Enumerating kernel notification callback routines, x64

This document apply to:

Windows 7, Windows 7 SP1, Windows 8, Windows 8.1, Windows 10 (TH1 up to 21H2) Windows 11 (21H2)

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1. Introduction

List of common kernel callback routines, their implementation and how to enumerate them.

Important note: since everything here related to kernel mode, a kernel mode driver is required for read memory operations.

Here and below kldbgdrv (WinDbg Kernel Local Debugging Driver) used. It provides stable memory read functionality implemented by KdSystemDebugControl ntos routine (requires Debug mode enabled and SeDebugPrivilege assigned). Any other own implemented driver can be used instead, e.g. rkhdrv50 or wodbgdrv.

Callbacks usually used by driver developers to gain notifications when certain events happen. That's why some of them often referenced as "notification routines" or "notifies" rather than "callbacks". Also you should distinguish callback routines with "Callback" object type that also play notification role but implemented as kernel mode object.

Common callbacks split on two sections: these callbacks that can only be used for notifications of events and these callbacks that can change event behavior.

Callbacks often abused by malicious/fraud/bloatware software because of their functionality.

There is no official way to enumerate these callbacks and their implementation is always undocumented and subject of change between Windows versions. Additionally proper enumeration require accessing to locks and other synchronization mechanisms that vary from one callback to other, they all not exported functions, variables and obviously cannot be called, accessed from user mode. We are reading this data from user mode with small change of that incoherent data will be returned.

2. Callbacks Table

Routine Name	Minimum supported client ¹	Documentation status
PsSetCreateProcessNotifyRoutine	Windows 2000	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetcreateprocessnotifyroutine
PsSetCreateProcessNotifyRoutineEx	Windows Vista SP1	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetcreateprocessnotifyroutineex
PsSetCreateProcessNotifyRoutineEx2	Windows 10 (1703)	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetcreateprocessnotifyroutineex2
PsSetCreateThreadNotifyRoutine	Windows 2000	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetcreatethreadnotifyroutine
PsSetCreateThreadNotifyRoutineEx	Windows 10 (1507)	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetcreatethreadnotifyroutineex
PsSetLoadImageNotifyRoutine	Windows 2000	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetloadimagenotifyroutine
PsSetLoadImageNotifyRoutineEx	Windows 10 (1709)	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntddk/nf-ntddk-pssetloadimagenotifyroutineex
KeRegisterBugCheckCallback	Windows 2000	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-keregisterbugeheckcallback
KeRegisterBugCheckReasonCallback	Windows XP SP1	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-keregisterbugeheckreasoncallback
CmRegisterCallback	Windows XP	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-cmregistercallback
CmRegisterCallbackEx	Windows Vista	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-cmregistercallbackex

¹ We assume Windows 7 minimum supported client here and below.

IoRegisterShutdownNotification	Windows 2000	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-ioregistershutdownnotification
IoRegisterLastChanceShutdownNotification	Windows 2000	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-ioregisterlastchanceshutdownnotification
ObRegisterCallbacks	Windows Vista SP1	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/wdm/nf-wdm-obregistercallbacks
SeRegisterLogonSessionTerminatedRoutine	Windows NT 3.51 SP5	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntifs/nf-ntifs-seregisterlogonsessionterminatedroutine
SeRegisterLogonSessionTerminatedRoutineEx	Windows 10	Undocumented
PoRegisterPowerSettingCallback	Windows Vista	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntifs/nf-ntifs-poregisterpowersettingcallback
PoRegisterCoalescingCallback	Windows 8	Undocumented
DbgSetDebugPrintCallback	Windows Vista	Undocumented
IoRegisterFsRegistrationChange	Windows NT 3.51	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-hardware/drivers/ddi/content/ntifs/nf-ntifs-ioregisterfsregistrationchange
DbgkLkmdRegisterCallback	Windows 7	Undocumented

3. Implementation

3.1. Ps* Notify Routines

PsSetCreateProcessNotifyRoutine, PsSetCreateProcessNotifyRoutineEx, PsSetCreateProcessNotifyRoutineEx2, PsSetCreateThreadNotifyRoutine, PsSetCreateThreadNotifyRoutineEx. PsSetLoadImageNotifyRoutineEx.

These routines implementation represent EX_CALLBACK pointers array of fixed size (64 items starting from Windows 7) with not exported counter variable (one per each type – Process/Thread/Image). Before querying actual callback function from array pointer, array pointer must be decoded.

