

Setup Server 2019 Enterprise CA 2/5: Offline Root CA

 vmlabblog.com/2019/09/setup-server-2019-enterprise-ca-2-5-offline-root-ca

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September 25, 2019

Previous: [Overview](#)

Updated 06-08-2020: Fixed typo CAPolicy.inf and removed incorrect screenshot.

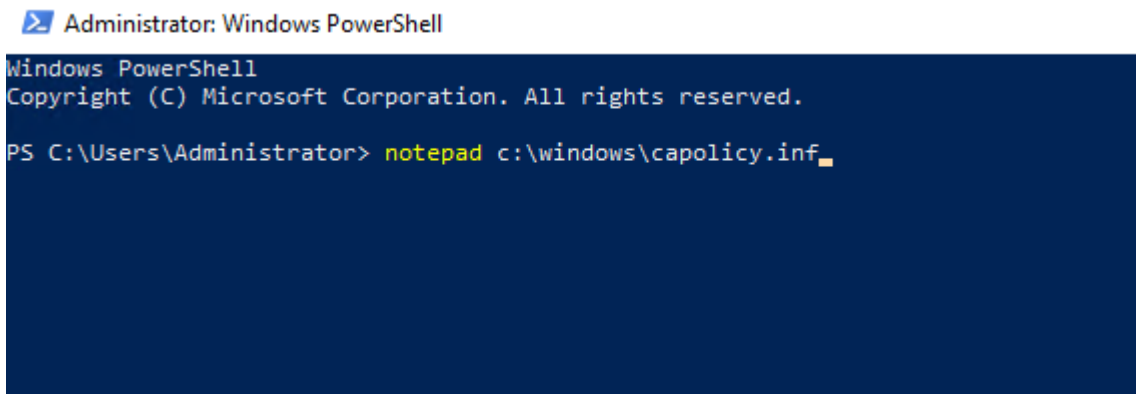
The Setup will start with the Offline Root CA server. This server will only be used to authorize the Subordinate Server and after that it will be turned off and only turned on to create and renew Subordinate CA Certificates. The offline CA Server is the OFFENT-CA01 and is a non-domainjoined server.

Setup Offline Root CA

First we will create the CAPolicy.inf. This is a configuration file that defines multiple settings that are applied to the root CA certificate and all other certificates issued by the root CA. This file needs to be created before the ADCS is installed on the root CA. For more information about the Syntax go [here](#).

1. Start powershell and type the following line and press “enter”:

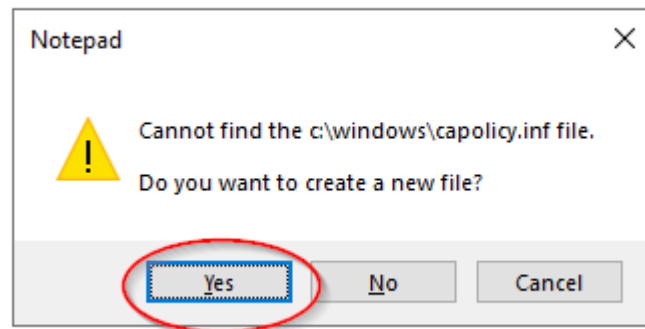
```
notepad c:\windows\capolicy.inf
```



```
Administrator: Windows PowerShell
Windows PowerShell
Copyright (C) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

PS C:\Users\Administrator> notepad c:\windows\capolicy.inf
```

2. Select “yes” to create the new file



3. Because this is a lab setup I will only setup some basic settings for the Root CA. I will configure the following settings:

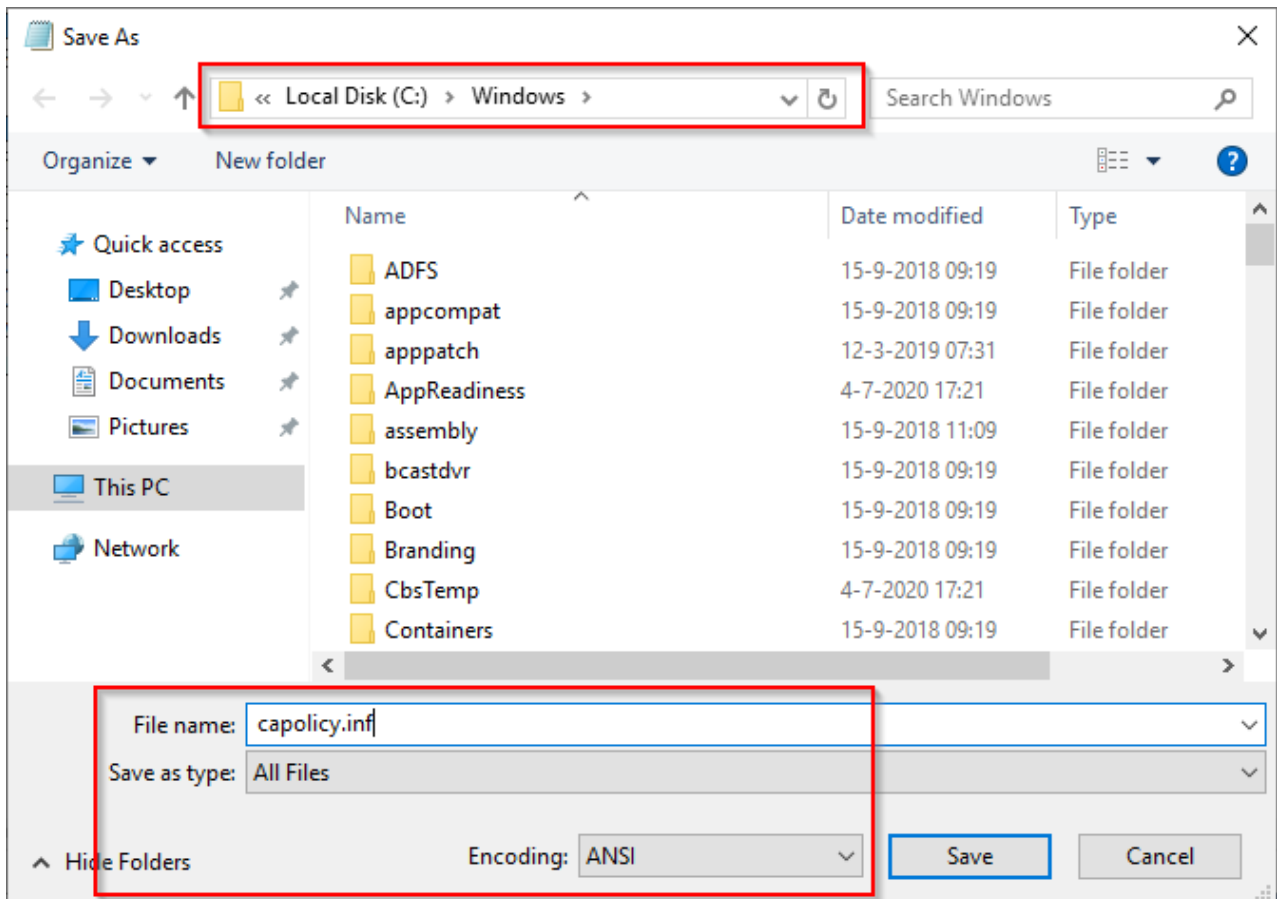
- Renewalinformation for the CA certificate.
- The validity period for the base CRL.
- Disable the AlternateSignatureAlgorithm (more info on why can be found [here](#)).
- Disable the DefaultTemplates, these are not used because this is an offline CA.

For this lab I will use a random generated OID which is based on the Microsoft OID. Because these generated OID may not be unique you should request a private enterprise number at IANA ([link](#)). This number can be added to the CAPolicy.inf.

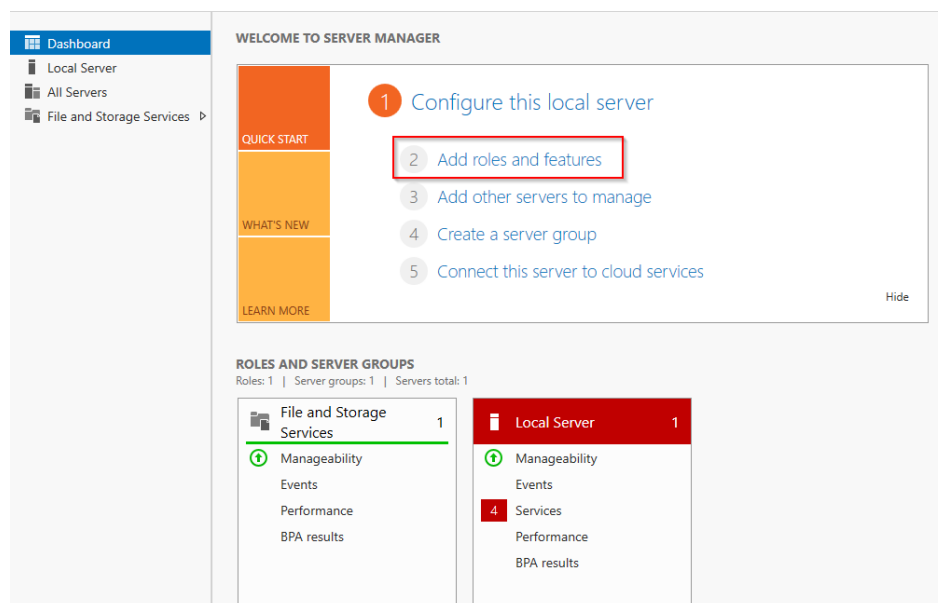
```
[Version]
Signature="$Windows NT$"
```

```
[Certsrv_Server]
RenewalKeyLength=4096
RenewalValidityPeriod=Years
RenewalValidityPeriodUnits=20
CRLPeriod=Years
CRLPeriodUnits=1
AlternateSignatureAlgorithm=0
LoadDefaultTemplates=0
```

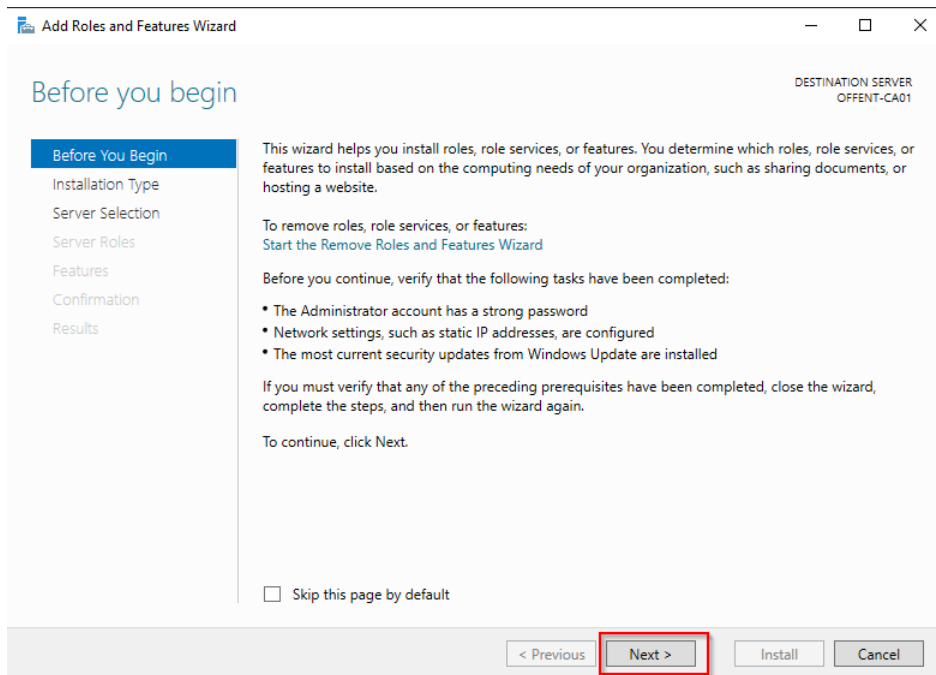
4. Save the file as "capolicy.inf" using "All files" and "ANSI" Encoding.



