

Information Paper:

How to Determine a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Certificate Expiration Date

Introduction

PKI certificates allow the proper authorities to create, manage, distribute, use, store, and revoke digital certificates that are used to provide personal identification. PKI certificates are necessary when simple passwords are an inadequate authentication method and more rigorous proof is required to confirm the identity of the party needing to access a computer system, document, etc.

Types of PKI Certificates

For most military members, as well as for most DoD civilian and contractor employees, your PKI certificate is located on your Common Access Card (CAC).

You may also receive training PKI certificates from other sources. These certificates will normally be sent via a secure email. You will download these certificates and install them in your computer's Certificate Store. For more information on downloading and installing training certificates refer to the [EWTS Guide](#).

All PKI certificates expire. Knowing how to check your PKI certificate expiration date ensures you can always access websites, documents, etc. requiring a PKI certificate.

Determining the Expiration Date, using a Browser

Open a browser window and activate the menu bar. Follow the below steps to determine the expiration date of the PKI certificates in your Certificate Store.

For Internet Explorer:

- a) Select **Tools** from the menu bar (Figure 1).
- b) Select **Internet Options** (Figure 1).
- c) Select the **Content** tab (Figure 2).
- d) Select **Certificates** (Figure 2).



**Determining
the Expiration
Date, using a
Browser
(continued)**

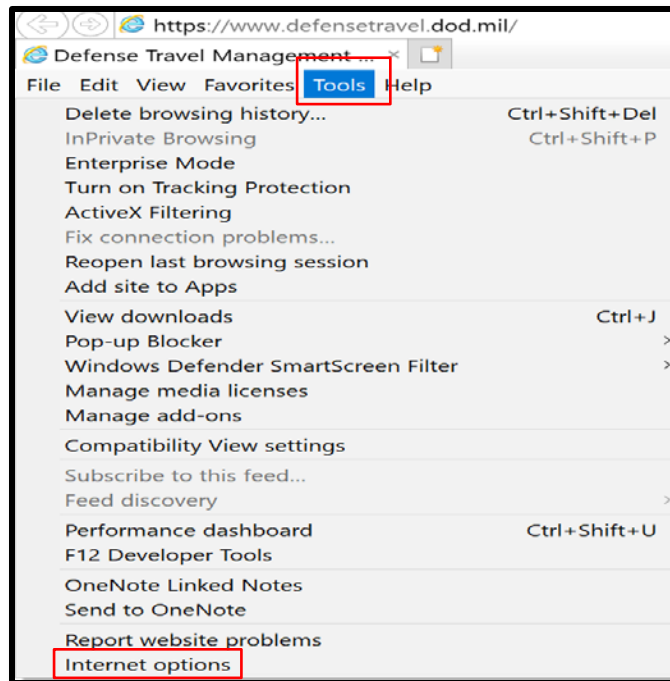


Figure 1: Internet Options

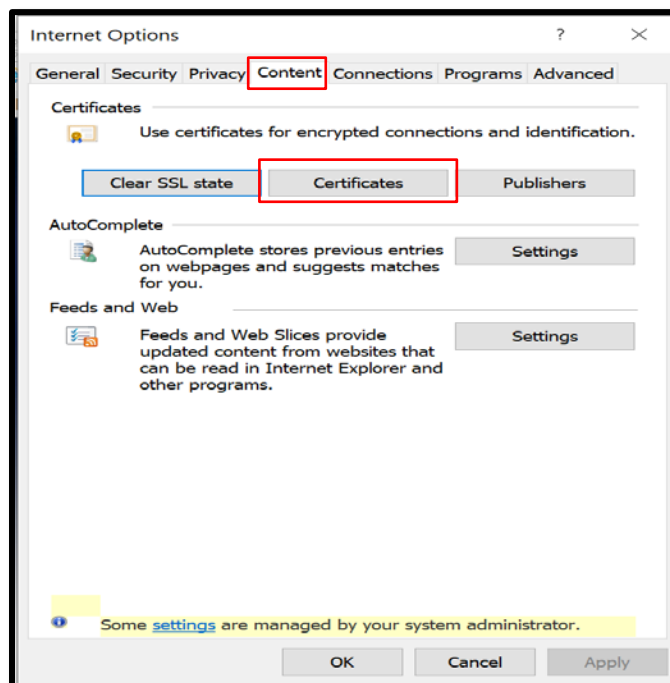


Figure 2: Content Tab



Determining the Expiration Date, using a Browser (continued)

Under the **Personal** tab, your certificate store shows all installed certificates and their expiration dates (Figure 3). If you can not view the expiration date in the window because it is hidden, select the cross-hairs between the columns and drag the column until you can readily view the information (Figure 3).

