

# A Developer's Guide to Protecting Your Data Inside of SQL Server

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<https://github.com/DavidCBerry13/sql-server-security/>

Security is a **Team** Sport

Plan for a **defense in depth**

You **cannot** rely on perimeter defenses

In 2018, the **perimeter is everywhere**

# What We Will Talk About

Users, Schemas and Roles

Connection Strings

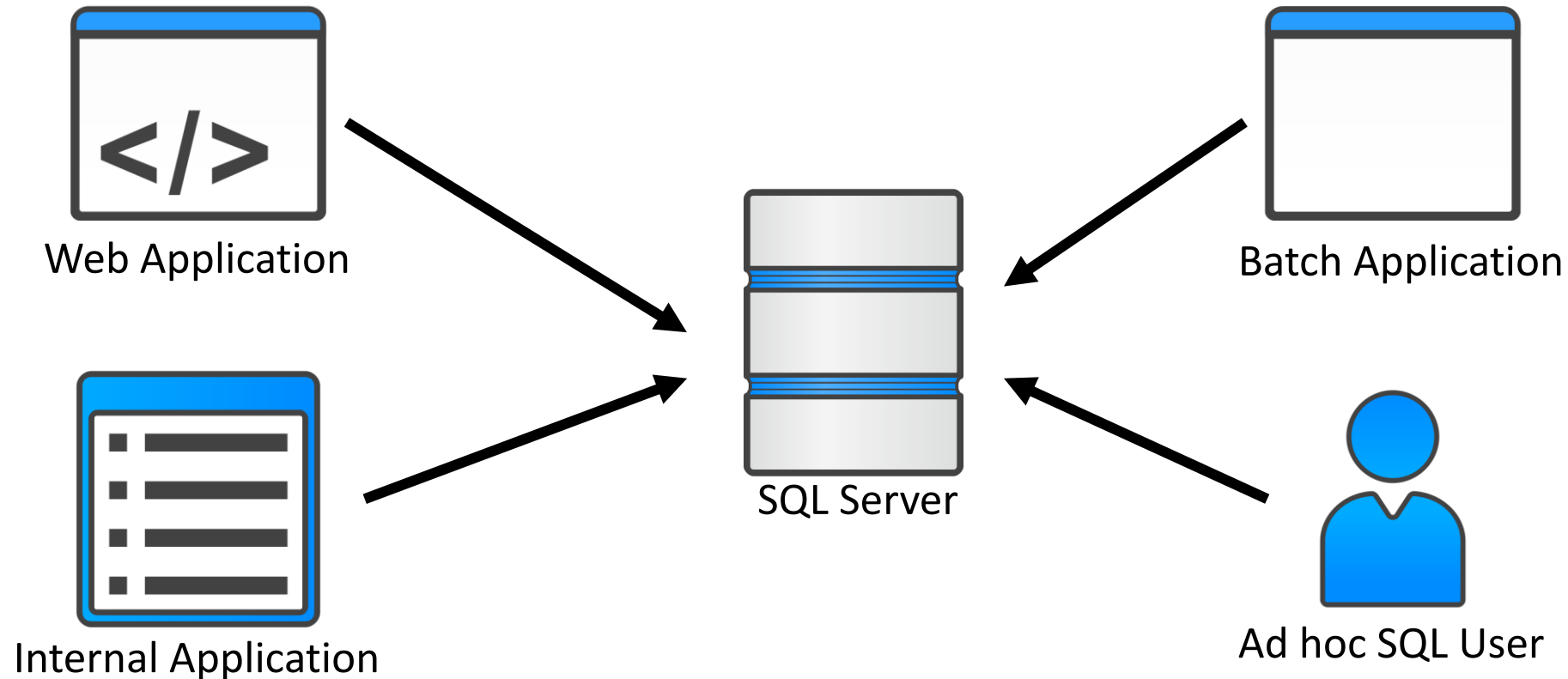
Transport Layer Security

Encrypting Data

SQL Injection

# Users, Schemas and Roles

# Overused and Overprivileged Users



*Problem is when all these users use the same account*

Assigning proper users, roles and privileges is your first line of defense



# Secure Database User Practices

Use Windows  
Authentication

Have a separate  
service account  
for each  
application

Use AD groups to  
For user access

Have a separate  
dedicated account  
to push schema  
changes

Do not assign  
db\_owner to any  
application or user  
account

Use database roles  
to assign  
permissions

# Why Use Windows Authentication



Eliminates an additional password



Take advantage of existing processes

- Especially around employee transfers and termination

# db\_owner Role

## Fixed-Database Roles

The following table shows the fixed-database roles and their capabilities. These roles exist in all databases. Except for the **public** database role, the permissions assigned to the fixed-database roles cannot be changed.

Fixed-Database role name	Description
db_owner	Members of the <b>db_owner</b> fixed database role can perform all configuration and maintenance activities on the database, and can also drop the database in SQL Server. (In SQL Database and SQL Data Warehouse, some maintenance activities require server-level permissions and cannot be performed by <b>db_owners</b> .)

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/sql/relational-databases/security/authentication-access/database-level-roles?view=sql-server-2017>

# What's Wrong with the db\_owner Role?

Do you really want an application user to be able to create or drop tables?

How about modify your stored procedures?

Or grant and revoke permissions from other users?

# What Is a Database Role

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A collection of privileges. Roles help you manage permissions in a database so that you can assign a group or privileges together

# Creating Database Roles

```
CREATE ROLE Operations;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON Customers TO Operations;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON Addresses TO Operations;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON CustomerAddresses TO Operations;
```

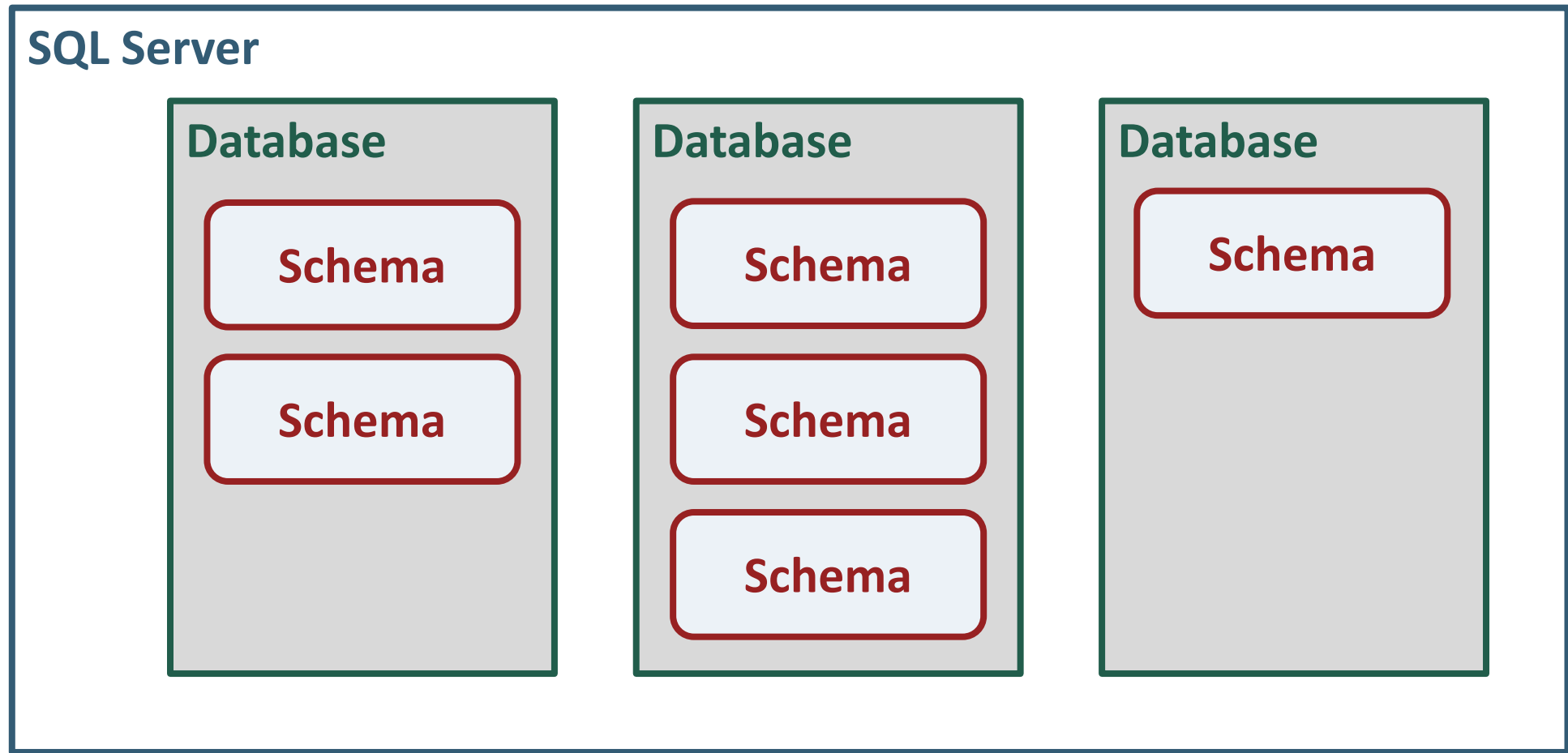
```
GRANT SELECT ON Orders TO Operations;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON OrderItems TO Operations;
```

```
ALTER ROLE Operations
```

```
    ADD MEMBER [MyDomain\OperationsTeam];
```