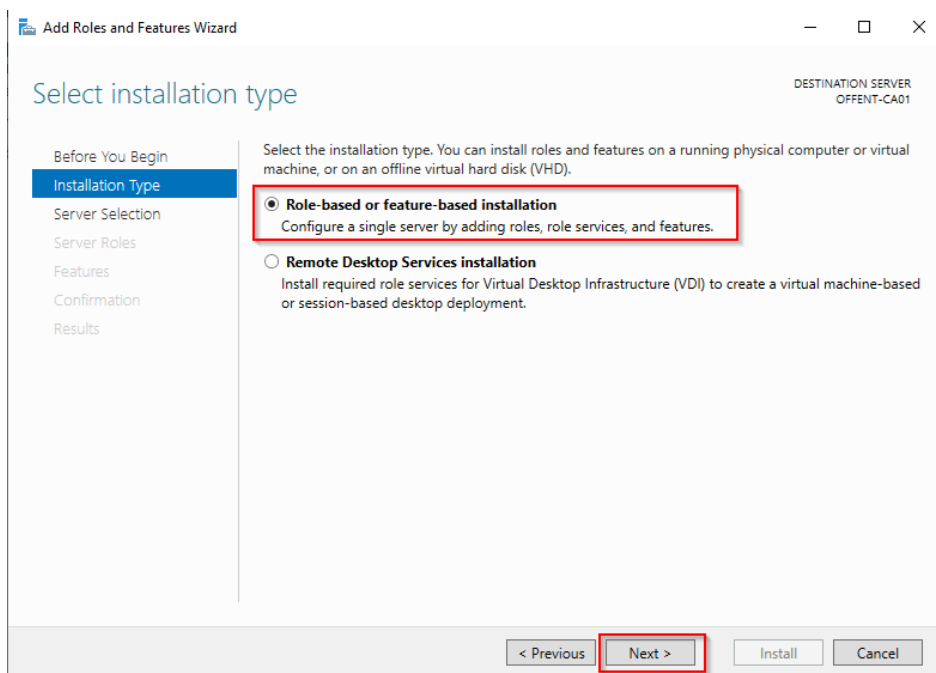
5. Now we the role can be added and configured. Start the Server manager and select “Add roles and features”



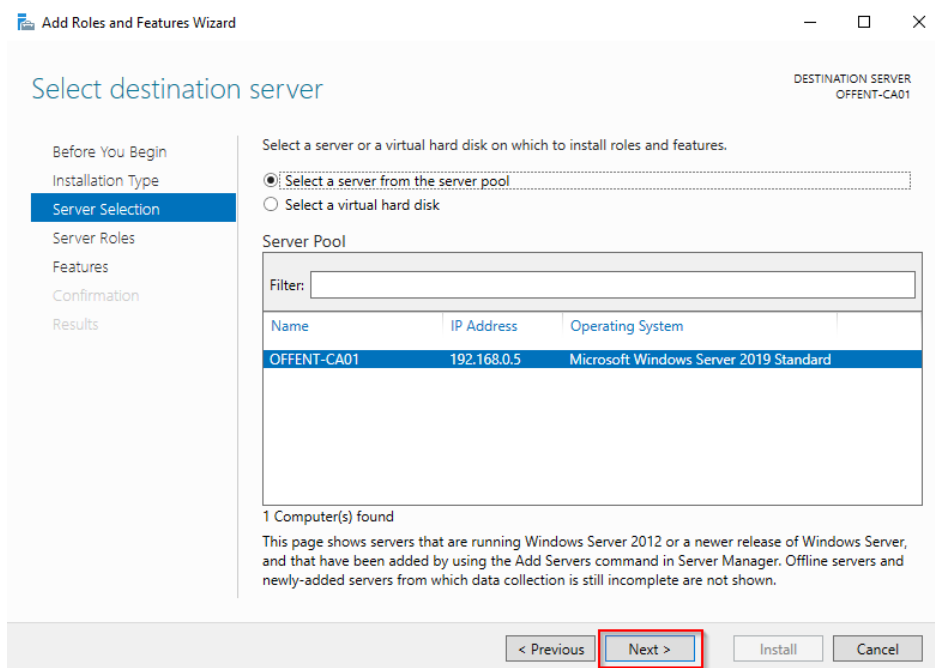
6. The “Add Roles and Features Wizard” will start, press “Next” to continue.



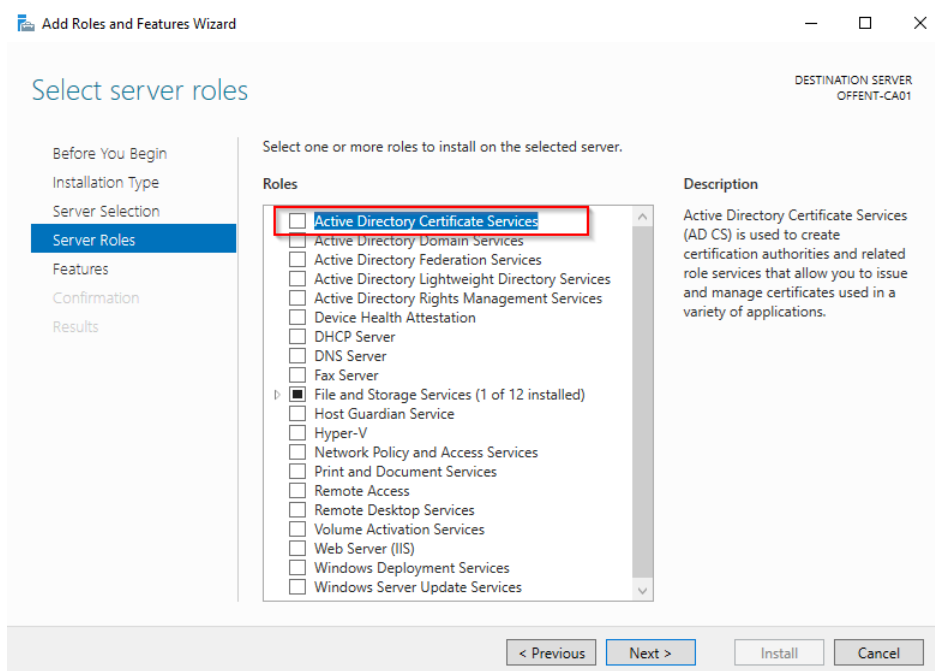
7. Select “Role-based or feature-based installation” and press “Next”



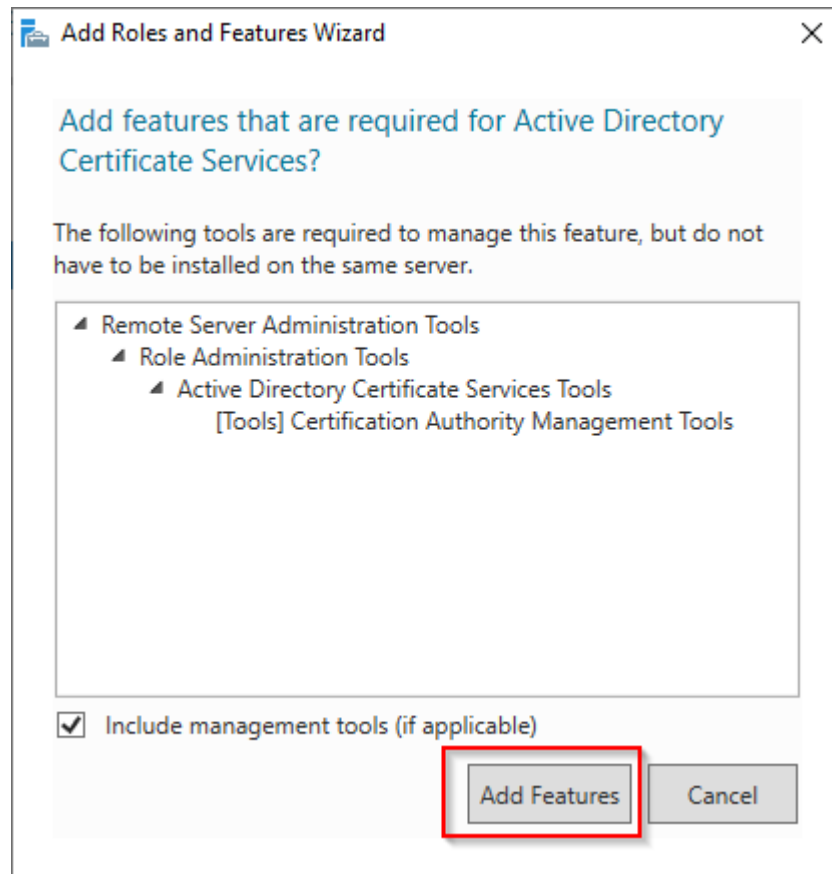
8. Use the default settings and press “Next” to continue.



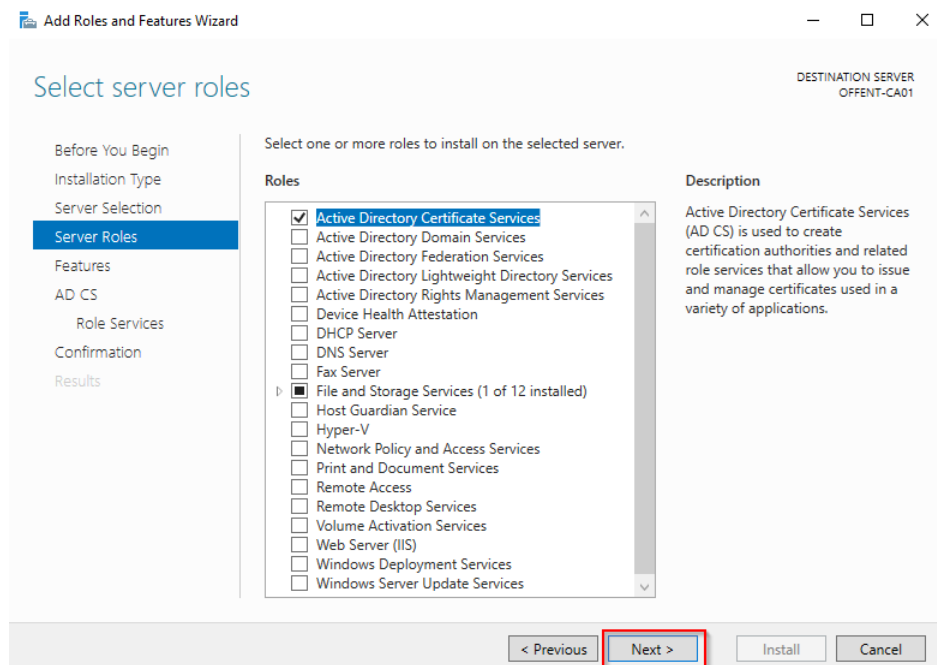
9. Select “Active Directory Certificate Services”



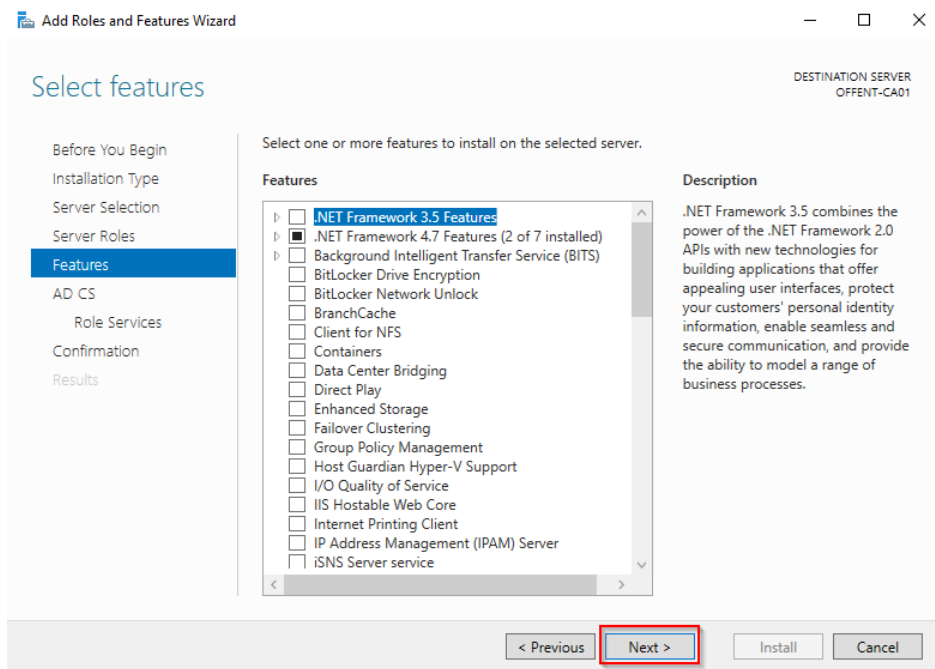
10. A pop-up will appear, press “Add Features” to continue.



