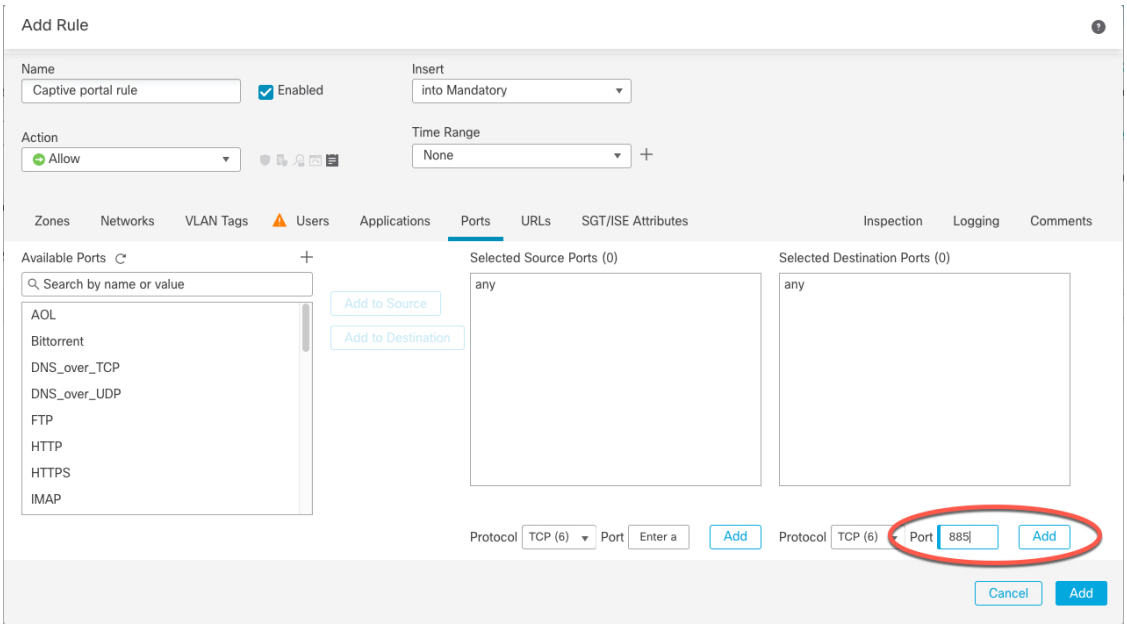
Procedure

Step 1 Log in to the Firewall Management Center if you have not already done so.

If you haven't done so already, create a certificate for the captive portal as discussed in PKI objects.

Step 2 Click **Policies** > **Access Control heading** > **Access Control** and create or edit an access control policy.
Step 3 Click **Add Rule**.
Step 4 Enter a **Name** for the rule.
Step 5 Choose **Allow** from the **Action** list.
Step 6 Click **Ports**.
Step 7 From the **Protocol** list under the **Selected Destination Ports** field, choose **TCP**.
Step 8 In the **Port** field, enter **885** and click **Add** next to the **Port** field.

The following figure shows an example.



Step 9 Click **Add** at the bottom of the page.

What to do next

Continue with Create a user access control rule, on page 11.

Create a user access control rule

Configure an access control rule to allow users in a specified realm to authenticate using captive portal, then adjust rule order in the policy editor to optimize traffic handling and resource use.

This part of the procedure discusses how to add an access control rule that enables users in a realm to authenticate using captive portal.

Before you begin

For an overview of the entire captive portal configuration, see Configure the captive portal for user control, on page 5.

Procedure

Step 1 In the rule editor, click **Add Rule**.

Step 2 Enter a **Name** for the rule.

Step 3 Choose **Allow** from the **Action** list.

Step 4 Click **Users**.

Step 5 In the **Available Realms** list, click the realms to allow.

If no realms display, click **Refresh** ( ).

Step 6 In the **Available Users** list, choose the users to add to the rule and click **Add to Rule**.

Step 7 (Optional.) Add conditions to the access control policy as discussed in Identity rule conditions.

Step 8 Click **Add**.

Step 9 On the access control rule page, click **Save**.

In the policy editor, set the rule position. Click and drag or use the right-click menu to cut and paste. Rules are numbered starting at 1. The system matches traffic to rules in top-down order by ascending rule number. The first rule that traffic matches is the rule that handles that traffic. Proper rule order reduces the resources required to process network traffic and prevents rule preemption

What to do next

Create a decryption policy with an outbound rule, on page 12

Create a decryption policy with an outbound rule

Create a decryption policy to decrypt and resign outbound traffic before captive portal authentication in the Secure Firewall Management Center.