# Schemas



## Rev 10.00.0009

**dbo**



Sales

## Purchasing

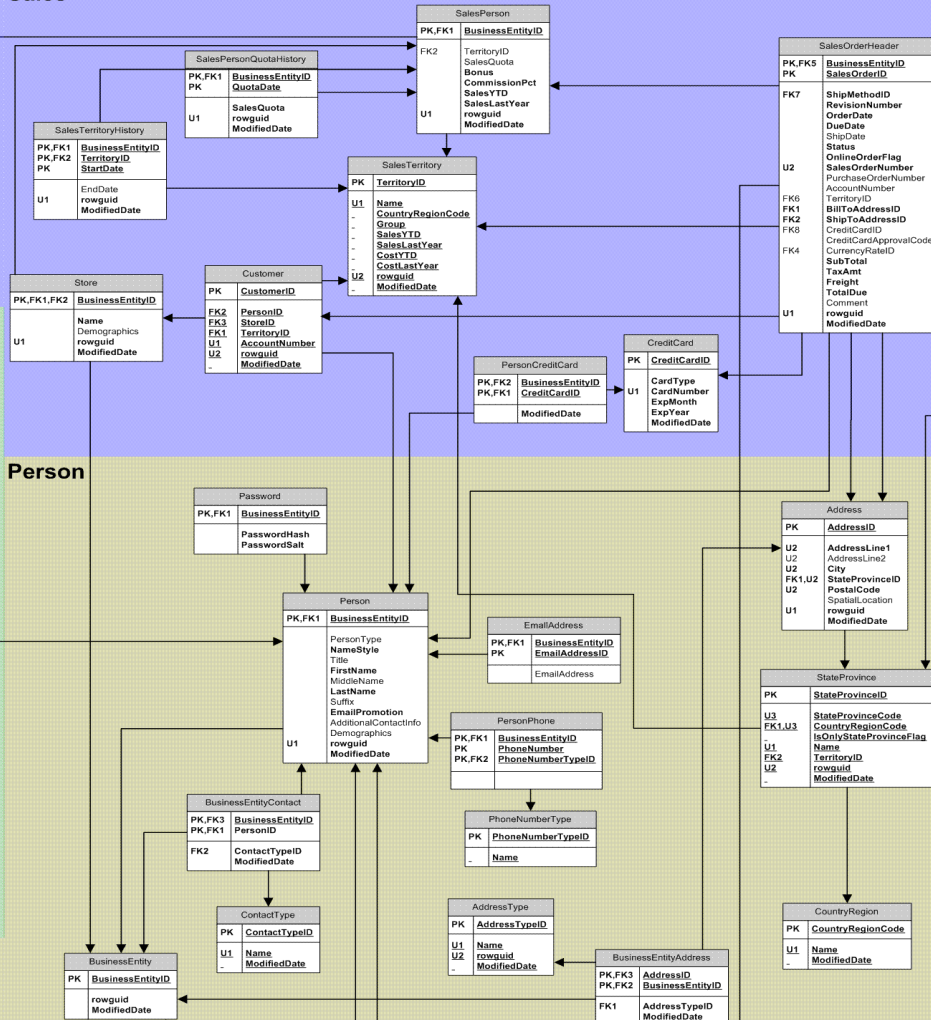
Person

## Production

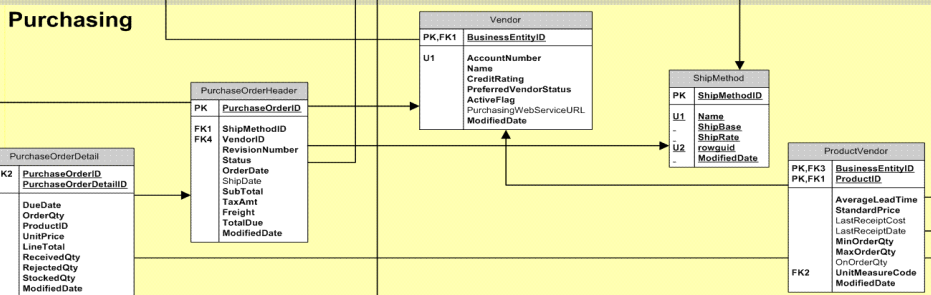
HumanResources

dbo

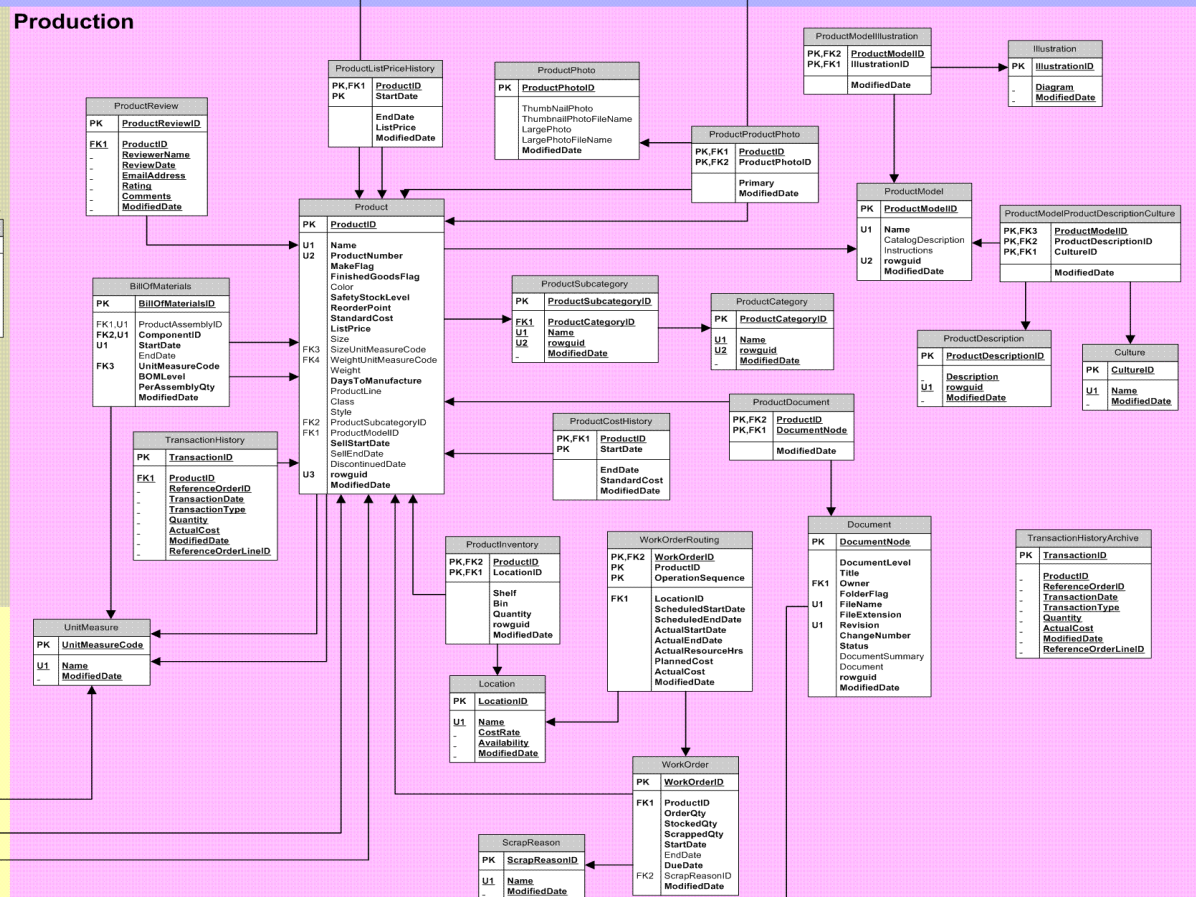
## Person



## Purchasing



## Production





# Other Access Control Mechanisms

## **Views**

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- Limit what columns or what rows can be seen
- Views can be inserted and updated in many cases
- ORM support is still a challenge