EX_CALLBACK structure defined as

```
typedef struct _EX_CALLBACK {
    EX_FAST_REF RoutineBlock;
} EX CALLBACK, *PEX CALLBACK;
```

EX FAST REF structure defined as

```
typedef struct _EX_FAST_REF {
    union {
        PVOID Object;
#if defined (_WIN64)
        ULONG_PTR RefCnt : 4;
#else
        ULONG_PTR RefCnt : 3;
#endif
        ULONG_PTR Value;
    };
} EX FAST REF, *PEX FAST REF;
```

EX_FAST_REF RefCnt field here used to keep track of object references. Under x64 we are interested in remaining 60 bits, excluding RefCnt.

Decoded pointer will represent another structure called EX_CALLBACK_ROUTINE_BLOCK and defined as:

```
typedef struct _EX_CALLBACK_ROUTINE_BLOCK {
    EX_RUNDOWN_REF RundownProtect;
    PVOID Function; //PEX_CALLBACK_FUNCTION
    PVOID Context;
} EX_CALLBACK_ROUTINE_BLOCK, *PEX_CALLBACK_ROUTINE_BLOCK;
```

Example query pseudo code, PspRoutineArray is a kernel array variable that holds list of EX_CALLBACKS, it is different for each type — Process/Thread/Image:

```
EX_CALLBACKS Callbacks[MAX_CALLBACKS];

ReadMemory(PspRoutineArray, MAX_CALLBACKS * sizeof(EX_CALLBACK));

for (Index = 0; Index < MAX_CALLBACKS; Index++) {
        PVOID CallbackBlockRoutineAddress = (PVOID) (Callbacks[Index].RoutineBlock.Value & ~MAX_FAST_REFS)^2;

        EX_CALLBACK_ROUTINE_BLOCK CallbackBlockRoutine = ReadMemory(CallbackBlockRoutineAddress);
        PVOID CallbackFunction = CallbackBlockRoutine.Function;
}</pre>
```

Where CallbackFunction is actual pointer to driver routine responsible for handling this callback.

² Where MAX_FAST_REFS is 15 for x64

3.2. KeBugCheck Notify Routines

KeRegisterBugCheckCallback, KeRegisterBugCheckReasonCallback.

Implemented as doubly linked lists whose heads are *KeBugCheckCallbackHead* and *KeBugCheckReasonCallbackHead* respectively. Each entry described by KBUGCHECK CALLBACK RECORD and KBUGCHECK CALLBACK REASON structures respectively.

KBUGCHECK CALLBACK RECORD

KBUGCHECK CALLBACK REASON

```
typedef struct KBUGCHECK REASON CALLBACK RECORD {
typedef struct KBUGCHECK CALLBACK RECORD {
   LIST ENTRY Entry;
                                                             LIST ENTRY Entry;
   PVOID CallbackRoutine;
                                                             PVOID CallbackRoutine;
   PVOID Buffer;
                                                             PUCHAR Component;
                                                             ULONG PTR Checksum;
   ULONG Length;
                                                             KBUGCHECK CALLBACK REASON Reason;
   PUCHAR Component;
   ULONG PTR Checksum;
                                                             UCHAR State;
   UCHAR State;
                                                         } KBUGCHECK REASON CALLBACK RECORD,
                                                         *PKBUGCHECK REASON CALLBACK RECORD;
} KBUGCHECK CALLBACK RECORD,
*PKBUGCHECK CALLBACK RECORD;
```

CallbackRoutine is a pointer to driver defined handler routine. Enumerating these type of callback require doubly linked list walking.

3.3. Configuration Manager Callbacks

CmRegisterCallback, CmRegisterCallbackEx.

Implemented as doubly linked list whose head is *CallbackListHead*. Each entry described by CM_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK and subject of changes between Windows versions. However there is a generic definition of this structure which is enough to enumerate registered callbacks.

```
typedef struct _CM_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK {
    LIST_ENTRY CallbackListEntry;
    LIST_ENTRY PreCallListHead;
    PVOID Unknown1;
    PVOID Function; //PEX_CALLBACK_FUNCTION
    UNICODE_STRING Altitude;
    LIST_ENTRY ObjectContextListHead;
} CM_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK, *PCM_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK;
```

Function is a pointer to driver defined handler routine. Enumerating this type of callback require doubly linked list walking.

3.4. Io Shutdown Notifications

IoRegisterShutdownNotification, IoRegisterLastChanceShutdownNotification.