This part of the procedure discusses how to create a decryption policy to decrypt and resign traffic before the traffic reaches the captive portal. The captive portal can authenticate traffic only after it has been decrypted.

Before you begin

You must have an internal certificate authority (CA) for your outbound server; in other words, the managed device that decrypts the traffic for captive portal users to authenticate. This certificate must be different from the *internal certificate* you use to authenticate the captive portal with the managed device.

Procedure

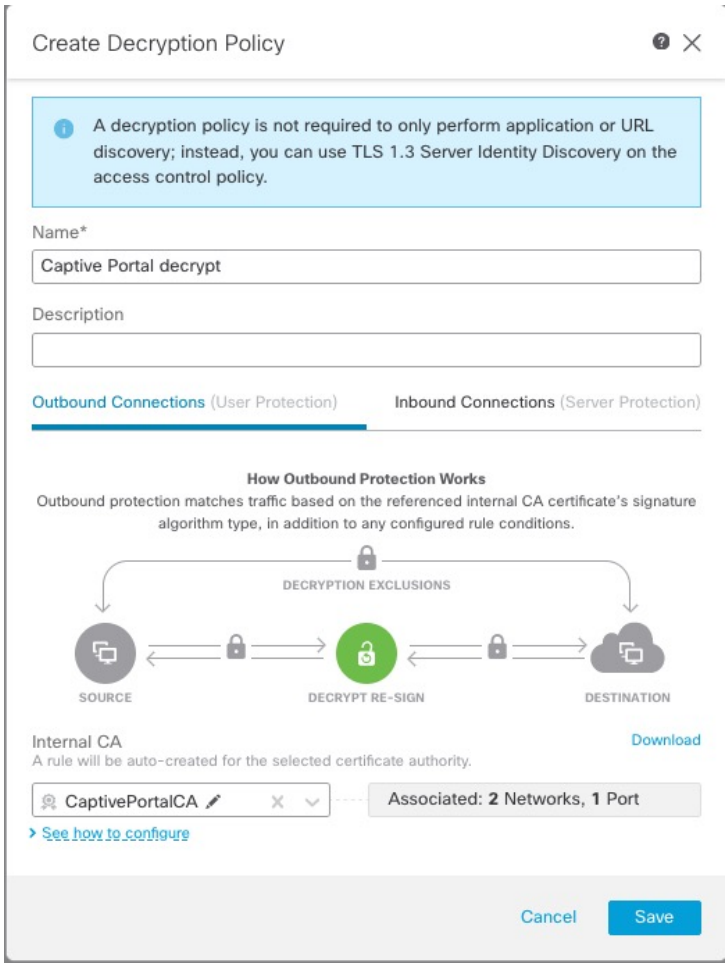
Step 1 Log in to the Firewall Management Center if you haven't already done so.

Step 2 Click **Policies** > **Access Control heading** > **Decryption**.

Step 3 Click **New Policy**.

Step 4 Give the policy a unique **Name** and, optionally, a **Description**.

Step 5 Click the **Outbound Connections** tab.



Step 6 Upload or choose certificates for the rules.

The system creates one rule per combination of CA and networks/ports.

Step 7 (Optional.) Choose networks and ports.

For more information:

- conditions
- Network rule conditions
- Best practice: use application-based rules over port-based rules

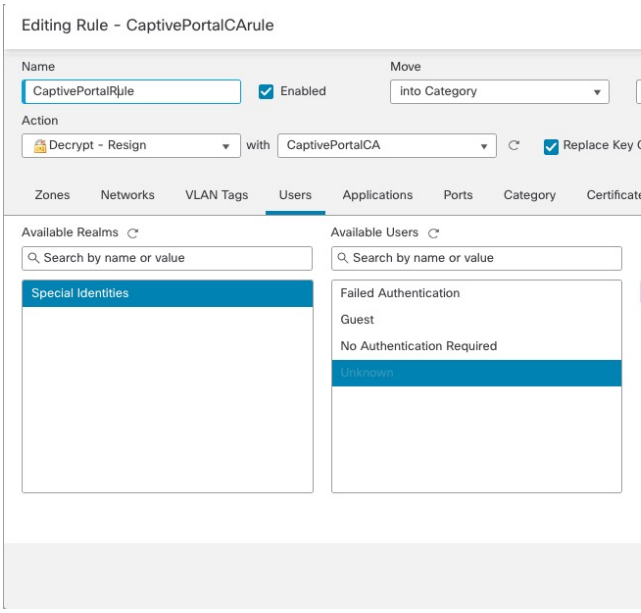
Step 8 Click **Save**.