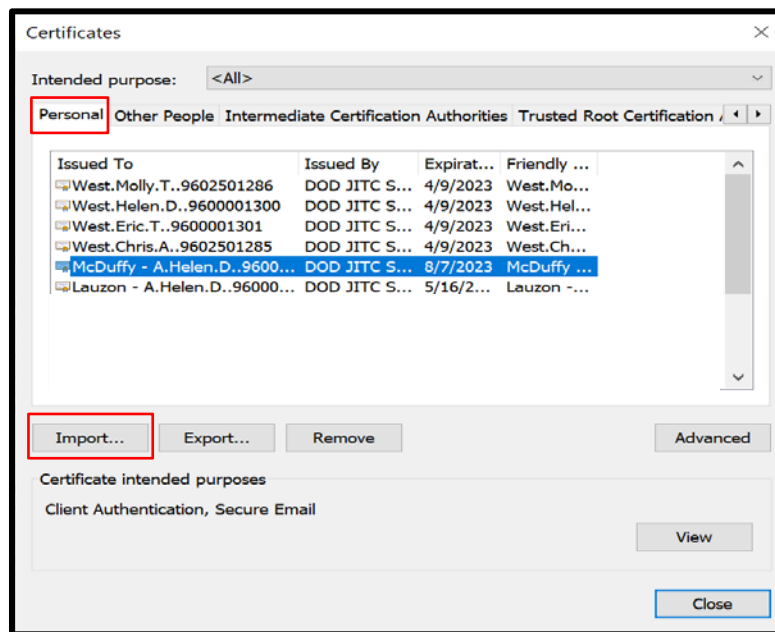


Figure 3: Internet Explorer Certificate Store

If your certificate does not appear on the **Personal** tab, try to **Import** the certificate into your browser (Figure 3). You can see certificates even if expired in the **Personal** tab, but you will not be able to access programs or documents until you obtain a new valid certificate.

For Firefox:

- Select **Tools** (looks like three vertical lines) from the menu bar (Figure 4).
- Select **Options** (Figure 4).
- In **Find in Options**, search for **Certificates** (Figure 5).
- Select **View Certificates** (Figure 5).

Under the **View Certificates** tab, your **Certificate Manager** shows all installed certificates and their expiration dates (Figure 6). If you can not view the expiration date because it is hidden, select the cross-hairs between the columns and drag the column until you can readily view the information (Figure 6).



Determining
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(continued)