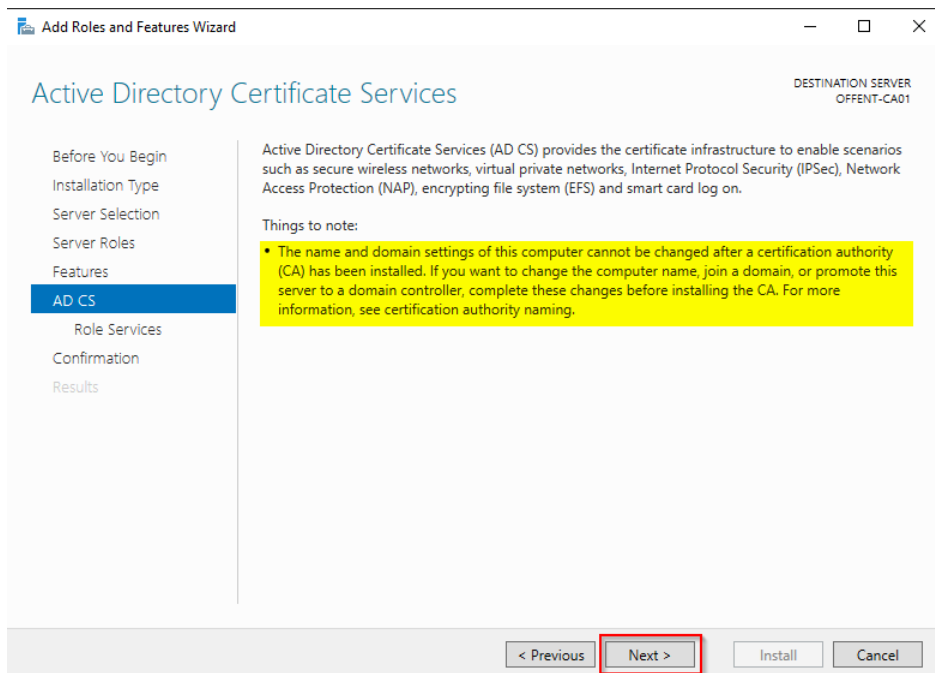
11. Press “Next” to continue



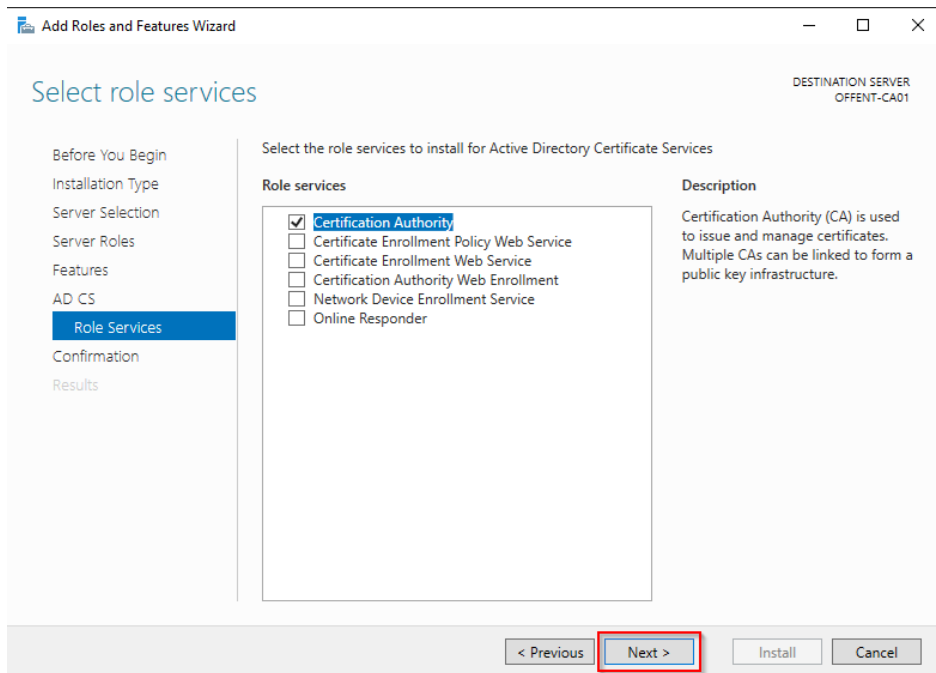
12. Press “Next” to continue.



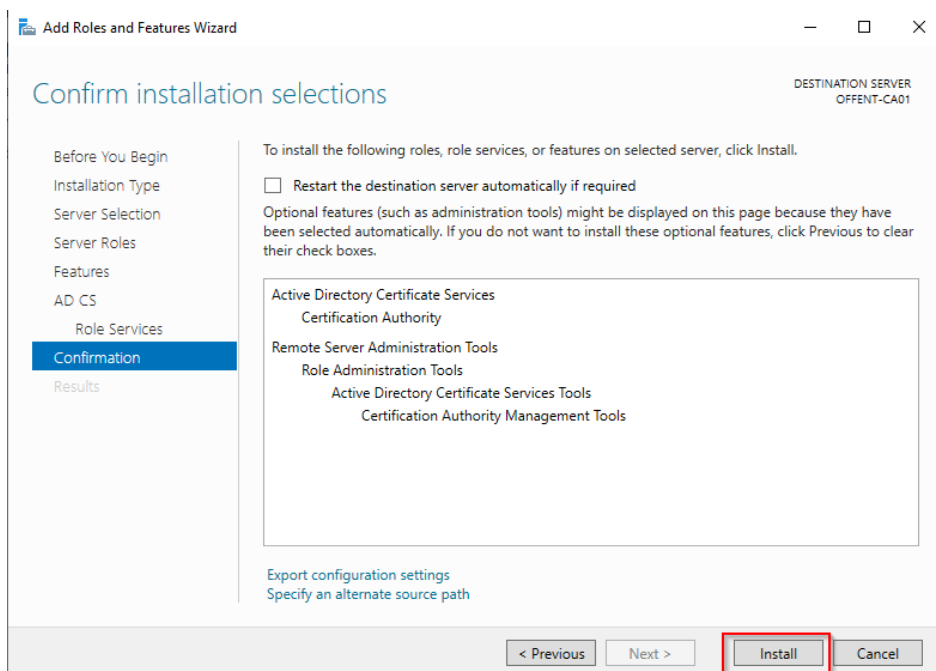
13. Check if the Servername is correct and press “Next” to continue.



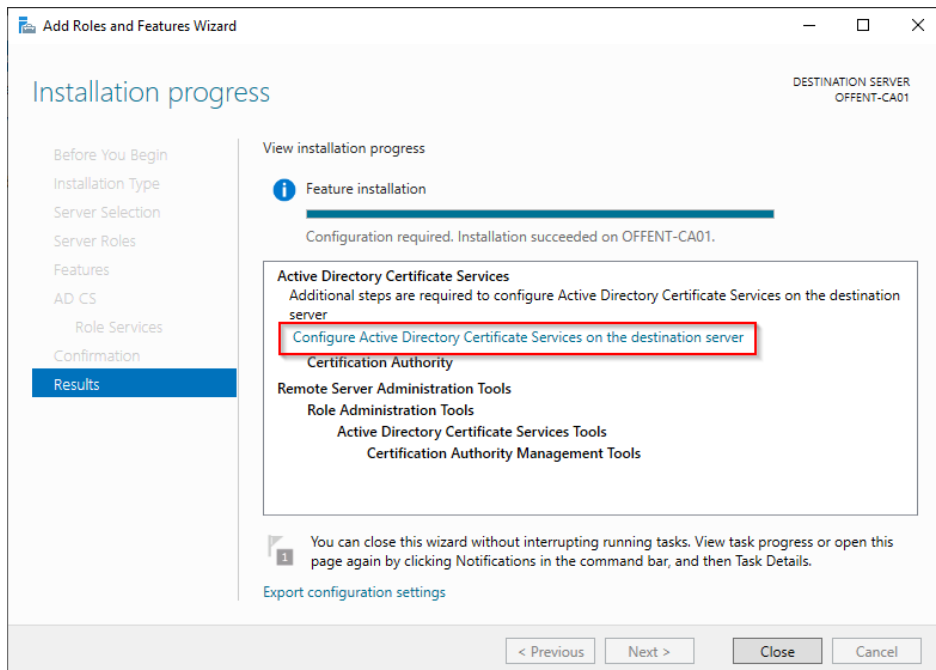
14. Use the default settings, for the Root CA only the “Certification Authority” role is needed.



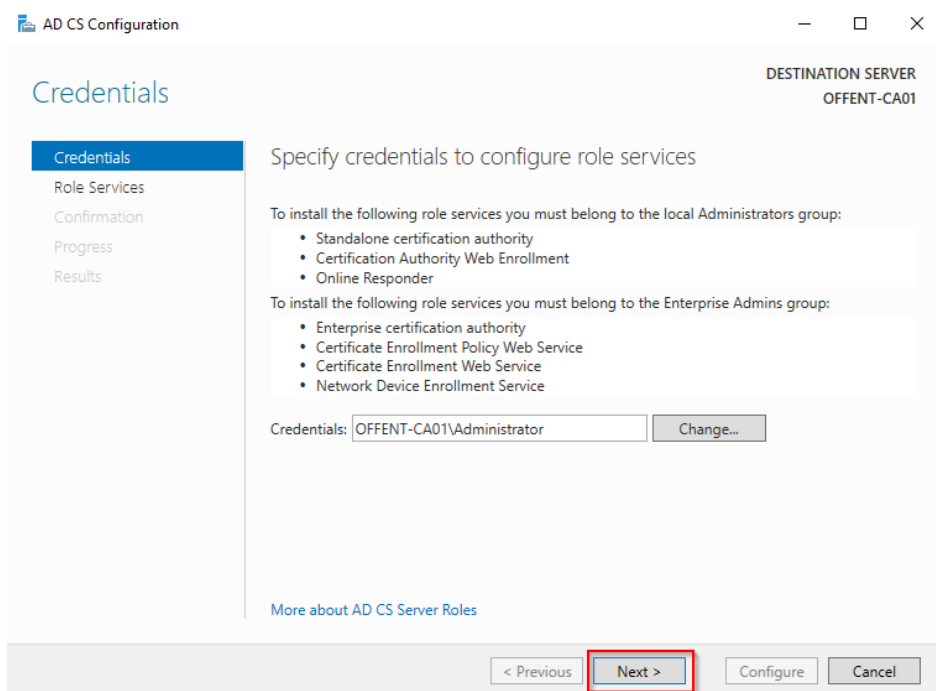
15. Press “install” to add the Active Directory Certificate Services to the server.



