

Bonus Challenge: Label-Based Access Control

Analysis

Problem: Standard Kubernetes RBAC cannot filter by labels. RBAC controls access to **resource types**, not individual resource instances based on their attributes.

What RBAC CAN do:

- Allow/deny access to entire resource types (all pods, all deployments)
- Limit by namespace
- Limit by verb (get, create, delete)

What RBAC CANNOT do:

- Filter by labels
- Filter by specific field values
- Conditional access based on resource content

Solution Approach: Admission Controllers

OPA (Open Policy Agent) Gatekeeper or **Kyverno** can be used to enforce label requirements.

How it works:

1. RBAC grants permission to create/delete pods
2. Admission controller validates that pods have required label
3. If label is missing, admission controller rejects the request

Hence, I have decided to go with **Kyverno**.

Implementation with Kyverno:

Step 1: Install Kyverno

```
PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC> kubectl create -f https://github.com/kyverno/kyverno/releases/download/v1.10.0/install.yaml
namespace/kyverno created
serviceaccount/kyverno-admission-controller created
serviceaccount/kyverno-background-controller created
serviceaccount/kyverno-cleanup-controller created
serviceaccount/kyverno-cleanup-jobs created
serviceaccount/kyverno-reports-controller created
configmap/kyverno created
configmap/kyverno-metrics created
Warning: unrecognized format "int64"
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/backgroundscanreports.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/cleanuppolicies.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/clusteradmissionreports.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/clusterbackgroundscanreports.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/clustercleanuppolicies.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/clusterpolicies.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/policyexceptions.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/updaterequests.kyverno.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/clusterpolicyreports.wgpolicyk8s.io created
customresourcedefinition.apixtensions.k8s.io/policyreports.wgpolicyk8s.io created
clusterrole.rbac.authorization.k8s.io/kyverno:admission-controller created
```

Step 2: Create ServiceAccount with pod permissions

```
part5 > Label_based_Access_Control > ! automation-sa.yaml
 1  ---
 2  apiVersion: v1
 3  kind: ServiceAccount
 4  metadata:
 5    name: automation-sa
 6    namespace: default
 7  ---
 8  apiVersion: rbac.authorization.k8s.io/v1
 9  kind: Role
10  metadata:
11    name: automation-role
12    namespace: default
13  rules:
14    - apiGroups: []
15      resources: ["pods"]
16      verbs: ["create", "delete", "get", "list"]
17  ---
18  apiVersion: rbac.authorization.k8s.io/v1
19  kind: RoleBinding
20  metadata:
21    name: automation-binding
22    namespace: default
23  subjects:
24    - kind: ServiceAccount
25      name: automation-sa
26      namespace: default
27  roleRef:
28    kind: Role
29    name: automation-role
30    apiGroup: rbac.authorization.k8s.io
31
```

Step 3: Create Kyverno Policy

```
Label_based_Access_Control > ! enforce-automation-label.yaml
1  apiVersion: kyverno.io/v1
2  kind: ClusterPolicy
3  metadata:
4    name: require-automation-label
5  spec:
6    # Enforce = block requests that violate the policy
7    validationFailureAction: enforce
8
9    # Disable background mode so the policy only applies to NEW requests
10   background: false
11
12  rules:
13    - name: check-automation-label
14
15    # MATCH section defines WHO + WHAT this policy applies to
16    match:
17      # Match only requests made by the ServiceAccount automation-sa
18      subjects:
19        - kind: ServiceAccount
20          name: automation-sa
21          namespace: default
22
23      # Match only Pod resources (create/update/delete requests on Pods)
24      resources:
25        kinds:
26          - Pod
27
28    # VALIDATION section defines WHAT must be true
29    validate:
30      # Message returned when validation fails
31      message: "Pods created by automation-sa must have label 'managed-by: automation'"
32
33      # REQUIRED Label pattern
34      pattern:
35        metadata:
36          labels:
37            managed-by: "automation"
38
```

Step 4: Test the policy

Test 1: Create pod WITHOUT required label (failed)

```
PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> kubectl apply -f test-pod-no-label.yaml --as=system:serviceaccount:default:automation-sa
Error from server: error when creating "test-pod-no-label.yaml": admission webhook "validate.kyverno.svc-fail" denied the request:
```

resource Pod/default/test-no-label was blocked due to the following policies

```
require-automation-label:
  check-automation-label: "validation error: Pods created by automation-sa must have
    label ''managed-by: automation''. rule check-automation-label failed at path /metadata/labels/'
```

```
PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> █
```

Test 2: Create pod WITH required label (succeed)

```
● PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> kubectl apply -f test-pod-with-label.yaml --as=system:serviceaccount:default:automation-sa
● pod/test-with-label created
● PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> kubectl get pod test-with-label
  NAME        READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
  test-with-label  1/1     Running   0          7s
○ PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> █
```

Test 3: Delete the labeled pod (succeed)

```
PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> kubectl apply -f test-pod-with-label.yaml --as=system:serviceaccount:default:automation-sa
pod/test-with-label created
PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> kubectl get pod test-with-label
  NAME        READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
  test-with-label  1/1     Running   0          18s
PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> kubectl delete pod test-with-label --as=system:serviceaccount:default:automation-sa
pod "test-with-label" deleted
○ PS C:\Users\LEGION\Desktop\Fall 2025 Sem\AWS dev Ops\COMP-488_Assignment_RBAC\Label_based_Access_Control> █
```