What to do next

Configure the decryption rule.

Configure a decryption rule

Procedure

	Command or Action	Purpose
Step 1	Click **Edit** ( ) next to the decryption policy you just created.	
Step 2	Click **Edit** ( ) next to the decryption rule for captive portal.	
Step 3	Click **Users**.	
Step 4	Above the **Available Realms** list, click **Refresh** ( ).	
Step 5	In the **Available Realms** list, click **Special Identities**.	
Step 6	In the **Available Users** list, click **Unknown**.	
Step 7	Click **Add to Rule**.	The following figure shows an example. 
Step 8	(Optional.) Set other options as discussed in conditions.	
Step 9	Click **Add**.	

Create A decryption policy with a Decrypt-Resign rule

Create a decryption policy to decrypt and resign traffic before the traffic reaches the captive portal.

This part of the procedure discusses how to create a decryption policy to decrypt and resign traffic before the traffic reaches the captive portal. The captive portal can authenticate traffic only after it has been decrypted.

Before you begin

For an overview of the entire captive portal configuration, see Configure the captive portal for user control, on page 5.

Follow these steps to create A decryption policy with a Decrypt-Resign rule:

Procedure

Step 1 If you haven't done so already, log in to the Firewall Management Center and create a certificate object to decrypt TLS/SSL traffic as discussed in PKI objects.

Step 2 Click **Policies** > **Access Control heading** > **Decryption**.

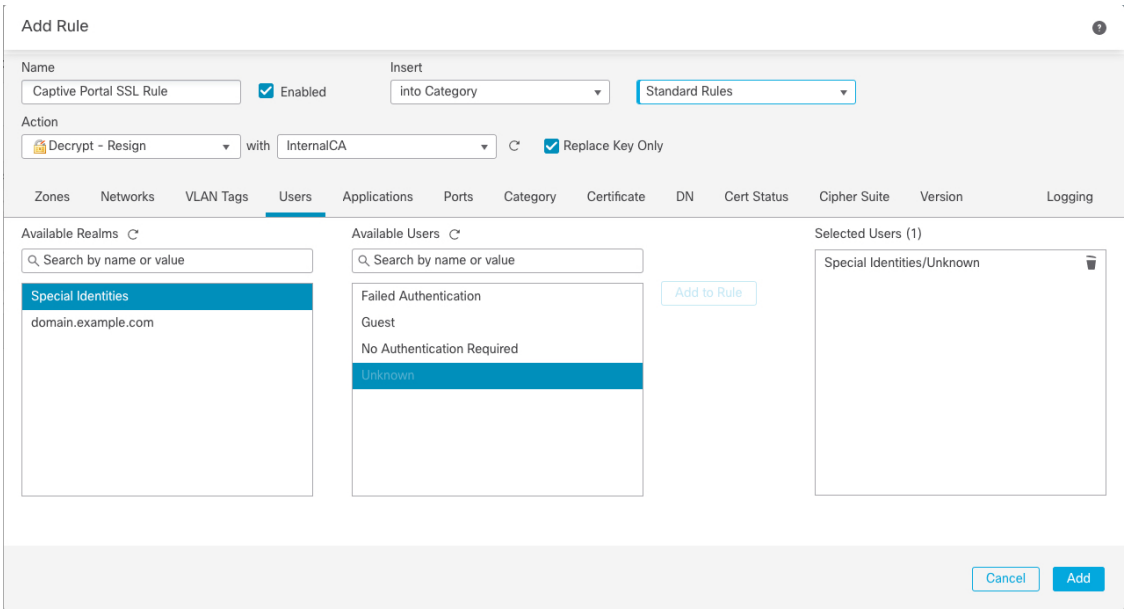
Step 3 Click **New Policy**.

Step 4 Enter a **Name** and choose a **Default Action** for the policy. Default actions are discussed in Decryption policy default actions.

Step 5 Click **Save**.

Step 6 Click **Add Rule**.

a) Enter a **Name** for the rule.
b) From the **Action** list, choose **Decrypt - Resign**.
c) From the **with** list, choose your PKI object.
d) Under the **Users** tab, refresh the **Available Realms**list by clicking **Refresh** ( ).
e) In the **Available Realms** list, click **Special Identities**.
f) In the **Available Users** list, click **Unknown**.
g) Click **Add to Rule**.
The following figure shows an example.