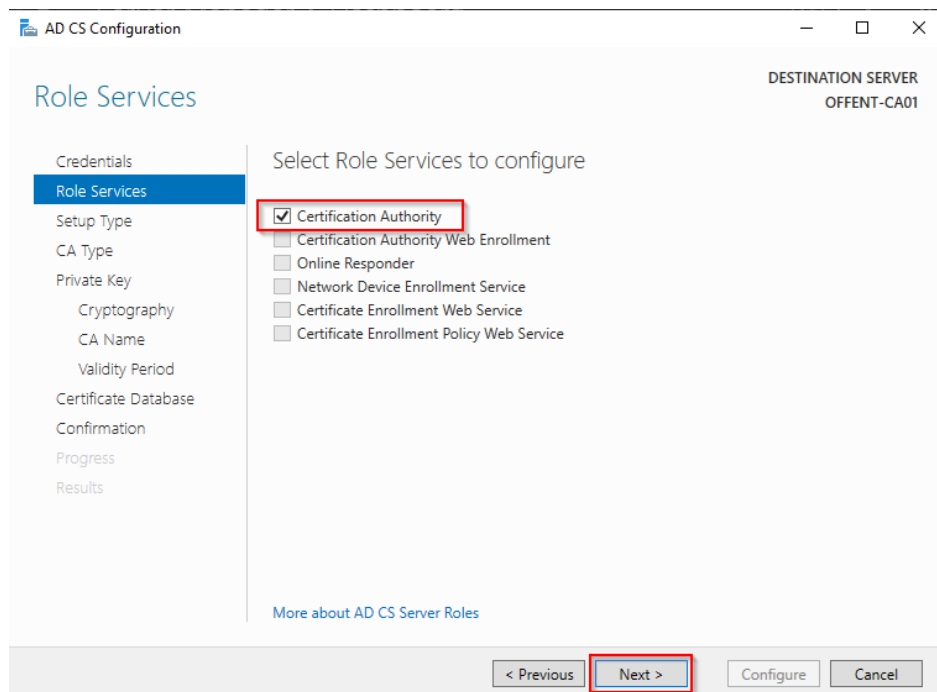
16. When the installation has completed, press the link “Configure Active Directory Certificate Services on the destination server”



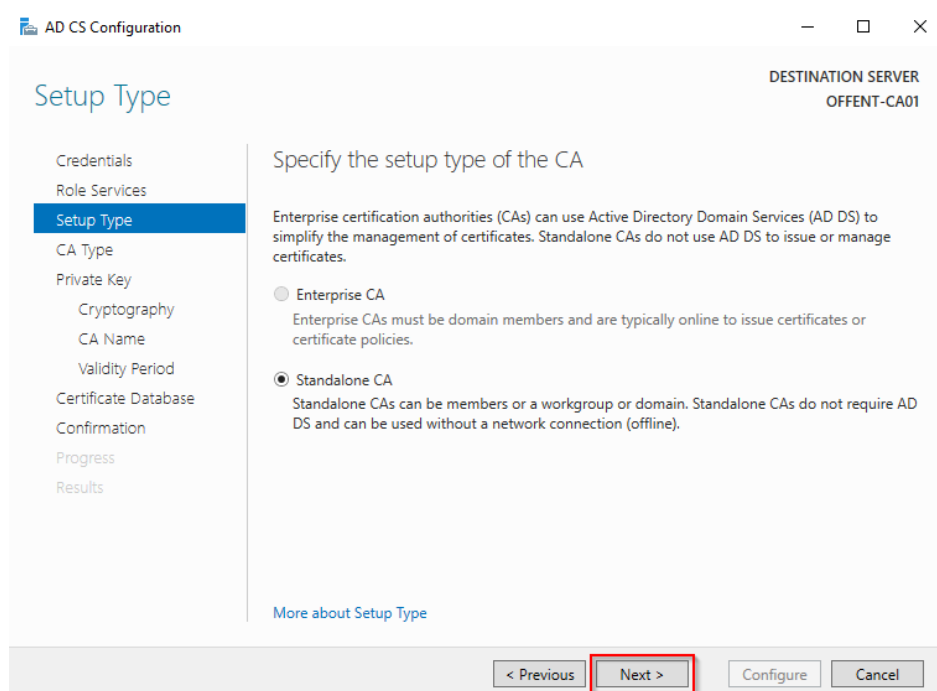
17. Use the default settings and press “Next”



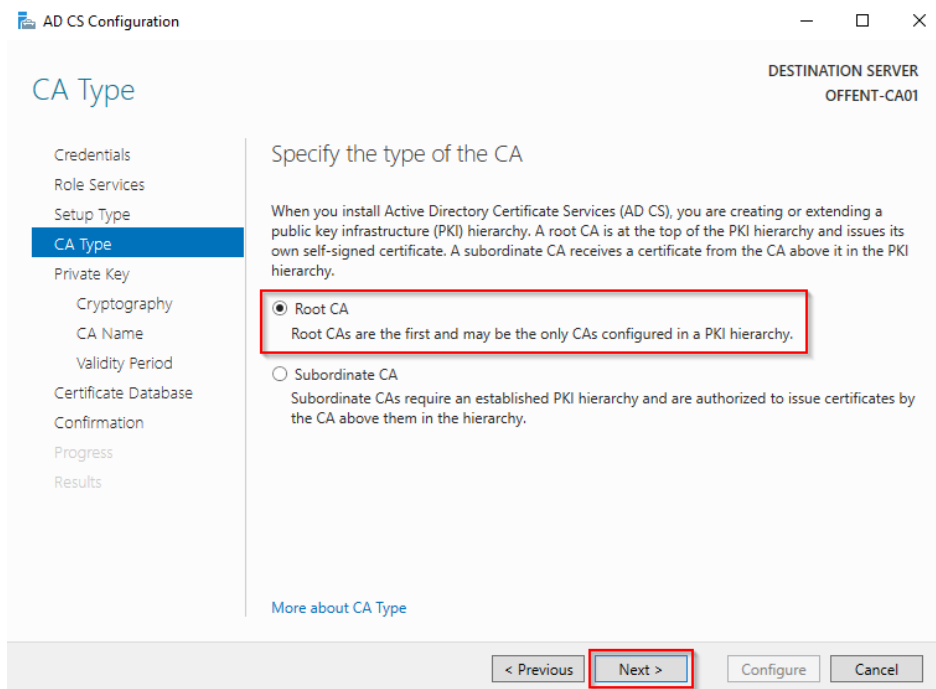
18. Select “Certification Authority” and press “Next”



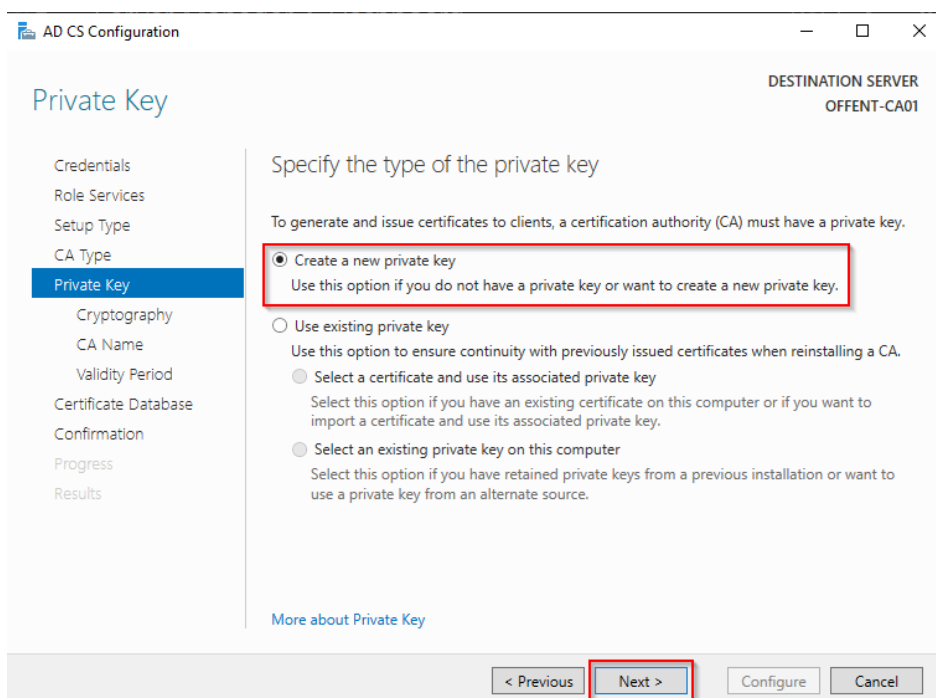
19. Because this server is non-domain joined only Standalone CA can be selected. Press “Next” to continue.



20. As this server is the root of the PKI hierarchy select “Root CA” and press “Next”



21. Select “Create a new private key” and press “Next” to continue.



22. Because this is the Root CA Certificate I use a longer Key length of 4096. This will increase the security.

AD CS Configuration

DESTINATION SERVER
OFFENT-CA01

Cryptography for CA

Credentials
Role Services
Setup Type
CA Type
Private Key
Cryptography
CA Name
Validity Period
Certificate Database
Confirmation
Progress
Results

Specify the cryptographic options

Select a cryptographic provider:
RSA#Microsoft Software Key Storage Provider

Key length:
4096

Select the hash algorithm for signing certificates issued by this CA:

- SHA256
- SHA384
- SHA512
- SHA1
- MD5

☐ Allow administrator interaction when the private key is accessed by the CA.

[More about Cryptography](#)

< Previous **Next >** Configure Cancel

23. Use the default settings and press “Next” to continue.

AD CS Configuration

DESTINATION SERVER
OFFENT-CA01

CA Name

Credentials
Role Services
Setup Type
CA Type
Private Key
Cryptography
CA Name
Validity Period
Certificate Database
Confirmation
Progress
Results

Specify the name of the CA

Type a common name to identify this certification authority (CA). This name is added to all certificates issued by the CA. Distinguished name suffix values are automatically generated but can be modified.

Common name for this CA:
OFFENT-CA01-CA

Distinguished name suffix:

Preview of distinguished name:
CN=OFFENT-CA01-CA

[More about CA Name](#)

< Previous **Next >** Configure Cancel

24. Because this server will be used in a Test Environment I extend the validity period to 10 years. Press “Next” to continue.

The screenshot shows the 'Validity Period' step of the AD CS Configuration wizard. The left sidebar contains a list of steps: Credentials, Role Services, Setup Type, CA Type, Private Key, Cryptography, CA Name, **Validity Period**, Certificate Database, Confirmation, Progress, and Results. The main area is titled 'Specify the validity period' and includes the instruction 'Select the validity period for the certificate generated for this certification authority (CA):'. Below this, there is a text box containing '10' and a dropdown menu set to 'Years'. A red box highlights these two elements. Below the input, it says 'CA expiration Date: 9/20/2029 10:01:00 AM'. A note states: 'The validity period configured for this CA certificate should exceed the validity period for the certificates it will issue.' At the bottom, there are four buttons: '< Previous', 'Next >', 'Configure', and 'Cancel'. The 'Next >' button is highlighted with a red box.