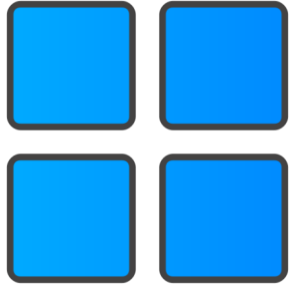
## **Stored Procedures**

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- Specify exactly what a user can do
- Use to eliminate ad-hoc data access

# Connection Strings

# Securing Your Connection String



## Use Windows Authentication

Eliminates the password  
in your connection string



## Never store connection strings in code

These can be easily  
reverse engineered



## Use Key Vault For SQL Logins

If you must use SQL  
logins, store the  
password somewhere  
secure

# Transport Layer Security

# Little Known Facts

## Traditional SQL Server

The connection between your application and SQL Server is ***not encrypted*** by default

## SQL Azure

The connection between your application and SQL Server ***is encrypted*** by default

# What Does Transport Layer Security Give Us

Encrypts our data in motion

Verifies who we are talking to



# Connection Strings to Encrypt Data

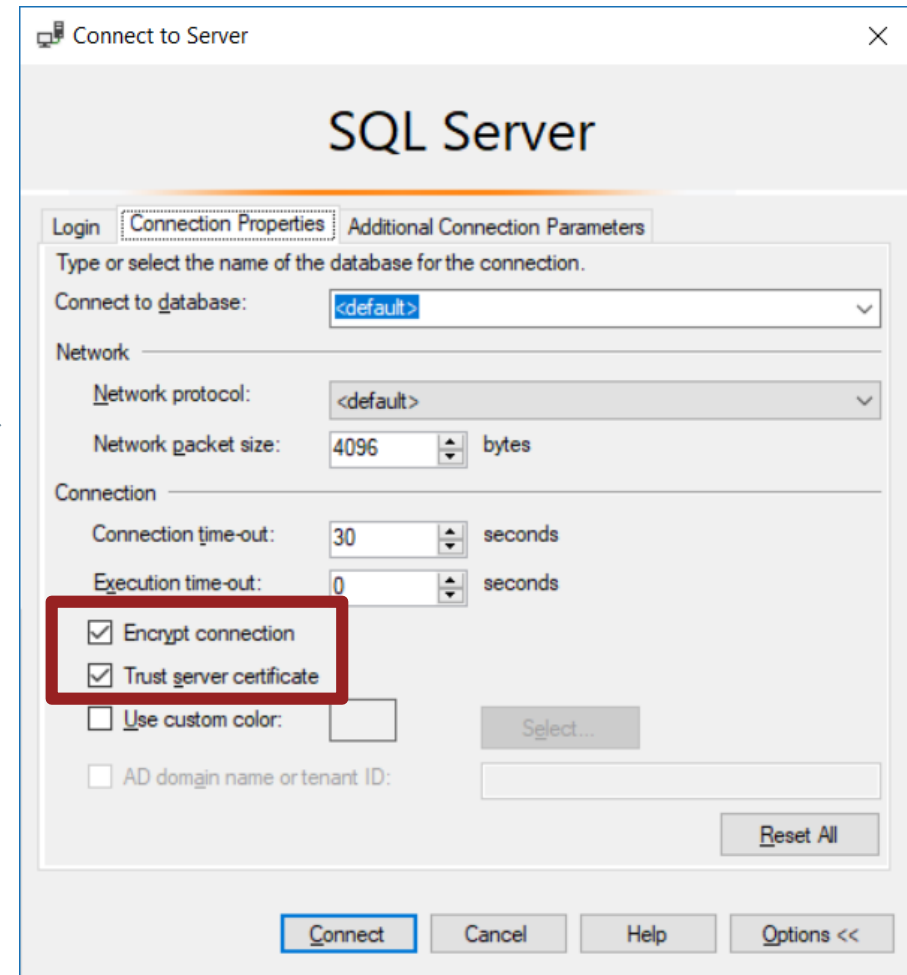
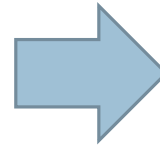
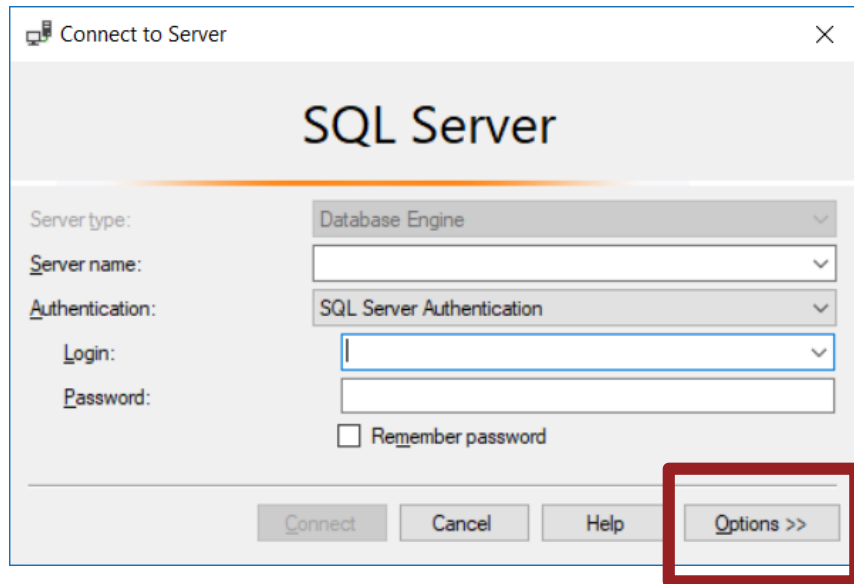
## Encrypt Data and Allow a Self Signed Certificate

```
Server=<server>\<instance>;Database=<database>;Integrated  
Security=true;Encrypt=true;TrustServerCertificate=True
```