Implemented as doubly linked lists whose heads are *IopNotifyShutdownQueueHead* and *IopNotifyLastChanceShutdownQueueHead* respectively. Each entry described by SHUTDOWN_PACKET structure.

```
typedef struct _SHUTDOWN_PACKET {
    LIST_ENTRY ListEntry;
    PDEVICE_OBJECT DeviceObject;
} SHUTDOWN_PACKET, *PSHUTDOWN_PACKET;
```

DeviceObject represent device created by driver. To query processing code we should read DeviceObject—DriverObject and look for IRP_MJ_SHUTDOWN in DRIVER_OBJECT MajorFunction array. Enumerating this type of callback require doubly linked list walking.

```
DRIVER_OBJECT LocalDriverObjectDump = ReadMemory(Entry.DeviceObject.DriverObject);
PVOID Routine = LocalDriverObjectDump.MajorFunction[IRP MJ SHUTDOWN];
```

3.5. Object Type Callbacks

ObRegisterCallbacks.

Implemented as doubly linked list whose head is an OBJECT_TYPE structure field *CallbackList*. OBJECT_TYPE is one of the key Ob Manager structures and subject of change between Windows versions. While generally structure looks the same, it part – another structure OBJECT_TYPE_INITIALIZER changes frequently and thus affecting parent structure size. There is a 4 variants of OBJECT_TYPE_INITIALIZER since 7 up to current Windows 11 21H2 (22000) at moment of writing this document. OBJECT_TYPE definition:

```
typedef struct _OBJECT_TYPE {
   LIST_ENTRY TypeList;
   UNICODE_STRING Name;
   PVOID DefaultObject;
   UCHAR Index;
   ULONG TotalNumberOfObjects;
   ULONG HighWaterNumberOfObjects;
   ULONG HighWaterNumberOfDbjects;
   ULONG HighWaterNumberOfHandles;
   OBJECT_TYPE_INITIALIZER TypeInfo; //size may vary
   EX_PUSH_LOCK TypeLock;
   ULONG Key;
   LIST_ENTRY CallbackList;
} OBJECT TYPE, POBJECT TYPE;
```

CallbackList has +0xC0 offset for Windows 7 (including SP1) and +0xC8 for everything else up to Windows 10 19H1 (18290). Since this CallbackList is a part of OBJECT_TYPE it is by design part of all object types available in Windows. However this callback mechanisms only supported by *PsProcessType*, *PsThreadType* and *ExDesktopObjectType* since Windows 10. Internally Windows handles this with help of OBJECT_TYPE_INITIALIZER→ObjectTypeFlags. SupportsObjectCallbacks bit flag. This flag is only set for Process/Thread and Desktop on Windows 10.

Each callback entry in CallbackList represent the following structure:

```
typedef struct _OB_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK {
   LIST_ENTRY CallbackListEntry;
   OB_OPERATION Operations;
   ULONG Flags;
   PVOID Registration; //POB_CALLBACK_REGISTRATION
   POBJECT_TYPE ObjectType;
   PVOID PreCallback; //POB_PRE_OPERATION_CALLBACK
   PVOID PostCallback; //POB_POST_OPERATION_CALLBACK
   EX_RUNDOWN_REF RundownReference;
} OB_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK, *POB_CALLBACK_CONTEXT_BLOCK;
```

Several child structures are documented by MS in ObRegisterCallbacks related content. Enumeration of registered callbacks can be done by doubly linked list walking.

3.6. Session Notifications

SeRegisterLogonSessionTerminatedRoutine, SeRegisterLogonSessionTerminatedRoutineEx.

Implemented as single linked lists whose heads are *SeFileSystemNotifyRoutinesHead* and *SeFileSystemNotifyRoutinesHeadEx* respectively. Each entry described by the following structure:

```
typedef struct _SEP_LOGON_SESSION_TERMINATED_NOTIFICATION {
    struct _SEP_LOGON_SESSION_TERMINATED_NOTIFICATION *Next;
    PVOID CallbackRoutine; //PSE_LOGON_SESSION_TERMINATED_ROUTINE
} SEP_LOGON_SESSION_TERMINATED_NOTIFICATION, *PSEP_LOGON_SESSION_TERMINATED_NOTIFICATION;
```

Note that for SeRegisterLogonSessionTerminatedRoutineEx structure is slightly different, extended in it tail, however required fields are on the same offset so another definition is not required. Enumeration of registered callbacks can be done by single linked list walking.

3.7. Power Settings Callbacks

PoRegisterPowerSettingCallback.

Implemented as doubly linked list with head *PopRegisteredPowerSettingCallbacks*.

Each entry described by POP POWER SETTING REGISTRATION structure which is a subject of change between Windows version.