AD CS Configuration

DESTINATION SERVER
OFFENT-CA01

Validity Period

Credentials
Role Services
Setup Type
CA Type
Private Key
Cryptography
CA Name
Validity Period
Certificate Database
Confirmation
Progress
Results

Specify the validity period

Select the validity period for the certificate generated for this certification authority (CA):

10 Years

CA expiration Date: 9/20/2029 10:01:00 AM

The validity period configured for this CA certificate should exceed the validity period for the certificates it will issue.

[More about Validity Period](#)

< Previous **Next >** Configure Cancel

25. Use the default settings and press “Next” to continue.

The screenshot shows the 'CA Database' step of the AD CS Configuration wizard. The left sidebar contains a list of steps: Credentials, Role Services, Setup Type, CA Type, Private Key, Cryptography, CA Name, Validity Period, **Certificate Database**, Confirmation, Progress, and Results. The main area is titled 'Specify the database locations' and includes two text boxes. The first is labeled 'Certificate database location:' and contains the text 'C:\Windows\system32\CertLog'. The second is labeled 'Certificate database log location:' and also contains 'C:\Windows\system32\CertLog'. At the bottom, there are four buttons: '< Previous', 'Next >', 'Configure', and 'Cancel'. The 'Next >' button is highlighted with a red box.

AD CS Configuration

DESTINATION SERVER
OFFENT-CA01

CA Database

Credentials
Role Services
Setup Type
CA Type
Private Key
Cryptography
CA Name
Validity Period
Certificate Database
Confirmation
Progress
Results

Specify the database locations

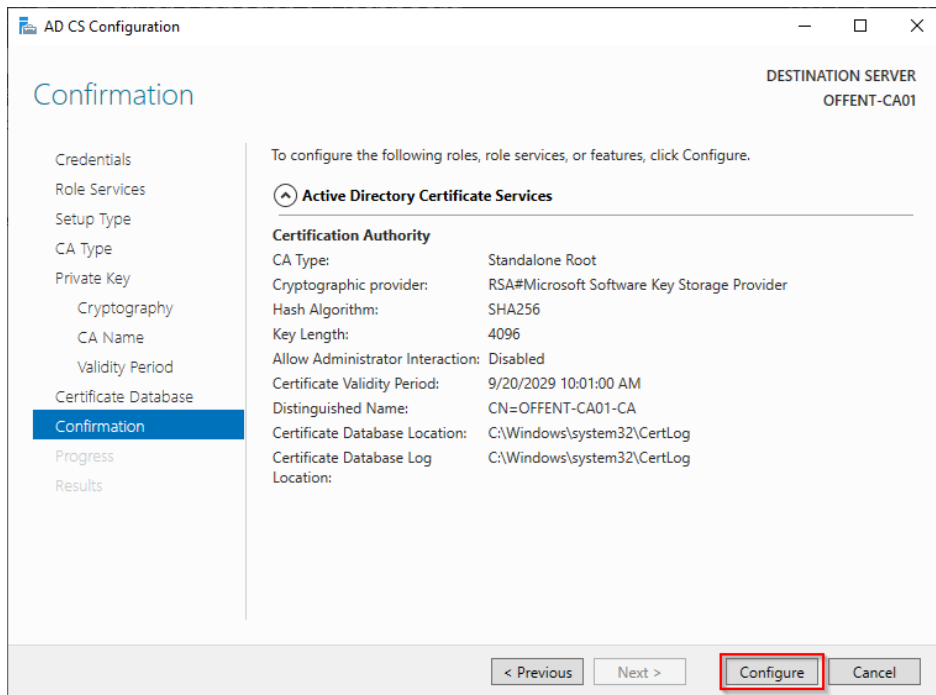
Certificate database location:
C:\Windows\system32\CertLog

Certificate database log location:
C:\Windows\system32\CertLog

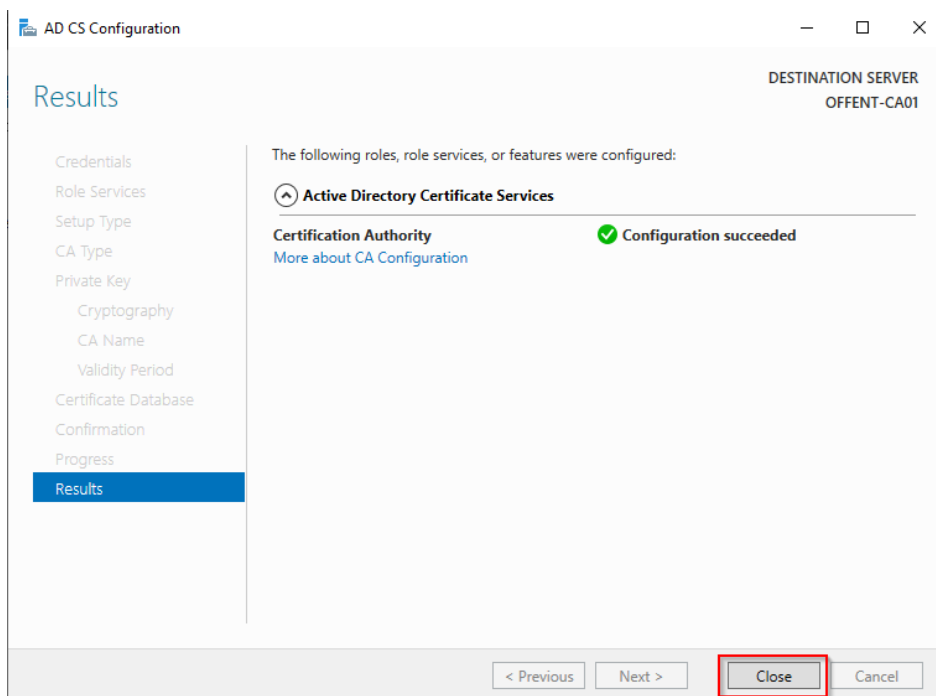
[More about CA Database](#)

< Previous **Next >** Configure Cancel

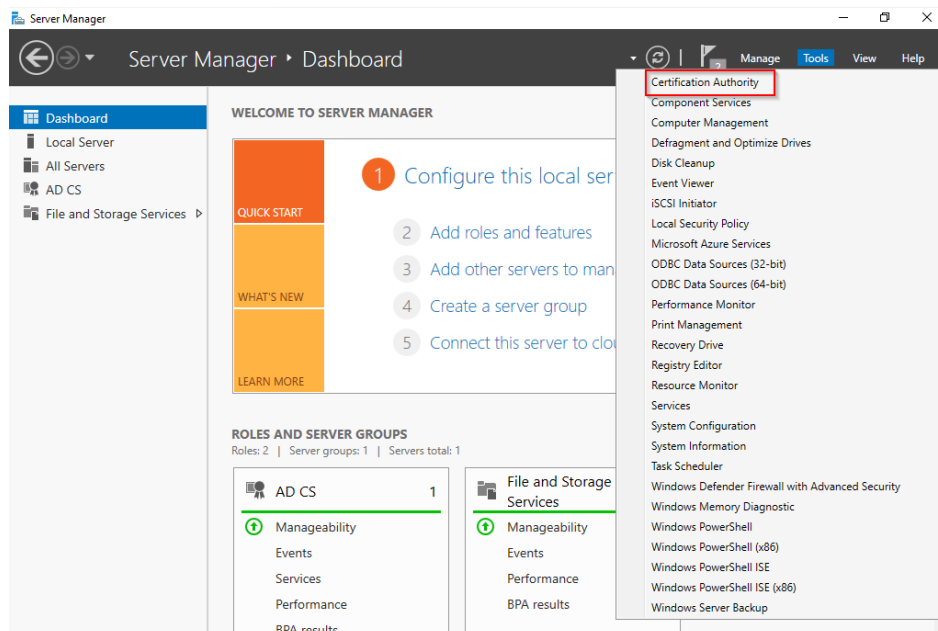
26. Press “Configure” to configure the server.



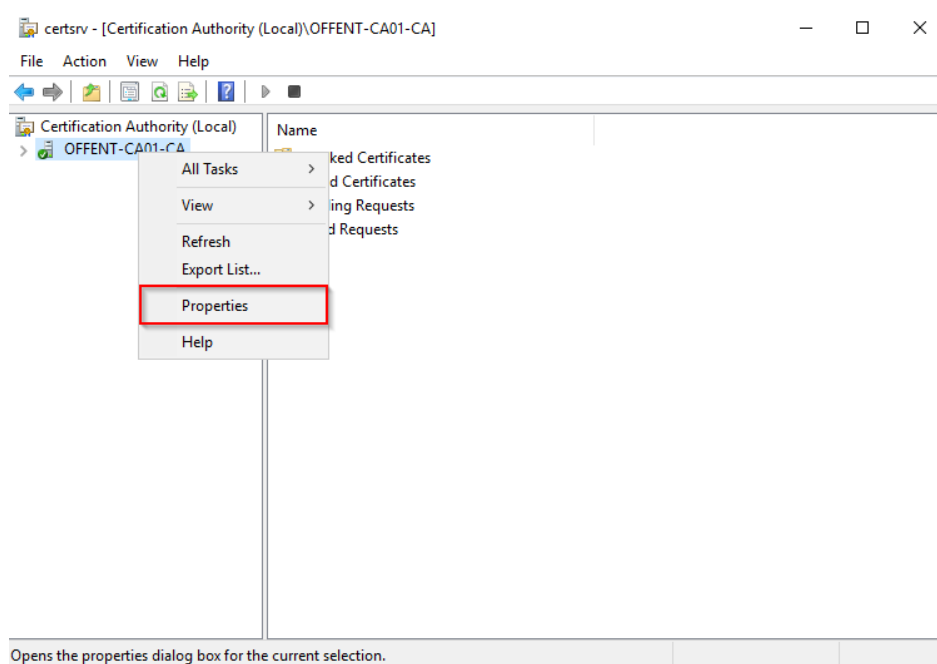
27. Press “Close” to continue.



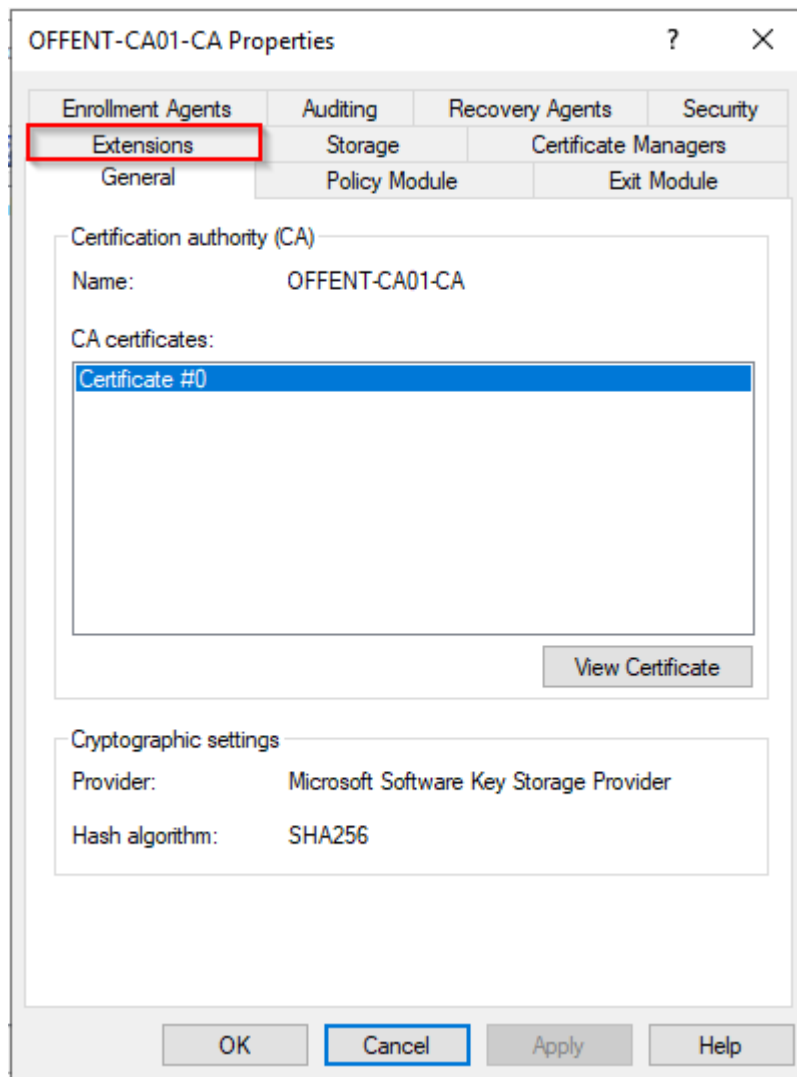
28. Press “Tools” in the Server Manager and select “Certification Authority”