## Encrypt Data and Validate Server Certificate

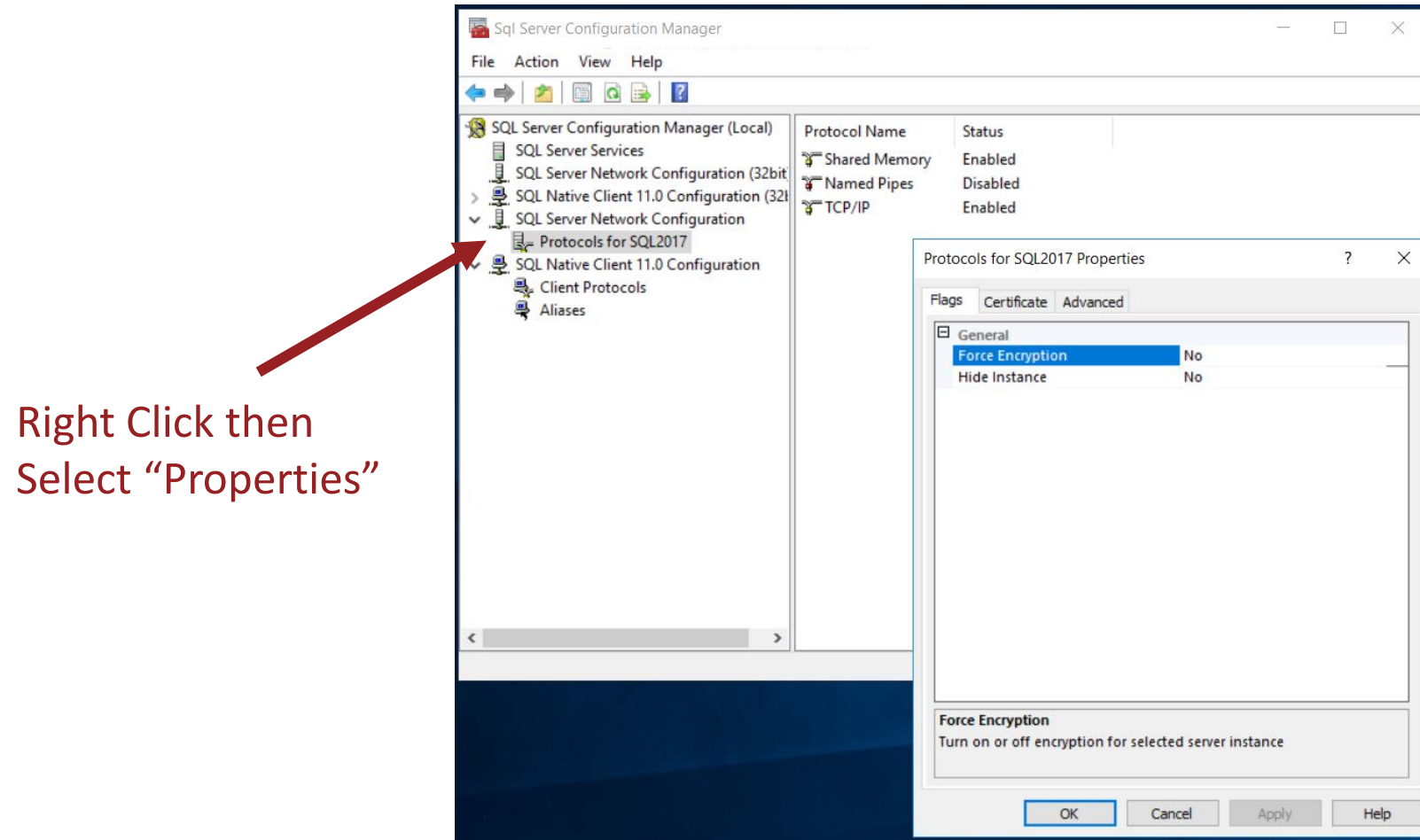
```
Server=<server>\<instance>;Database=<database>;Integrated  
Security=true;Encrypt=true;TrustServerCertificate=false
```

# Decrypting Data from SSMS





# Configuring SQL Server to Force TLS



Full instructions at: <https://www.sqlshack.com/how-to-set-and-use-encrypted-sql-server-connections/>

# TLS Strategy

Set Encrypt=true  
for you connection  
strings

Work towards  
installing a  
verifiable  
certificate

Discuss requiring  
encrypted  
connections with  
your DBA team

# Database Encryption

# Transparent Data Encryption

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Encrypts the data files of SQL Server (data at rest)

Protects you in case an attacker gets your data files or backups

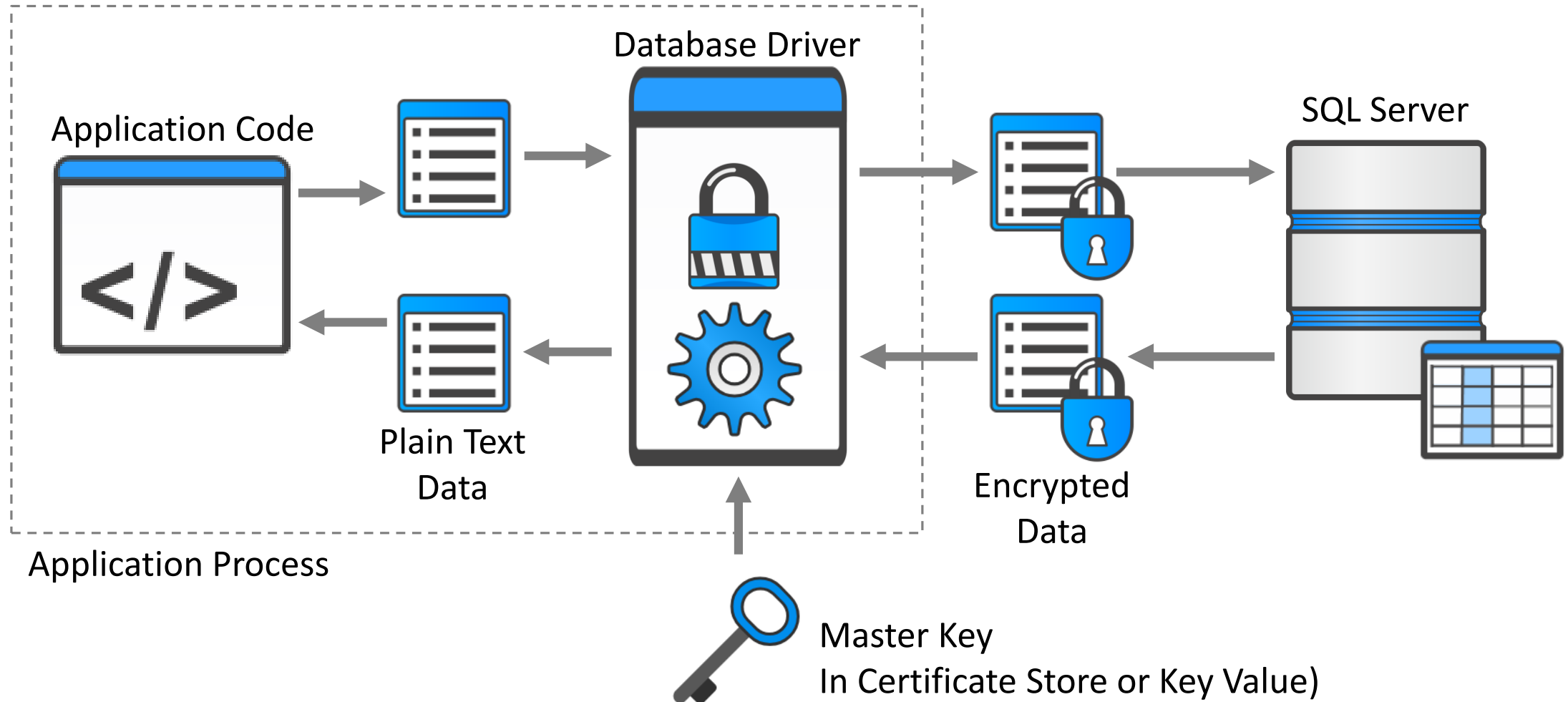
# Always Encrypted

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Designed to protect data at a column level

Available in SQL Server 2016 and later

# How Always Encrypted Works



# What You Can/Cannot Encrypt

## Can Be Encrypted

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- VARCHAR/NVARCHAR
- INT/SMALLINT/BIGINT
- FLOAT/DOUBLE
- DECIMAL
- MONEY/SMALLMONEY
- DATETIME/DATE/TIME

## Cannot Be Encrypted

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- XML
- SQL\_VARIANT
- IMAGE
- GEOGRAPHY
- GEOMETRY

# Encryption Types

## Deterministic

- Always generates the same encrypted value for a plain text value
- Column can be used in equality comparisons, joins, group by operations and indexes
- Not suitable for cardinality columns because the attacker can guess values based on probabilities

## Randomized

- Different encrypted values will be generated for the same plain text input
- Column cannot be used in equality comparisons, joins, group by operations or indexes



# Deterministic Encryption Example

```
SELECT CustomerId, FirstName, LastName, ZipCode, ZipCodeEncrypted  
FROM CustomerNames  
WHERE ZipCode = '78501';
```

100 %

Results Messages

	CustomerId	FirstName	LastName	ZipCode	ZipCodeEncrypted
1	200	Charles	Williams	78501	0x0134AEA12DA64A5219742363864E57335138CB56B2D3380EE73F27194A19E8AB3506...
2	327	John	Krumm	78501	0x0134AEA12DA64A5219742363864E57335138CB56B2D3380EE73F27194A19E8AB3506...
3	390	Curtis	Motz	78501	0x0134AEA12DA64A5219742363864E57335138CB56B2D3380EE73F27194A19E8AB3506...
4	396	Christian	Sanchez	78501	0x0134AEA12DA64A5219742363864E57335138CB56B2D3380EE73F27194A19E8AB3506...
5	1358	Edna	Sparks	78501	0x0134AEA12DA64A5219742363864E57335138CB56B2D3380EE73F27194A19E8AB3506...
6	1494	Nicolas	Ramsey	78501	0x0134AEA12DA64A5219742363864E57335138CB56B2D3380EE73F27194A19E8AB3506...