Before Windows 10 1607 (RS1 14393)

```
typedef struct _POP_POWER_SETTING_REGISTRATION_V1 {
    LIST_ENTRY Link;
    ULONG Tag;
    PVOID CallbackThread;
    UCHAR UnregisterOnReturn;
    UCHAR UnregisterPending;
```

PVOID LastValue; PVOID Callback;

GUID Guid;

PVOID Context;

PDEVICE_OBJECT DeviceObject;

POP_POWER_SETTING_REGISTRATION_V1,

*PPOP_POWER_SETTING_REGISTRATION_V1;

After Windows 10 1607 (RS1 14393)

```
typedef struct _POP_POWER_SETTING_REGISTRATION_V2 {
    LIST_ENTRY Link;
    ULONG Tag;
    PVOID CallbackThread;
    UCHAR UnregisterOnReturn;
    UCHAR UnregisterPending;
    GUID Guid;
    GUID Guid2;
    PVOID LastValue;
    PVOID Callback;
    PVOID Context;
    PDEVICE_OBJECT DeviceObject;
} POP_POWER_SETTING_REGISTRATION_V2;
```

Note that tail of V2 is incorrect for newest Windows 10 versions, however this does not affect enumeration which can be done by doubly linked list walking.

3.8. DebugPrint Callbacks

DbgSetDebugPrintCallback.

For unknown reason this API is not documented however used by software since Vista release, for example by MS SysInternals DbgView. Implemented as doubly linked list whose head is *RtlpDebugPrintCallbackList*. Each entry described by the following structure:

```
typedef struct _RTL_CALLBACK_REGISTER {
    ULONG Flags;
    EX_RUNDOWN_REF RundownReference;
    PVOID DebugPrintCallback;
    LIST_ENTRY ListEntry;
} RTL_CALLBACK_REGISTER, *PRTL_CALLBACK_REGISTER;
```

Since ListEntry is a tail of this structure actual address of entry must be calculated before query/read memory. For example:

```
RTL_CALLBACK_REGISTER *Next = ListEntry.Flink - FIELD_OFFSET(RTL_CALLBACK_REGISTER, ListEntry);
ReadMemory(Next);
ListEntry.Flink = Next.ListEntry.Flink;
```

Enumeration is doubly linked list walking with next entry calculation as above.

3.9. Coalescing Callbacks

PoRegisterCoalescingCallback.

Undocumented callback used by Windows Cache Manager, Configuration Manager and NTFS driver. It was introduced in Windows 8. Before Windows 10 RS4 (17134) implemented as an array of callbacks *PopCoalescingCallbackRoutine* with maximum eight (8) elements. **Warning**: Windows 10 RS3 (16299) has increased capacity to thirty-two (32) elements. Since Windows 10 RS4 (17763) it was updated to be unlimited capacity linked list *PopCoalRegistrationList*. Each entry is described by the following structure:

Windows 8 → Windows 10 1709 (RS3 16299)

```
typedef struct _PO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V1 {
    EX_PUSH_LOCK PushLock;
    PVOID CoalescingCallback;
    PVOID SelfPtr;
    PPO_COALESCING_CALLBACK Callback;
    BOOLEAN ClientOrServer;
    PVOID Context;
} PO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V1, *
PPO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V1;
```

After Windows 10 1803 (RS4 17134)

```
typedef struct _PO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V2 {
    EX_PUSH_LOCK PushLock;
    PVOID CoalescingCallback;
    PVOID SelfPtr;
    PPO_COALESCING_CALLBACK Callback;
    BOOLEAN ClientOrServer;
    PVOID Context;
    LIST_ENTRY Link;
    EX_CALLBACK ExCallback;
} PO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V2, *
PPO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V2;
```

Since V2 Link field is a tail of this structure actual address of entry must be calculated before query/read memory. Enumeration for V1 is similar to Ps* routines and for V2 it is a double linked list walking with next entry calculation as below:

```
PO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V2* Next = ListEntry.Flink - FIELD_OFFSET(PO_COALESCING_CALLBACK_V2, Link);
ReadMemory(Next);
ListEntry.Flink = Next.ListEntry.Flink;
```

3.10. IoFs Change Notifications

IoRegisterFsRegistrationChange.

Implemented as doubly linked list whose head is *IopFsNotifyChangeQueueHead*. Each entry described by the following structure:

```
typedef struct _NOTIFICATION_PACKET {
    LIST_ENTRY ListEntry;
    PDRIVER_OBJECT DriverObject;
    PVOID NotificationRoutine; //PDRIVER_FS_NOTIFICATION
} NOTIFICATION_PACKET, *PNOTIFICATION_PACKET;
```

Enumeration is doubly linked list walking.

3.11. DbgK Callbacks

DbgkLkmdRegisterCallback.