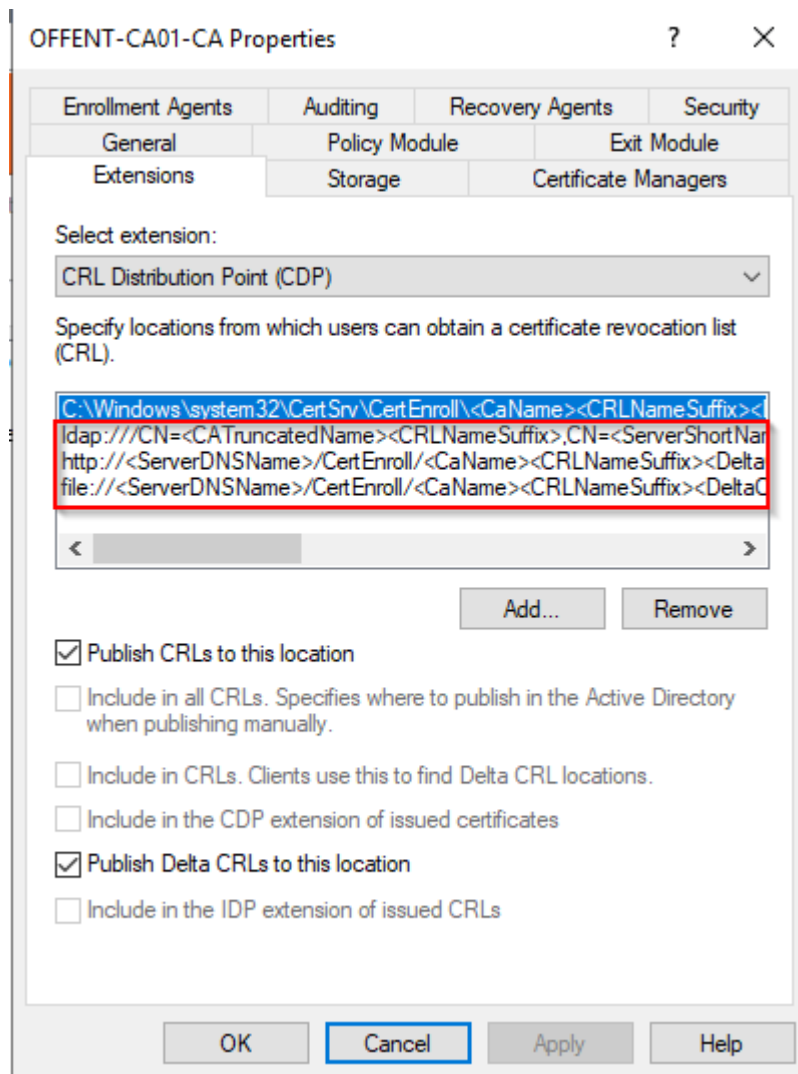
29. Right click the Servername and select “Properties”



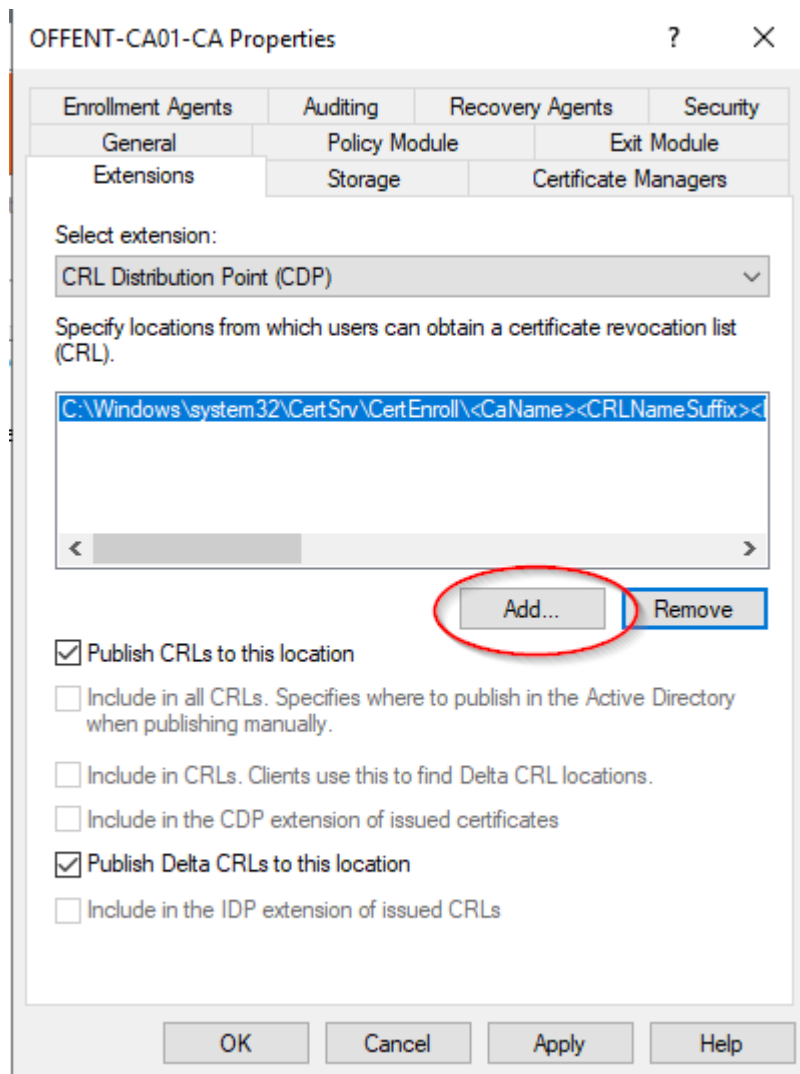
30. Select the “Extensions” tab



31. In the “Extensions tab” select the extension “CRL Distribution Point (CDP)” and remove all locations except the “C:*” Location.



32. Because this server will be offline it cannot be contacted, therefore a location needs to be added to the subordinate server. Press "Add" to add the CDP on the Subordinate Server.



33. Enter the following location and press “OK”

<http://<ServerDNSName>/CertEnroll/<CaName><CRLNameSuffix><DeltaCRLAllowed>.crl>

Replace <serverDNSName> with the dnsname of the Subordinateserver in this demo the location will be:

<http://SUBENT-CA02.vmlabblog.com/CertEnroll/<CaName><CRLNameSuffix><DeltaCRLAllowed>.crl>

Add Location [X]

A location can be any valid URL or path. Enter an HTTP, LDAP, file address, or enter a UNC or local path. To insert a variable into the URL or path, select the variable below and click Insert.

Location:
abblog.com/CertEnroll/<CaName><CRLNameSuffix><DeltaCRLAllowed>.cr|

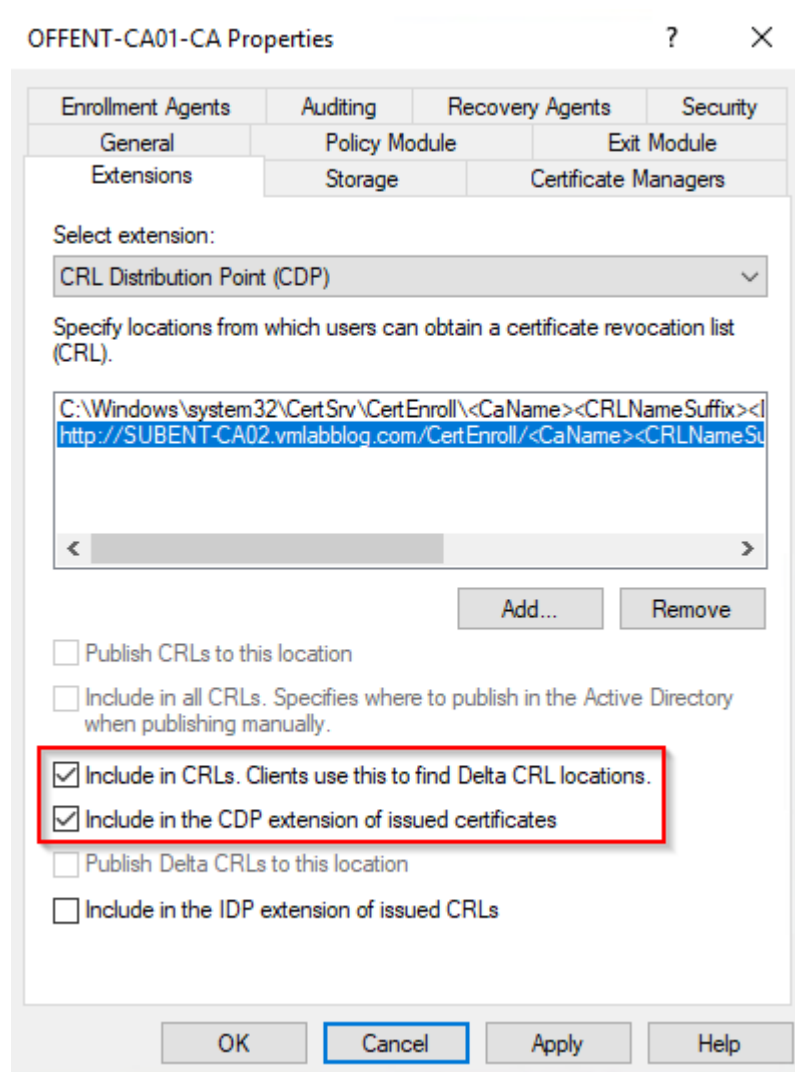
Variable:
<CaName> [v] [Insert]

Description of selected variable:
Used in URLs and paths
Inserts the DNS name of the server
Example location: http://<ServerDNSName>/CertEnroll/<CaName><CRLNa

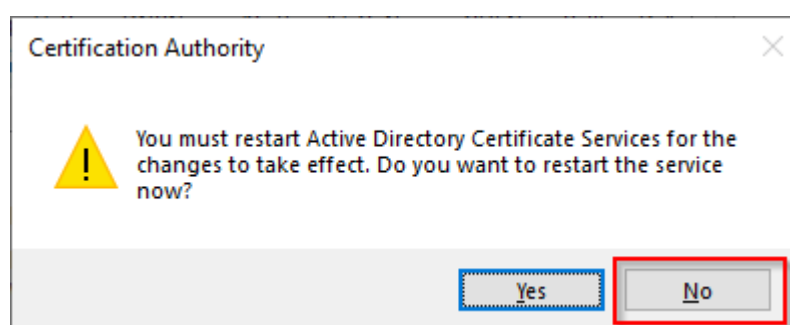
< [] >

[OK] [Cancel]