# Connection Strings For Always Encrypted

## Encrypt Data and Allow a Self Signed Certificate

```
Server=<server>\<instance>;Database=<database>;Integrated  
Security=true;Encrypt=true;TrustServerCertificate=True;  
Column Encryption Setting=enabled
```

# Using Azure Key Vault Provider

```
// https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/sql-database/sql-database-always-encrypted-azure-key-vault
// Required NuGet Packages
//     Microsoft.SqlServer.Management.AlwaysEncrypted.AzureKeyVaultProvider
//     Microsoft.IdentityModel.Clients.ActiveDirectory

private static ClientCredential _clientCredential;

static void InitializeAzureKeyVaultProvider()
{
    _clientCredential = new ClientCredential(applicationId, clientKey);

    SqlColumnEncryptionAzureKeyVaultProvider azureKeyVaultProvider =
        new SqlColumnEncryptionAzureKeyVaultProvider(GetToken);

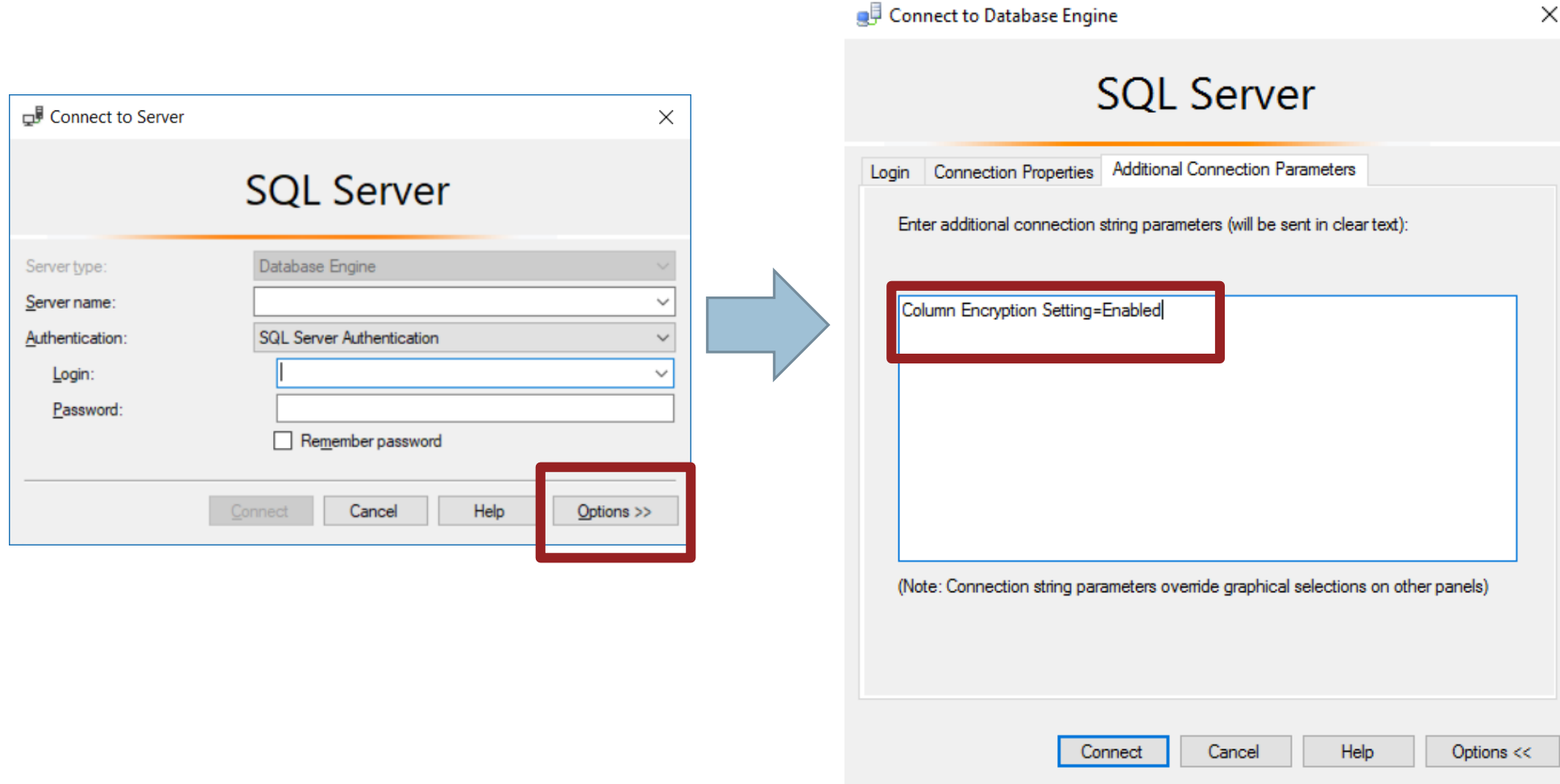
    Dictionary<string, SqlColumnEncryptionKeyStoreProvider> providers =
        new Dictionary<string, SqlColumnEncryptionKeyStoreProvider>();

    providers.Add(SqlColumnEncryptionAzureKeyVaultProvider.ProviderName, azureKeyVaultProvider);
    SqlConnection.RegisterColumnEncryptionKeyStoreProviders(providers);
}

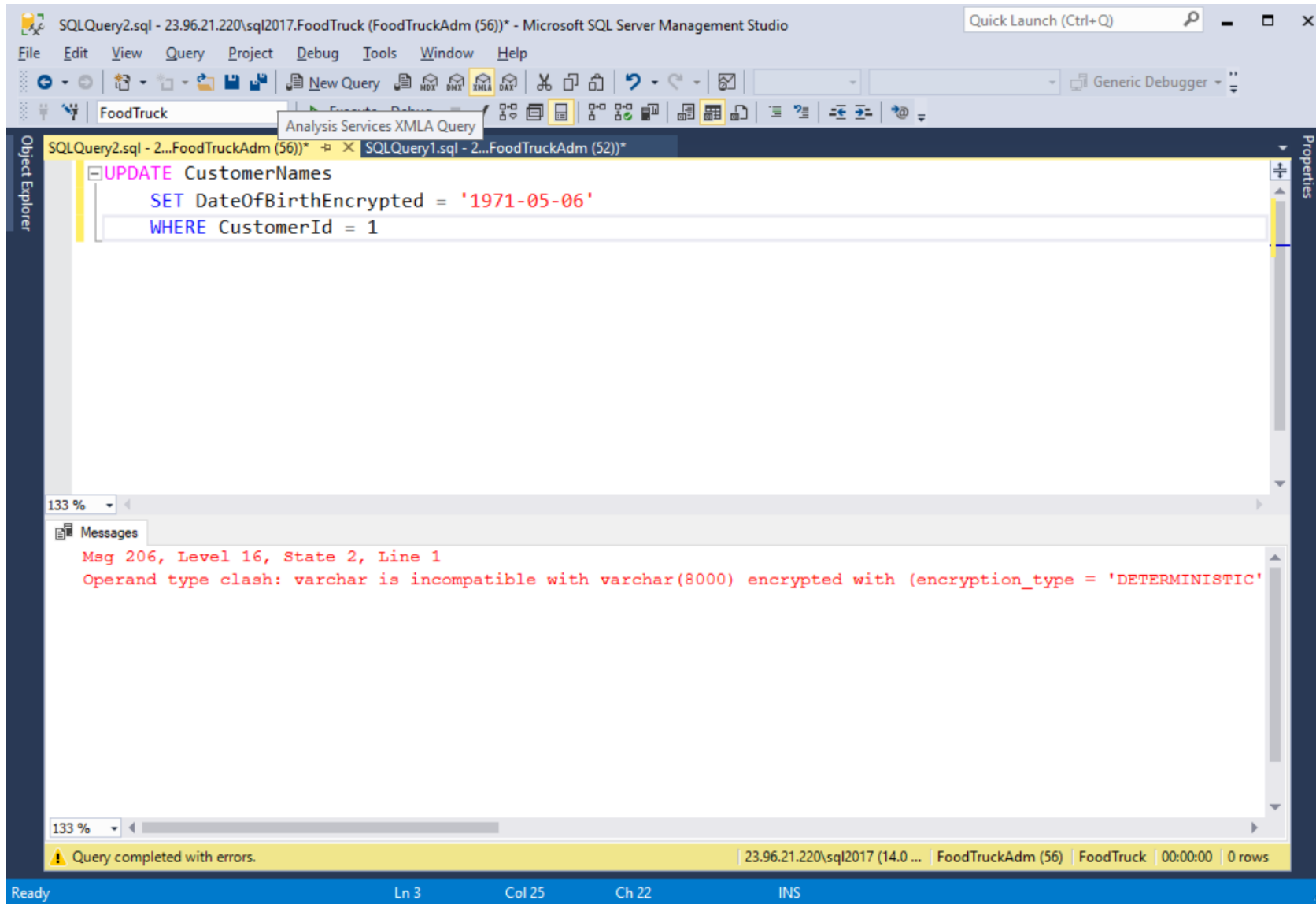
public async static Task<string> GetToken(string authority, string resource, string scope)
{
    var authContext = new AuthenticationContext(authority);
    AuthenticationResult result = await authContext.AcquireTokenAsync(resource, _clientCredential);

    if (result == null)
        throw new InvalidOperationException("Failed to obtain the access token");
    return result.AccessToken;
}
```