Undocumented callback mechanism used by NtSystemDebugControl service. Implemented as fixed size array of EX_CALLBACK structures. Before querying actual callback function from array pointer, array pointer must be decoded, decoding is the same as in case of Ps*Notify routines. Array can contain maximum eight (8) elements. Currently used by win32k.

4.0. Search Patterns

4.1. PspCreateProcessNotifyRoutine

4.2. PspCreateThreadNotifyRoutine

4.3. PspLoadImageNotifyRoutine

```
ptrCode = GPA(mappedNtoskrnl, "PsRemoveLoadImageNotifyRoutine");
...
    if (I.Length == 7)
    If ((ptrCode[Index] == 0x48 || ptrCode[Index] == 0x4C) && ptrCode[Index + 1] == 0x8D)
    {
        Rel = *(PLONG)(ptrCode + Index + 3);
        break;
}
```

4.4. KeBugCheckCallbackHead

4.5. KeBugCheckReasonCallbackHead

4.6. IopNotifyShutdownQueueHead

4.7. IopNotifyLastChanceShutdownQueueHead

4.8. CallbackListHead (Configuration Manager)

4.9. CallbackList (Object Type)

```
ObjectRefAddr = ObReferenceObjectAddr(ObjectType);
OBJECT_TYPE_V = SelectObjectTypeVersion(NtBuildNumber);
CallbackList = ObjectRefAddr + FIELD_OFFSET(OBJECT_TYPE_V, CallbackList);
```

where ObReferenceObjectAddr is either locating address of kernel mode object of required type (Process/Thread/Desktop) or parsing Ob directory.

4.10. SeFileSystemNotifyRoutinesHead

4.11. SeFileSystemNotifyRoutinesExHead

4.12. PopRegisteredPowerSettingCallbacks

4.13. CoalescingCallbacks

4.14. RtlpDebugPrintCallbackList

```
//First, search for DbgpInsertDebugPrintCallback
ptrCode = GPA(mappedNtoskrnl, "DbgSetDebugPrintCallback");
do {
. . .
      if (I.Length == 5) { //jmp or call
            if ((ptrCode[Index] == 0xE9) ||
                (ptrCode[Index] == 0xE8))
                Rel = *(PLONG)(ptrCode + Index + 1);
                break;
        if (hs.len == 6) \{ //jz \}
            if (ptrCode[Index] == 0x0F) {
                Rel = *(PLONG)(ptrCode + Index + 2);
                break;
\} while (Index < 64);
if (Rel) ptrCode = ptrCode + Index + (I.Length) + Rel;
else break;
```

4.15. IopFsNotifyChangeQueueHead

4.16. DbgkLkmdCallbacks

5.0. Callback Object Type

Callback is a kernel mode object type. Driver call *ExCreateCallback* to create new object with "Callback" type and register driver specified routine with *ExRegisterCallback*. Callback objects are usually located in dedicated \Callback object directory. This object type described by the following structure:

Windows 7

```
typedef struct _CALLBACK_OBJECT {
    ULONG Signature;
    KSPIN_LOCK Lock;
    LIST_ENTRY RegisteredCallbacks;
    BOOLEAN AllowMultipleCallbacks;
    UCHAR reserved[3];
} CALLBACK_OBJECT, *PCALLBACK_OBJECT;
```

Windows 8.1 and above

```
typedef struct _CALLBACK_OBJECT_V2 {
    ULONG Signature;
    KSPIN_LOCK Lock;
    LIST_ENTRY RegisteredCallbacks;
    BOOLEAN AllowMultipleCallbacks;
    LIST_ENTRY ExpCallbackList;
} CALLBACK_OBJECT_V2, * PCALLBACK_OBJECT_V2;
```

Where list entries are described by CALLBACK REGISTRATION structure:

```
typedef struct _CALLBACK_REGISTRATION {
   LIST_ENTRY Link;
   PCALLBACK_OBJECT CallbackObject;
   PVOID CallbackFunction; //PCALLBACK_FUNCTION
   PVOID CallbackContext;
   ULONG Busy;
   BOOLEAN UnregisterWaiting;
} CALLBACK_REGISTRATION, *PCALLBACK_REGISTRATION;
```

By walking RegisteredCallback doubly linked list for given object of type "Callback" we can enumerate registered callback routines.

Examples of callback objects:

\Callback\ProcessorAdd – dynamically track changes in the processor population;

\Callback\SeImageVerificationDriverInfo – when callback object registered with SeRegisterImageVerificationCallback it will be invoked each time a driver image is loaded in memory;

\Callback\PowerState - Invoked when the system switches from AC to DC power or vice versa, the system power policy changes as the result of a user or application request, a transition to a system sleep or shutdown state is imminent.

6.0. Copyrights and References

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Document Version 3.4

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