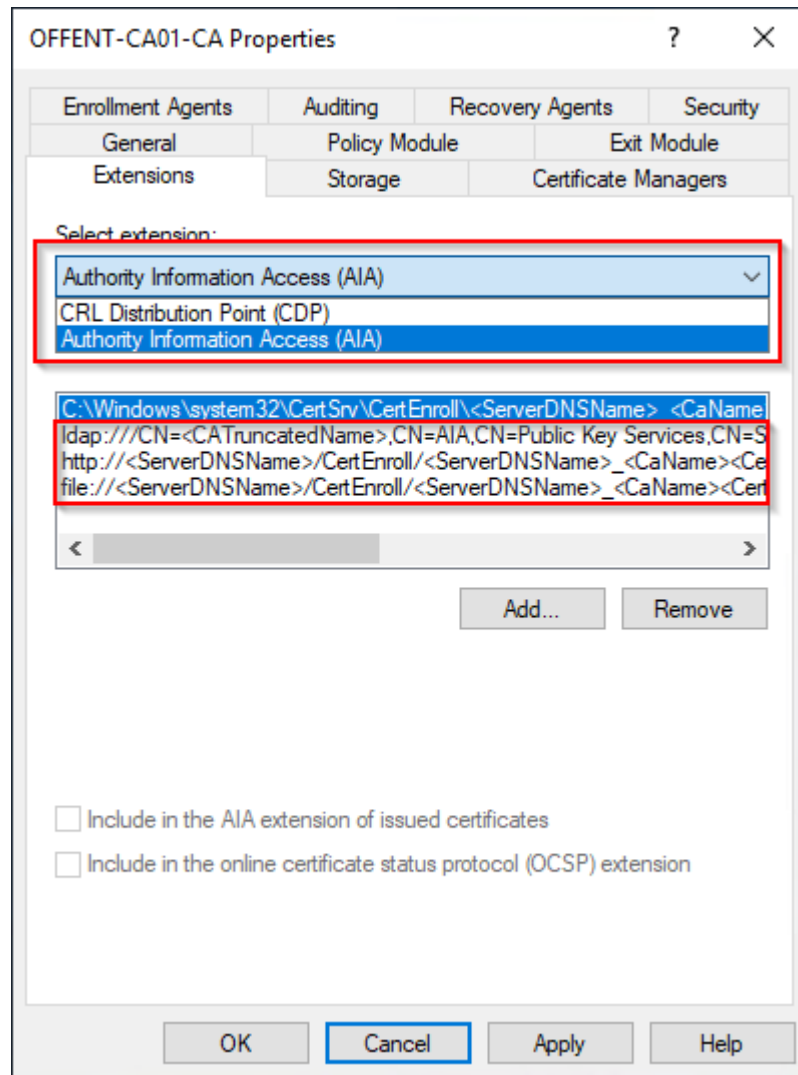
24. Check the boxes beginning with “Include in CRLs*” and “Include in the CDP*” and press “Apply”



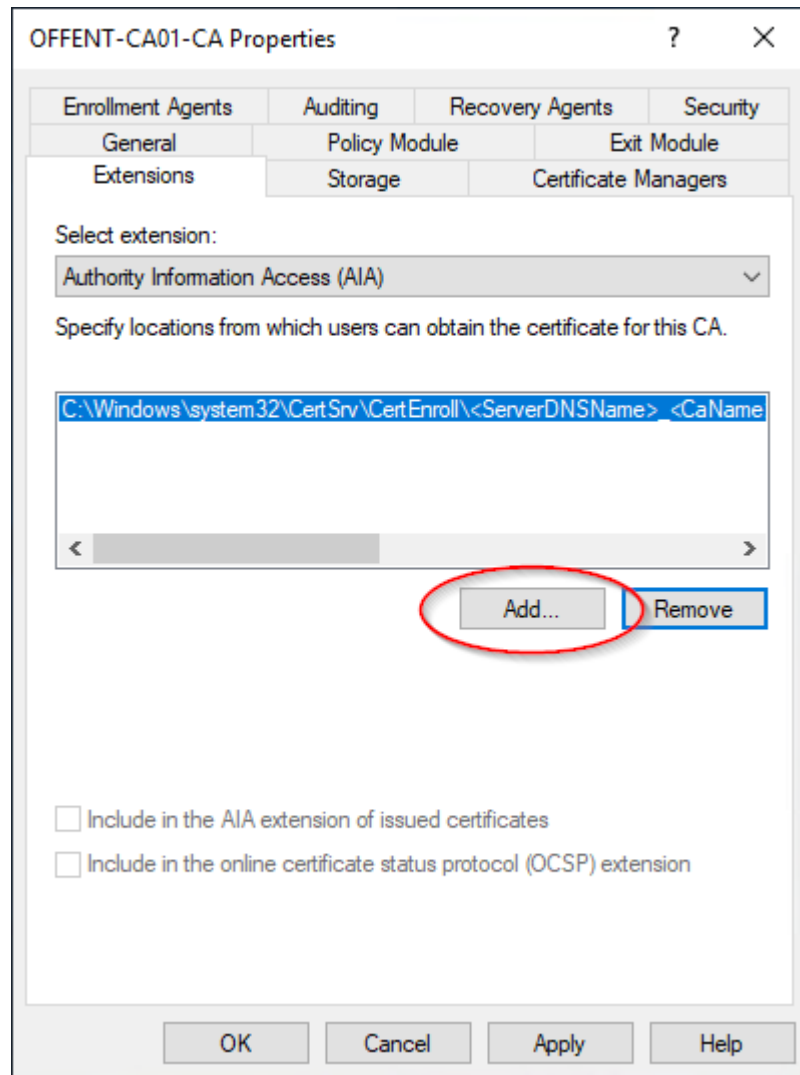
35. Press “No” when asked to restart the service.



36. Select in “Select extension” the “Authority Information Access (AIA)” and remove all locations except the “C:*” Location.



37. Press “Add” to add the AIA location on the Subordinate Server.



38. Enter the following location and press “OK”

`http://<ServerDNSName>/CertEnroll/<ServerDNSName>_<CaName><CertificateName>.crt`

Replace <serverDNSName> with the dnsname of the Subordinateserver in this demo the location will be:

`http://SUBENT-CA02.vmlabblog.com/CertEnroll/<ServerDNSName>_<CaName><CertificateName>.crt`

Add Location [X]

A location can be any valid URL or path. Enter an HTTP, LDAP, file address, or enter a UNC or local path. To insert a variable into the URL or path, select the variable below and click Insert.

Location:

Variable:

Description of selected variable:
 Used in URLs and paths
 Inserts the DNS name of the server
 Example location: http://<ServerDNSName>/CertEnroll/<ServerDNSName>
 Or (for OCSP)
 http://<ServerDNSName>/ocsp

< >

39. Check the box “Include in the AIA extension of issued certificates” and press “Apply”

OFFENT-CA01-CA Properties [?] [X]

Enrollment Agents	Auditing	Recovery Agents	Security
General	Policy Module	Exit Module	
Extensions	Storage	Certificate Managers	

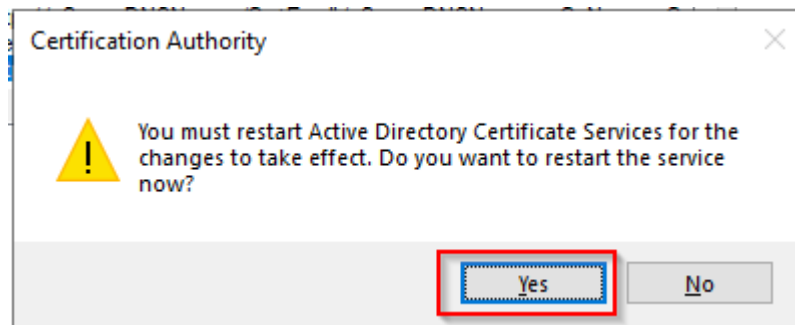
Select extension:

Specify locations from which users can obtain the certificate for this CA.

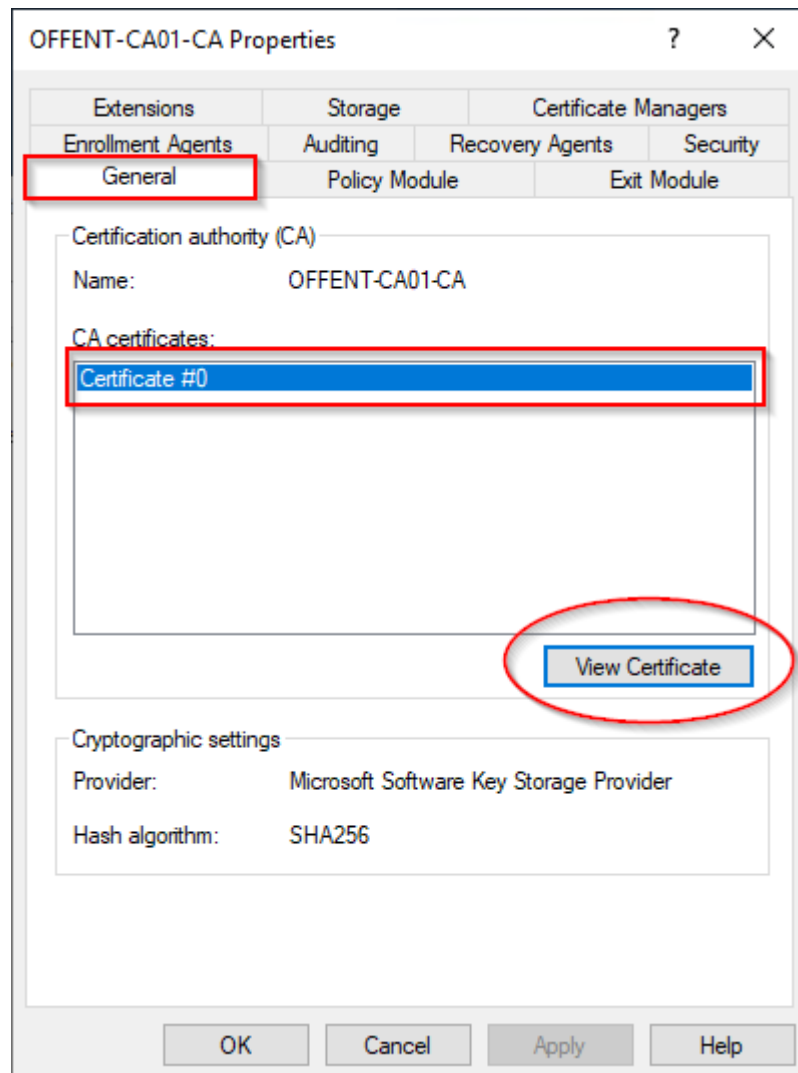
< >

☒ Include in the AIA extension of issued certificates
☐ Include in the online certificate status protocol (OCSP) extension

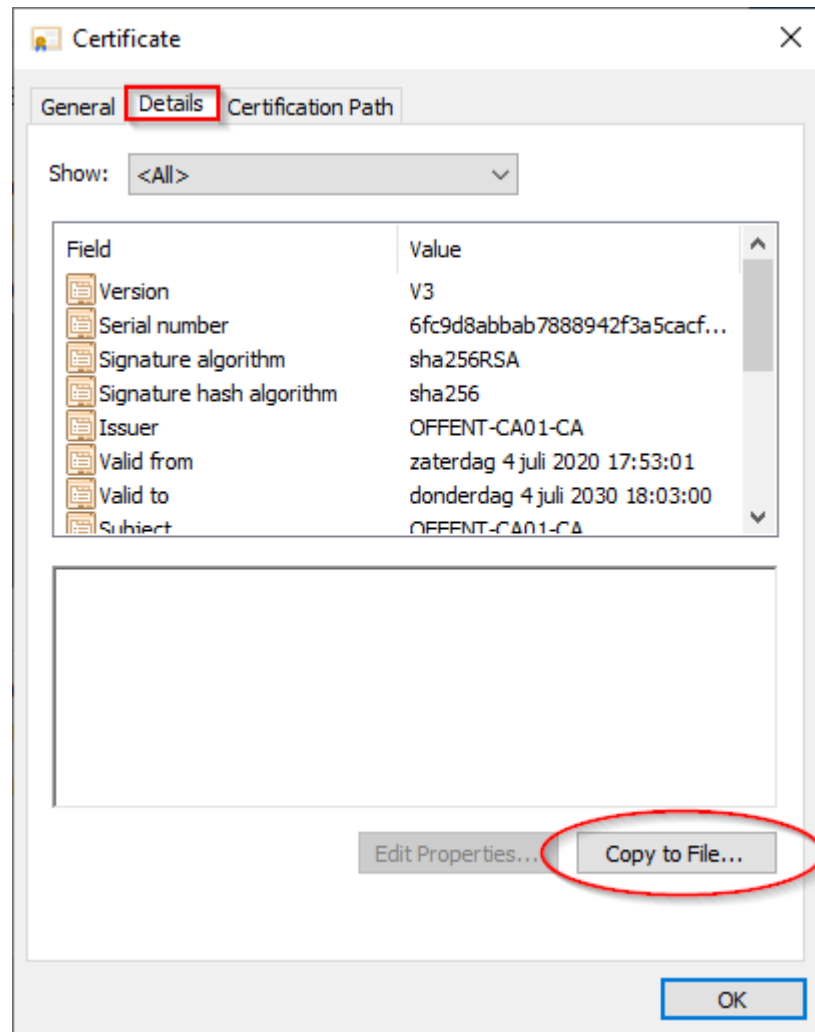
40. Press “Yes” when asked to restart the service.