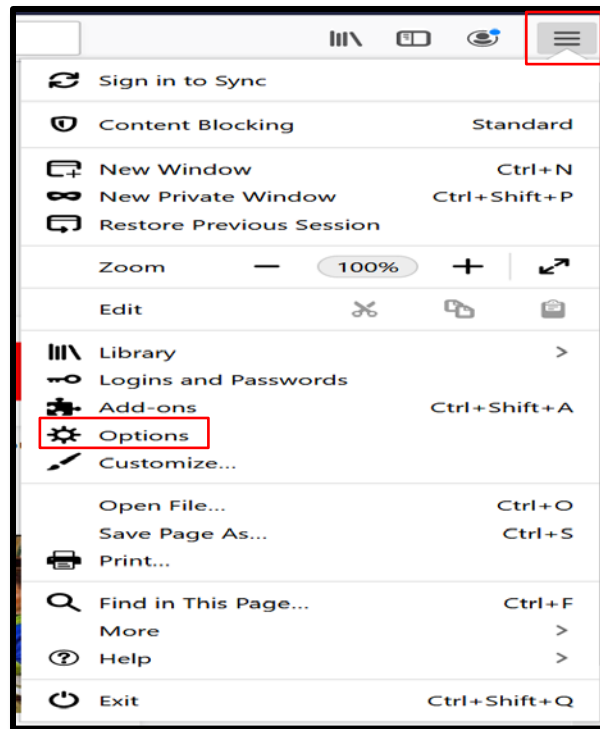


Figure 4: Options

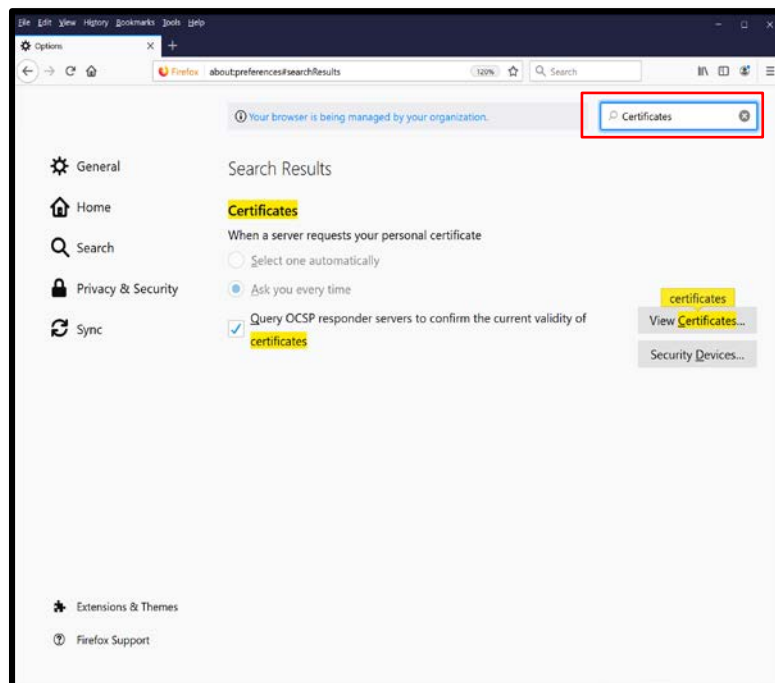


Figure 5: Search Window



Determining the Expiration Date, using a Browser (continued)

If your certificate does not appear on the **View Certificates** tab, try to **Import** the certificate into your browser (Figure 6). If the certificate is expired you will see the file in the screen, but you will not be able to access programs or documents until you obtain a new valid certificate.

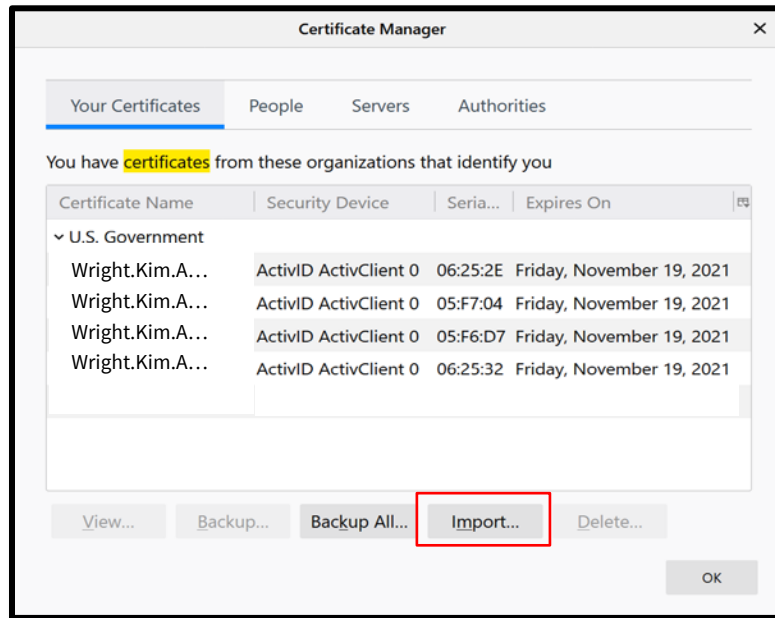


Figure 6: Firefox Certificate Manager

Viewing Certificates from a Folder

When you receive your PKI certificate(s) you perform a download and save the file(s) to a folder on your PC or specific storage location (Figure 7). You can retrieve the certificates as needed using the identified password. If you receive new certificates, follow the same process to download and store certs securing the password. See the [EWTS Guide](#) for the certificate downloading process.

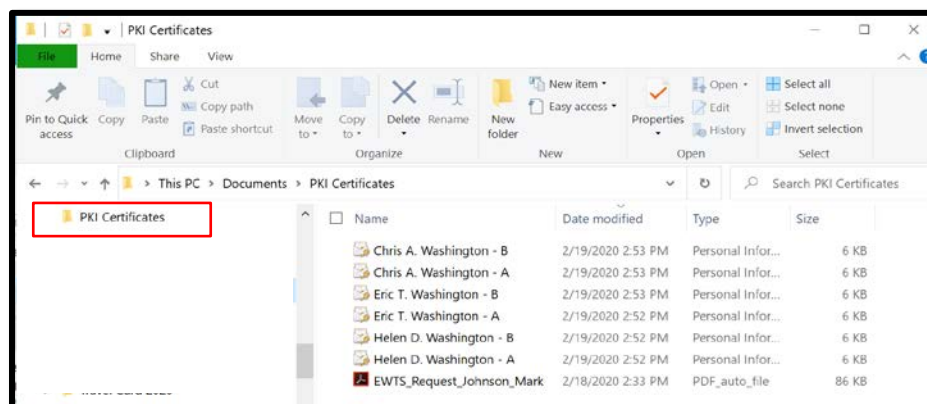


Figure 7: PKI Certificates Folder