# Encrypting Connection from SSMS



# SSMS Functionality Changes



# Editing Encrypted Data in SSMS

Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio window showing a query result for the `CustomerNames` table.

Query Text:

```
SELECT CustomerId, FirstName, MiddleInitial, LastName, StreetAddress, City, State, ZipCode, EmailAddress, Telephone, DateOfBirth, Ssn, ZipCodeEncrypted, DateOfBirthEncrypted, SsnEncrypted
FROM CustomerNames
WHERE (CustomerId = 587)
```

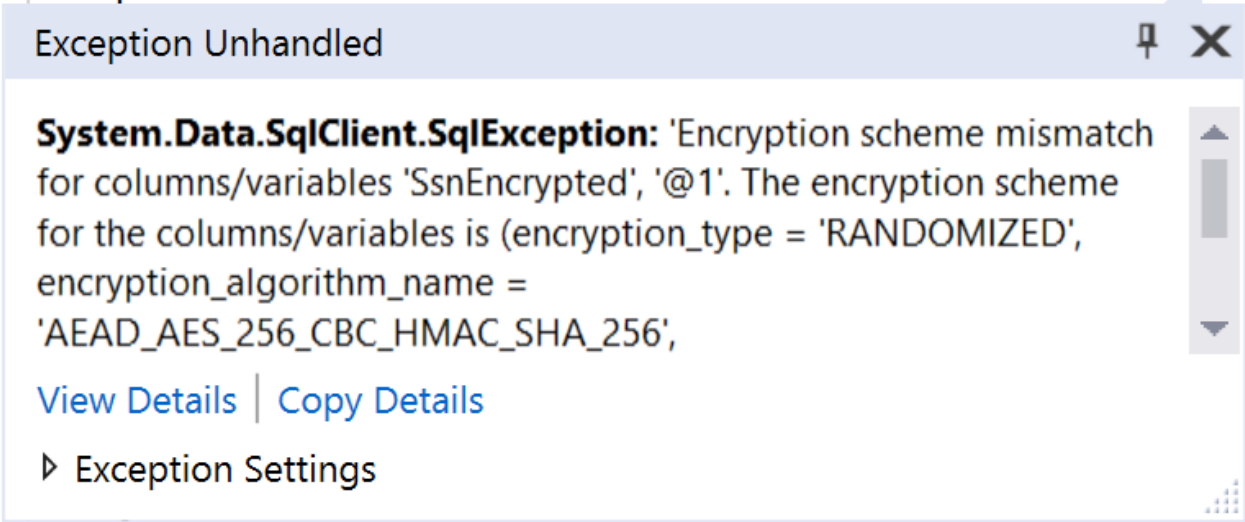
Result Set:

	CustomerId	FirstName	MiddleInitial	LastName	StreetAddress	City	State	ZipCode	EmailAddress	Telephone
▶	587	Margaret	E	Cherry	2486 Chenowet...	Spring Hill	TN	37174	MargaretECherr...	931-489-7239
•	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL

Navigation: 1 of 1 | Cell is Read Only.

# What Happens When Searching Randomized Data?

```
con.Open();
using (SqlCommand cmd = new SqlCommand("SELECT FirstName, LastName, ZipCoc
{
    using (SqlDataReader dr = cmd.ExecuteReader())
    {
        }
    }
}
```



The dialog box displays the following error message:

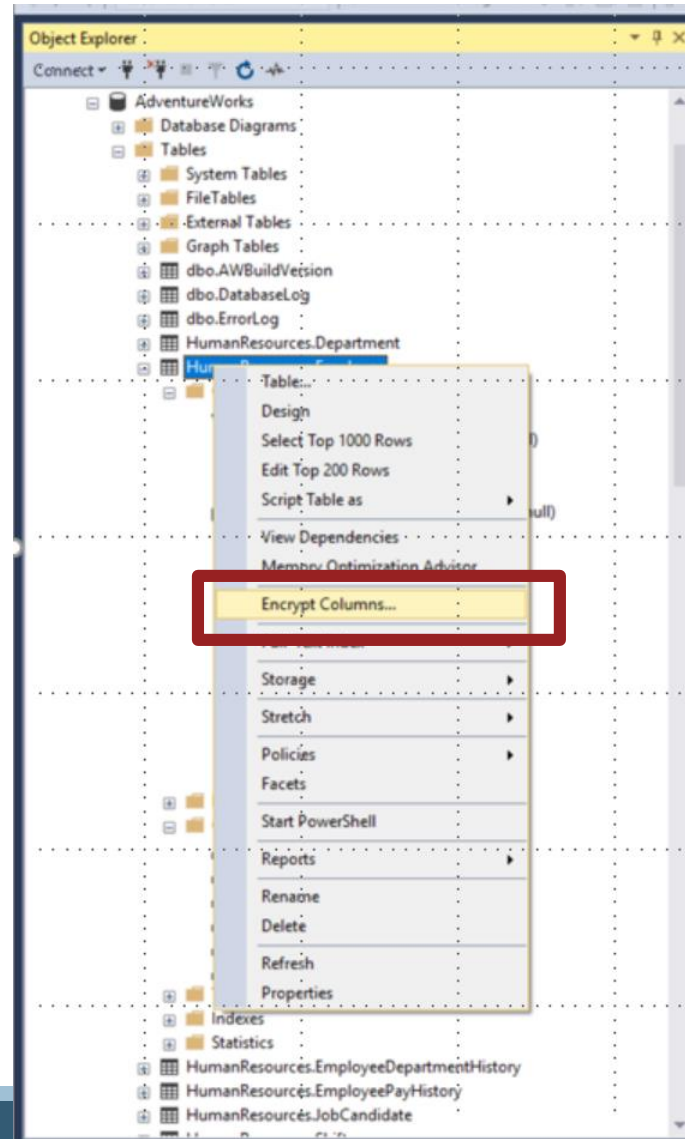
**System.Data.SqlClient.SqlException:** 'Encryption scheme mismatch for columns/variables 'SsnEncrypted', '@1'. The encryption scheme for the columns/variables is (encryption\_type = 'RANDOMIZED', encryption\_algorithm\_name = 'AEAD\_AES\_256\_CBC\_HMAC\_SHA\_256',

[View Details](#) | [Copy Details](#)