Step 7 (Optional.) Set other options as discussed in conditions.

Step 8 Click **Add**.

Step 9 At the top of the page, click **Save**.

What to do next

Associate the identity and decryption policies with the access control policy from step 3.

This final step enables the system to authenticate users with the captive portal.

For more information, see Associate Identity and decryption policies with the access control policy, on page 16.

Associate Identity and decryption policies with the access control policy

Associate the identity policy and TLS/SSL **Decrypt - Resign** rule with your access control policy to enable captive portal authentication.

This part of the procedure discusses how to associate the identity policy and TLS/SSL **Decrypt - Resign** rule with the access control policy you created earlier. After this, users can authenticate using the captive portal.

For an overview of the entire captive portal configuration, see Configure the captive portal for user control, on page 5.

Procedure

Step 1 Click **Policies** > **Access Control heading** > **Access Control** and edit the access control policy you created as discussed in Create a TCP port access control rule, on page 10. If **View** ( ) appears instead, the configuration belongs to an ancestor domain, or you do not have permission to modify the configuration.

Step 2 Either create a new access control policy or edit an existing policy.

Step 3 At the top of the page, click the word **Identity**.

Step 4 From the list, choose the name of your identity policy and, at the top of the page, click **Save**.

Step 5 Repeat the preceding steps to associate your captive portal decryption policy with the access control policy.

Step 6 If you haven't done so already, target the policy at managed devices as discussed in Assign access control policy to devices.

What to do next

- Deploy your identity and access control policies to managed devices as discussed in Deploy configuration changes.
- Monitor user activity as discussed in *Using Workflows* in the *Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center Administration Guide*.

Captive portal fields

Use these fields to configure captive portal on the **Active Authentication** tab page of your identity policy. See also Identity rule fields and Exclude applications from captive portal, on page 17.

Server Certificate

An internal certificate presented by the captive portal daemon.

Note Captive portal does *not* support the use of Digital Signature Algorithm (DSA) or Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm (ECDSA) certificates.

Port

The port number to use for the captive portal connection. You must set up your access control rule with a TCP port to use for the captive portal, then associate the identity policy with that access control policy. For more information, see Create a TCP port access control rule, on page 10.

Maximum login attempts

The maximum allowed number of failed login attempts before the system denies a user's login request.

Active Authentication Response Page

The system-provided or custom HTTP response page you want to display to captive portal users. After you select an **Active Authentication Response Page** in your identity policy active authentication settings, you also must configure one or more identity rules with **`HTTP Response Page`** as the **Authentication Protocol**.

The system-provided HTTP response page includes **Username** and **Password** fields, as well as a **Login as guest** button to allow users to access the network as guests. To display a single login method, configure a custom HTTP response page.

Choose these options:

- To use a generic response, click **System-provided**. You can click **View** ( ) to view the HTML code for this page.
- To create a custom response, click **Custom**. A window with system-provided code is displayed that you can replace or modify. When you are done, save your changes. You can edit a custom page by clicking **Edit** ( ).

Exclude applications from captive portal

This task allows you to exempt specific applications from captive portal active authentication, enabling their traffic to pass through the identity policy without requiring authentication.

You can select applications (identified by their HTTP `User-Agent` strings) and exempt them from captive portal active authentication. This allows traffic from the selected applications to pass through the identity policy without authenticating.

Note Only applications with the **`User-Agent Exclusion` Tag** are displayed in this list.

Before you begin

Follow these steps to exclude applications from captive portal authentication:

Procedure

Step 1 If you haven't done so already, log in to the Firewall Management Center.

Step 2 Click **Policies** > **Access Control heading** > **Identity**.

Step 3 Edit the identity policy that contains the captive portal rule.

Step 4 On **Realm & Settings** tab page, expand **HTTP User Agent Exclusions**.

- In the first column, select the check box next to each item to filter applications, then one or more applications, and click **Add to Rule**.

  Check boxes are ANDed together.

- To narrow the filters that are displayed, type a search string in the **Search by name** field; this is especially useful for categories and tags. To clear the search, click **Clear** ( ).
- To refresh the filters list and clear any selected filters, click **Reload** ( ).

Note
The list displays 100 applications at a time.

Step 5 Choose the applications that you want to add to the filter from the **Available Applications** list:

- To narrow the individual applications that appear, enter a search string in the **Search by name** field. To clear the search, click **Clear** ( ).
- Use paging at the bottom of the list to browse the list of individual available applications.
- To refresh the applications list and clear any selected applications, click **Reload** ( ).