41. Select the “General” and select the Root Certificate and press “View Certificate”.



42. Select the tab “Details” and press “Copy to File...”.



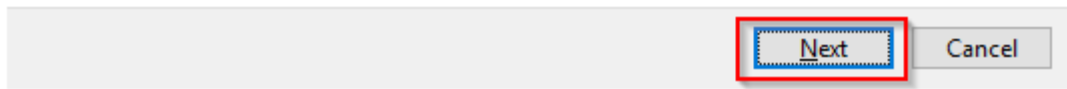
43. In the Certificate Export Wizard press "Next".

Welcome to the Certificate Export Wizard

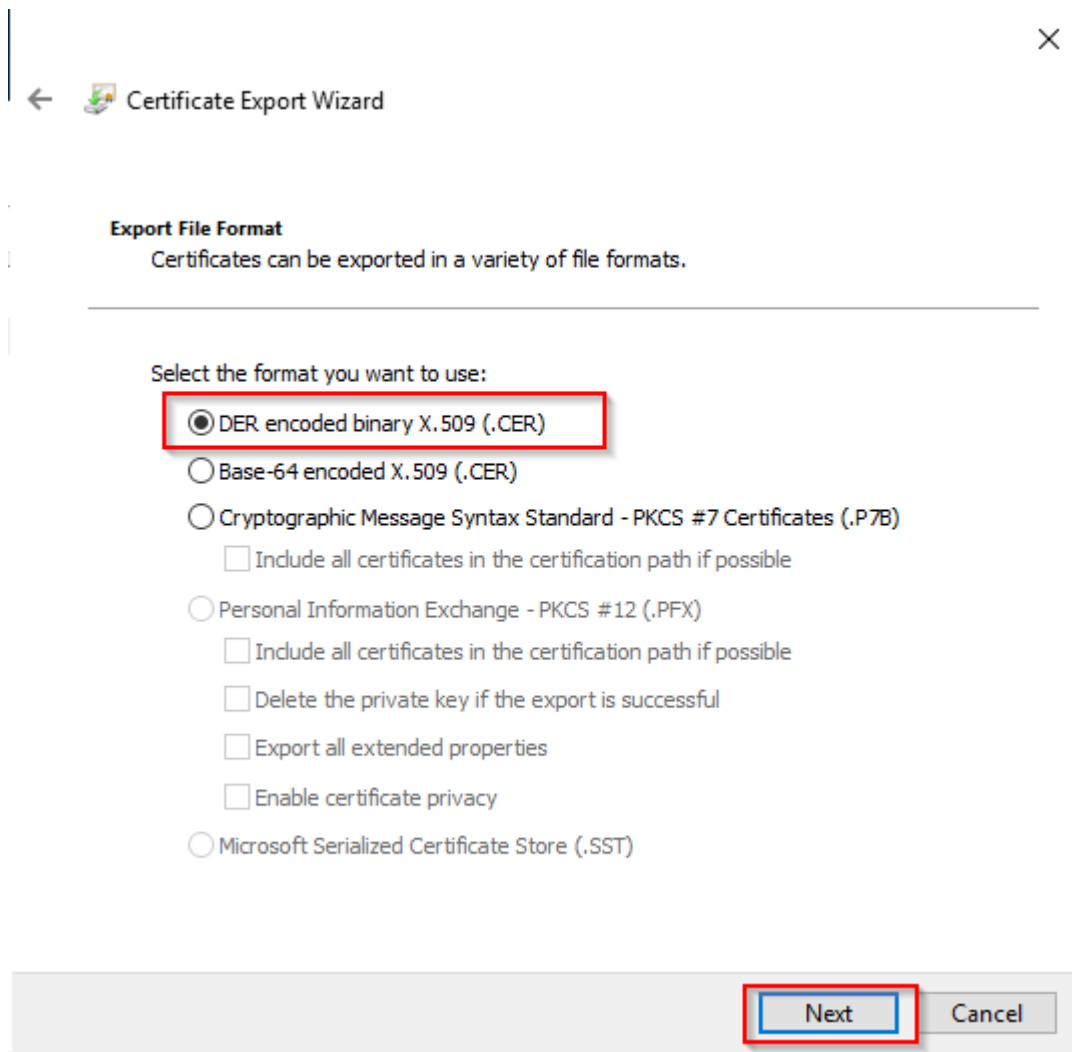
This wizard helps you copy certificates, certificate trust lists and certificate revocation lists from a certificate store to your disk.

A certificate, which is issued by a certification authority, is a confirmation of your identity and contains information used to protect data or to establish secure network connections. A certificate store is the system area where certificates are kept.

To continue, click Next.




44. Select “DER encoded binary X.509 (.CER)” and press “Next”.

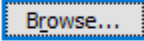


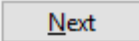
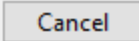
45. In File name enter “C:\Windows\System32\CertSrv\CertEnroll\<CA-NAME>-CA.cer” and press “Next”.

×

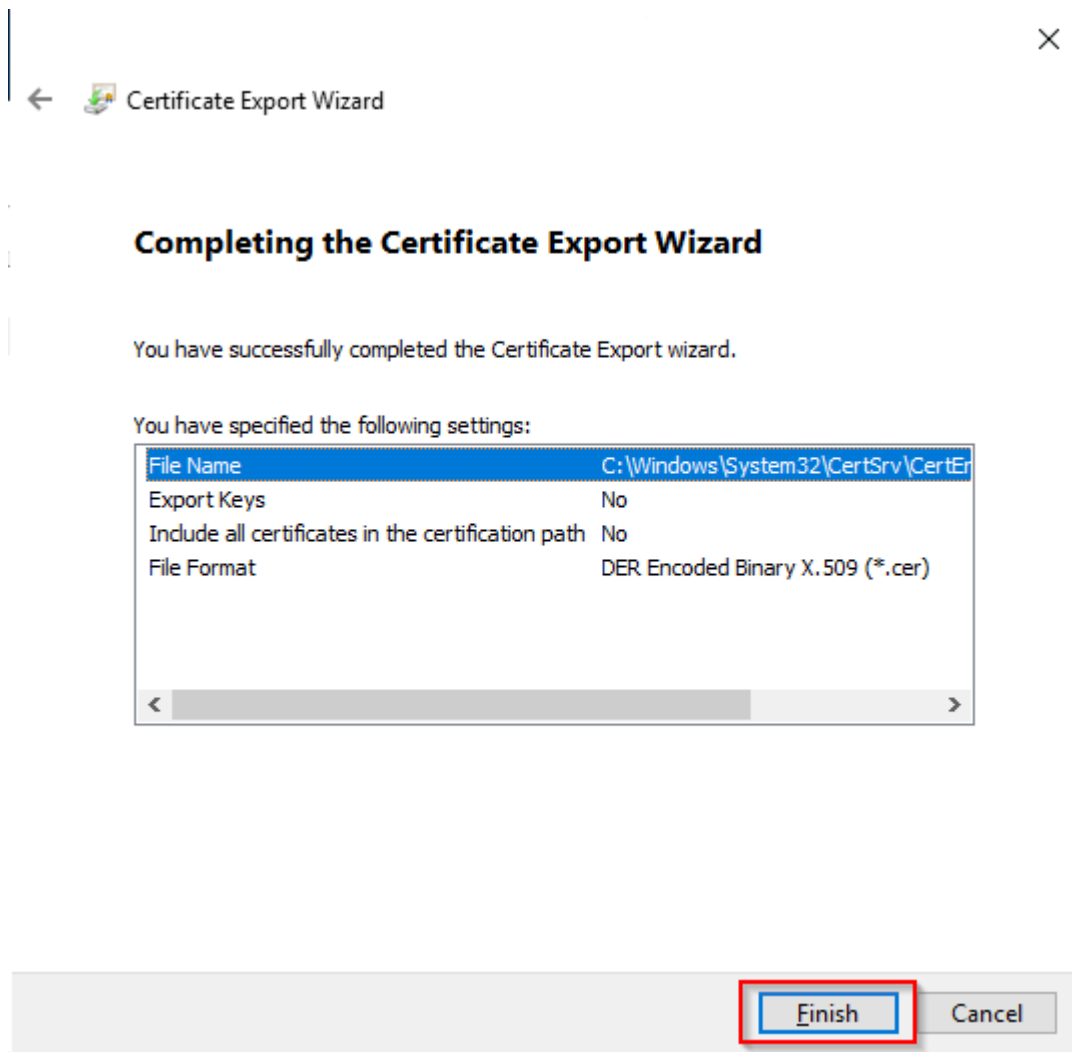
←  Certificate Export Wizard

File to Export
Specify the name of the file you want to export

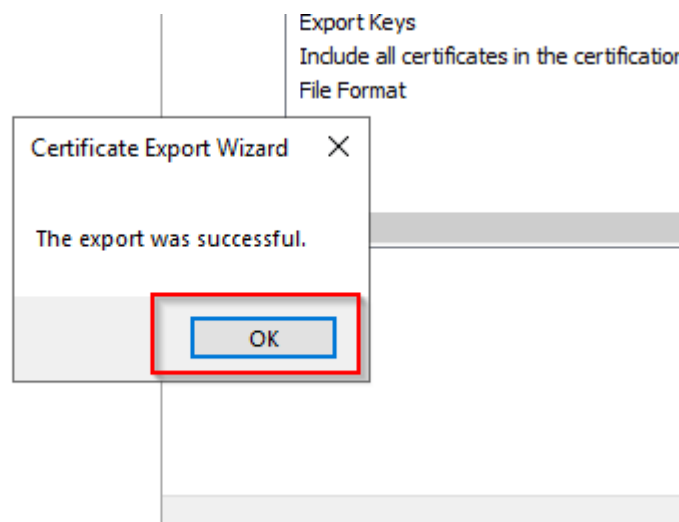
File name:
C:\Windows\System32\CertSrv\CertEnroll\OFFENT-CA01-CA.cer 

46. Press “Finish” to export the RootCA Certificate.



47. A popup will appear when the export was successful, press “OK” to continue.



The setup of the Offline RootCA is now completed.

Next: [Subordinate CA Server](#)