▶ Exception Settings

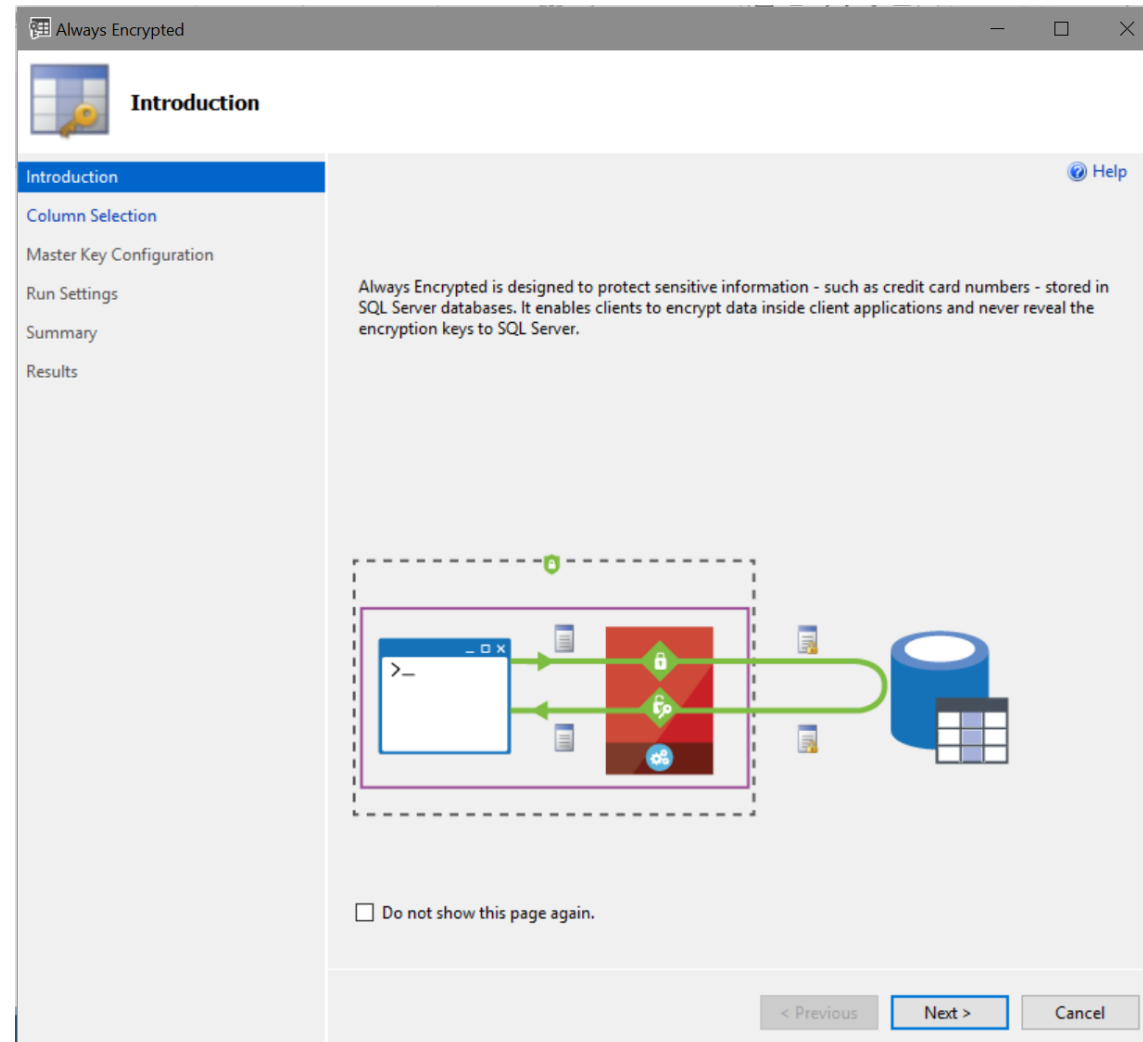
To the right of the dialog box, the text `{zipCode}` and `{c` is visible.