Step 6 Add the selected applications to exclude from external authentication. You can click and drag, or you can click **Add to Rule**. The result is the combination of the application filters you selected.

What to do next

- Continue configuring the identity rule as described in Create an identity rule.

Troubleshoot the captive portal identity source

For other related troubleshooting information, see Troubleshoot realms and user downloads and Troubleshoot user control.

If you experience issues with captive portal, check these items:

- The time on your captive portal managed device must be synchronized with the time on the Firewall Management Center.
- If you have DNS resolution configured and you create an identity rule to perform **Kerberos** (or **HTTP Negotiate**, if you want Kerberos as an option) captive portal, you must configure your DNS server to resolve the fully qualified domain name (FQDN) of the captive portal device. The FQDN must match the hostname you provided when configuring DNS.

  For more information, see Hostname redirect, on page 2.
- If you're using Kerberos authentication, the managed device's host name must be less than 15 characters (it's a NetBIOS limitation set by Windows); otherwise, captive portal authentication fails. You set the managed device host name when you set up the device. For more information, see an article like this one on the Microsoft documentation site: Naming conventions in Active Directory for computers, domains, sites, and OUs.

  DNS must return a response of 64KB or less to the hostname; otherwise, the AD connection test fails. This limit applies in both directions and is discussed in RFC 6891 section-6.2.5.
- If the device you want to use for captive portal contains both inline and routed interfaces, you must configure a zone condition in your captive portal identity rules to target only the routed interfaces on the captive portal device.
- If the captive portal is configured correctly but the redirect to an IP address or fully-qualified domain name (FQDN) fails, disable endpoint security software. This type of software can interfere with the redirection.
- The ERR_CONNECTION_TIMED_OUT error during active authentication occurs when the redirect URL fails to resolve to the managed device's IP address. This error could prevent the client from receiving a user authentication prompt after redirection, cause client traffic on port 885 to be missing from managed device packet captures, or lead to other connection issues. To mitigate connection issues, ensure that the redirect URL resolves to the managed device's IP address on the client's ingress path, where active portal authentication is configured. Verify the configuration by using the `system support captive-portal-debug` command.
- To securely log a user out of captive portal and prevent the user from logging in again, an administrator can close their session: **Analysis** > **Users heading** > **Active Sessions**. If the user closes their browser, the browser does not reauthenticate automatically.
- If you select **Kerberos** (or **HTTP Negotiate**, if you want Kerberos as an option) as the **Authentication Type** in an identity rule, the **Realm** you select must be configured with an **AD Join Username** and **AD Join Password** to perform Kerberos captive portal active authentication.

  If you select **HTTP Basic** as the **Authentication Type** in an identity rule, users on your network might not notice their sessions time out. Most web browsers cache the credentials from **HTTP Basic** logins and use the credentials to seamlessly begin a new session after an old session times out.

- If the connection between your Firewall Management Center and a managed device fails, no captive portal logins reported by the device can be identified during the downtime, unless the users were previously seen and downloaded to the Firewall Management Center. The unidentified users are logged as Unknown users on the Firewall Management Center. After the downtime, the Unknown users are reidentified and processed according to the rules in your identity policy.
- Active FTP sessions are displayed as the **Unknown** user in events. This is normal because, in active FTP, the server (not the client) initiates the connection and the FTP server should not have an associated user name. For more information about active FTP, see RFC 959.

  When the captive portal authenticates users that match an identity rule, any user in a Microsoft Active Directory or LDAP group that has not been downloaded is identified as Unknown. To avoid users being identified as Unknown, configure the realm to download users in all groups you expect to authenticate with captive portal. Unknown users are handled according to the associated access control policy; if the access control policy is configured to block Unknown users, these users are blocked.

  To make sure the system downloads all users in a realm, make sure the groups are in the Available Groups list in the realm's configuration.

  For more information, see Synchronize users and groups.

History for captive portal

This reference provides the development history and version information for the captive portal feature across different software releases.

Feature	Minimum Firewall Management CenterFirewall Management Center	Minimum Firewall Threat Defense	Details
Hostname redirect.	7.1.0	7.1.0 with Snort 3	You can use a network object that contains the fully-qualified host name (FQDN) of the interface that captive portal can use for active authentication requests.
Guest login.	6.1.0	6.1.0	Users can log in as guest using captive portal.
Captive portal.	6.0.0	6.0.0	Feature introduced. You can use the captive portal to require users to enter their credentials when prompted in a browser window. The mapping also allows policies to be based on a user or group of users.