# Always Encrypted Wizard

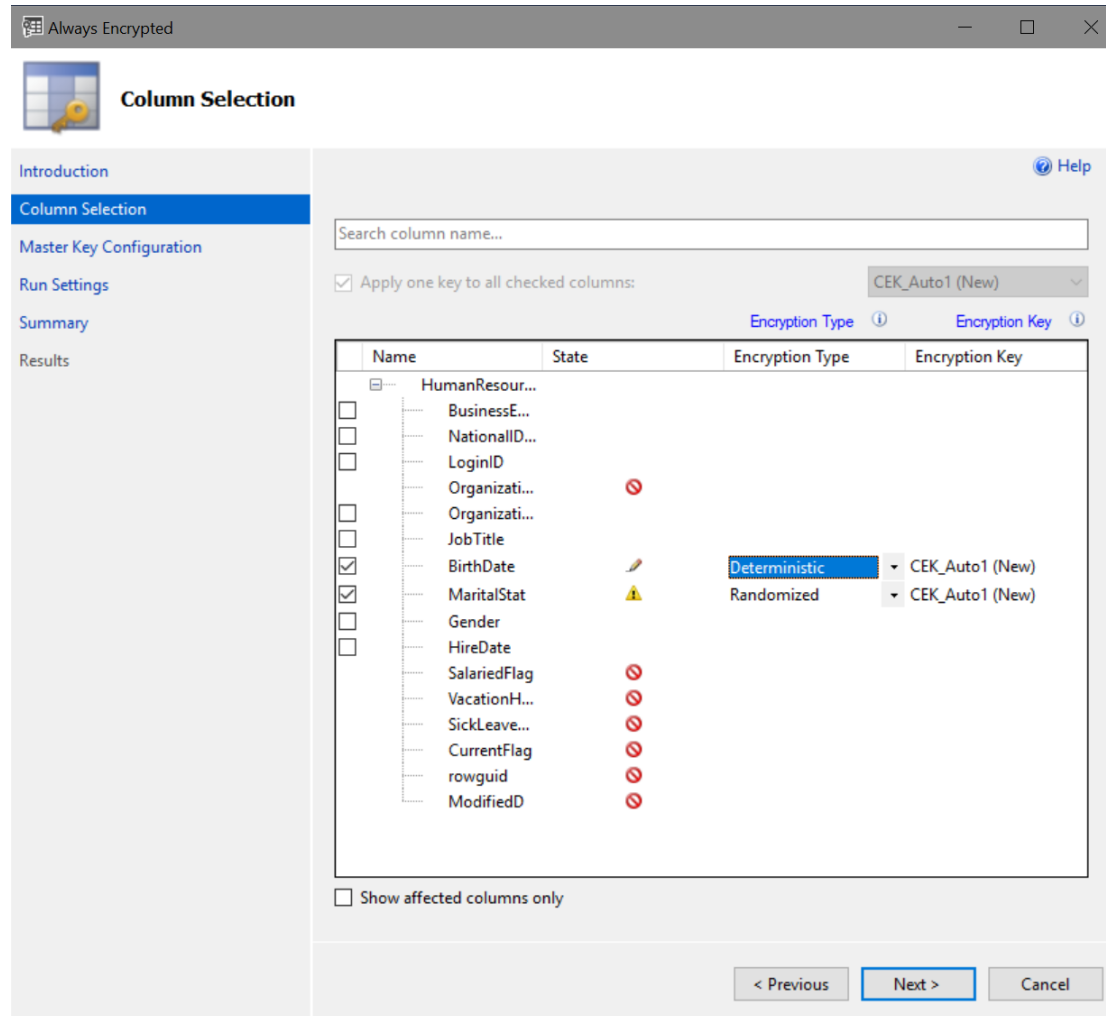




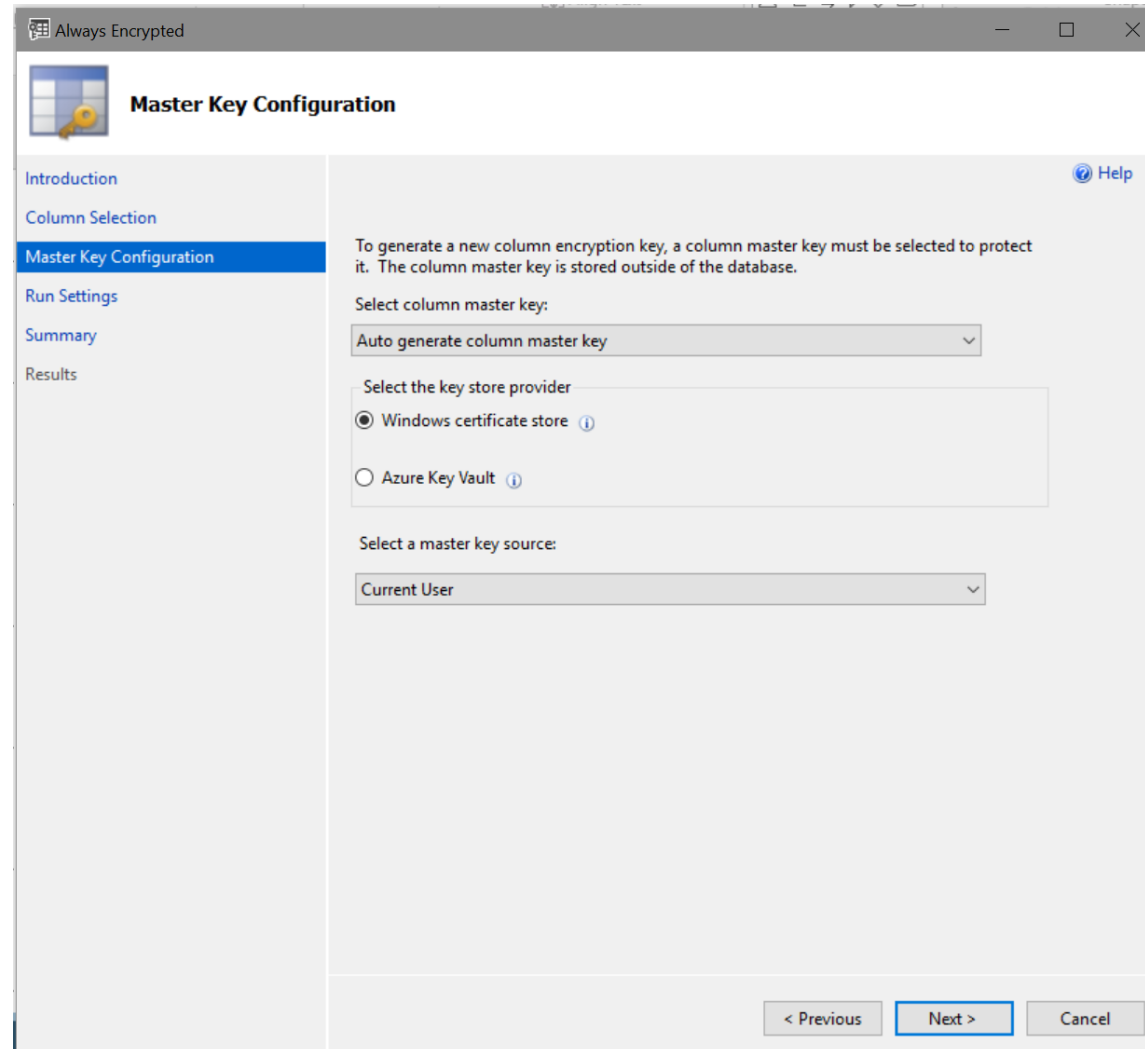
# Always Encrypted Wizard



# Selecting Columns to be Encrypted



# Creating a Master Encryption Key



The screenshot shows the 'Master Key Configuration' window within the 'Always Encrypted' application. The window has a title bar with the text 'Always Encrypted' and standard window controls. On the left is a navigation pane with links: 'Introduction', 'Column Selection', 'Master Key Configuration' (which is highlighted), 'Run Settings', 'Summary', and 'Results'. The main area is titled 'Master Key Configuration' and includes a 'Help' icon in the top right. It contains the following text and controls:

To generate a new column encryption key, a column master key must be selected to protect it. The column master key is stored outside of the database.

Select column master key:

Auto generate column master key

Select the key store provider:

- ☒ Windows certificate store ⓘ
- ☐ Azure Key Vault ⓘ

Select a master key source:

Current User

At the bottom right, there are three buttons: '< Previous', 'Next >' (which is highlighted with a blue border), and 'Cancel'.

# Always Encrypted Columns DDL

```
CREATE TABLE [HumanResources].[Employee]
(
    [BusinessEntityID] [int] NOT NULL,
    [NationalIDNumber] [nvarchar](15) NOT NULL,
    [LoginID] [nvarchar](256) NOT NULL,
    [OrganizationNode] [hierarchyid] NULL,
    [OrganizationLevel] AS ([OrganizationNode].[GetLevel]()),
    [JobTitle] [nvarchar](50) NOT NULL,
    [BirthDate] [date] ENCRYPTED WITH (COLUMN_ENCRYPTION_KEY = [CEK_Auto1],
        ENCRYPTION_TYPE = Deterministic, ALGORITHM = 'AEAD_AES_256_CBC_HMAC_SHA_256') NOT NULL,
    [MaritalStatus] [nchar](1) NOT NULL,
    [Gender] [nchar](1) COLLATE Latin1_General_BIN2 ENCRYPTED WITH
        (COLUMN_ENCRYPTION_KEY = [CEK_Auto1],
        ENCRYPTION_TYPE = Randomized, ALGORITHM = 'AEAD_AES_256_CBC_HMAC_SHA_256') NOT NULL,
    [HireDate] [date] NOT NULL,
    [SalariedFlag] [dbo].[Flag] NOT NULL,
    CONSTRAINT [PK_Employee_BusinessEntityID]
        PRIMARY KEY (BusinessEntityID)
)
GO
```

# Always Encrypted Search Implications

- To be searched, columns must use deterministic encryption
- You can only search on the full value (no range searches or LIKE clauses)
- Consider storing a subset of the field to be searched (last 4 of social)

# Always Encrypted Documentation

## **Microsoft Documentation**

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/sql/relational-databases/security/encryption/always-encrypted-database-engine>

## **Simple Talk Article**

<https://www.red-gate.com/simple-talk/sql/database-administration/sql-server-encryption-always-encrypted/>

# Simple Demographics Often Identify People Uniquely

L. Sweeney, Simple Demographics Often Identify People Uniquely. Carnegie Mellon University, Data Privacy Working Paper 3. Pittsburgh 2000.

## **Simple Demographics Often Identify People Uniquely**

**Latanya Sweeney**  
Carnegie Mellon University  
*latanya@andrew.cmu.edu*

<https://dataprivacylab.org/projects/identifiability/paper1.pdf>

# SQL Injection



Injection attacks are still ranked #1 on the OWASP top ten list of security vulnerabilities

But we are actually seeing SQL Injection  
decline

# Vulnerable Code

```
String sql = @"SELECT CustomerId, FirstName, LastName, Ssn
                FROM Customers WHERE CustomerId = '" + customerId + "'";

using (SqlCommand cmd = new SqlCommand(sql, dbConnection))
{
    using (SqlDataReader reader = cmd.ExecuteReader())
    {
        if (reader.Read())
        {
            customer = new Customer()
            {
                CustomerId = reader.GetString(0),
                FirstName = reader.GetString(1),
                LastName = reader.GetString(2),
                Ssn = reader.GetString(3)
            };
        }
    }
}
```

# Safe Code

```
String sql = @"SELECT CustomerId, FirstName, LastName, Ssn
                FROM Customers WHERE CustomerId = @customerId";

using (SqlCommand cmd = new SqlCommand(sql, dbConnection))
{
    cmd.Parameters.Add("@customerId", customerId);
    using (SqlDataReader reader = cmd.ExecuteReader())
    {
        if (reader.Read())
        {
            customer = new Customer()
            {
                CustomerId = reader.GetString(0),
                FirstName = reader.GetString(1),
                LastName = reader.GetString(2),
                Ssn = reader.GetString(3)
            };
        }
    }
}
```

# Defeating SQL Injection

## **Parameterize Your SQL**

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Don't try to escape your own SQL strings. There are too many scenarios for us to cover

## **Use an ORM**

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Modern ORMs automatically parameterize SQL statements for you

## **Scan Your Code**

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Code analysis in Visual Studio or tools like Sonarqube and Puma Scan can detect vulnerable SQL

# Final Thoughts

# Thank You

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<https://github.com/DavidCBerry13/sql-server-security/>