

ACTIVE DIRECTORY, DNS, DHCP AND RDS CONFIGURATION ON WINDOWS SERVER

Introduction

Windows Server provides essential services for network and IT infrastructure management, including **Active Directory** for identity management, **DNS** for domain name resolution, and **DHCP** for dynamic IP allocation.

• Configuring Active Directory

What is Active Directory?

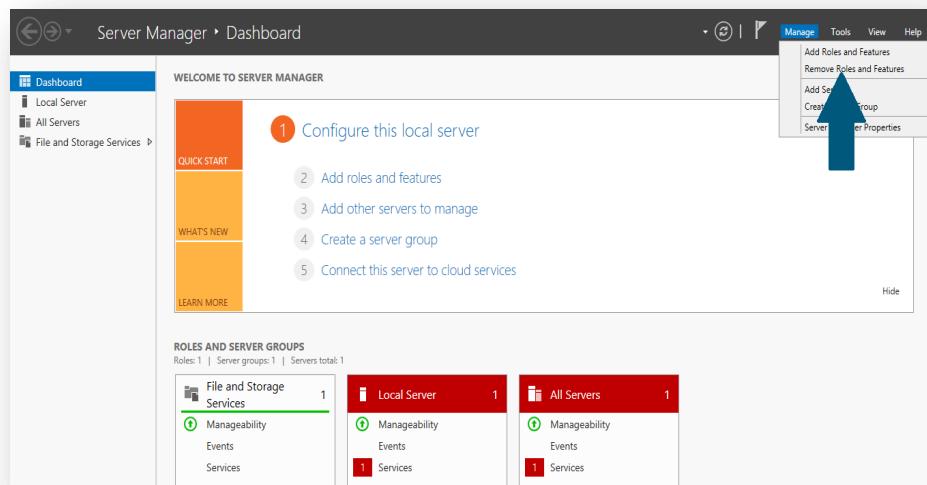
Active Directory (AD) is a directory service given by Microsoft. It provides centralized management of users, groups, computers, and resources of the network.

Prerequisites

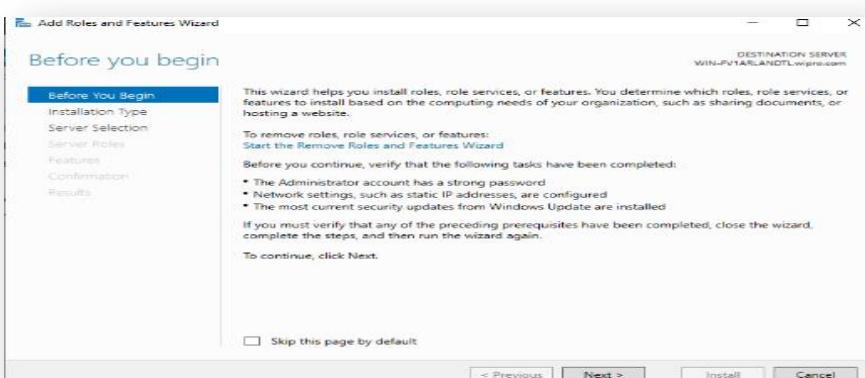
- Install Windows Server and give administrative privilege.
- Set static IP address.
- Set system time and time zone correctly.
- Check network settings and availability of the domain.

Installation Steps

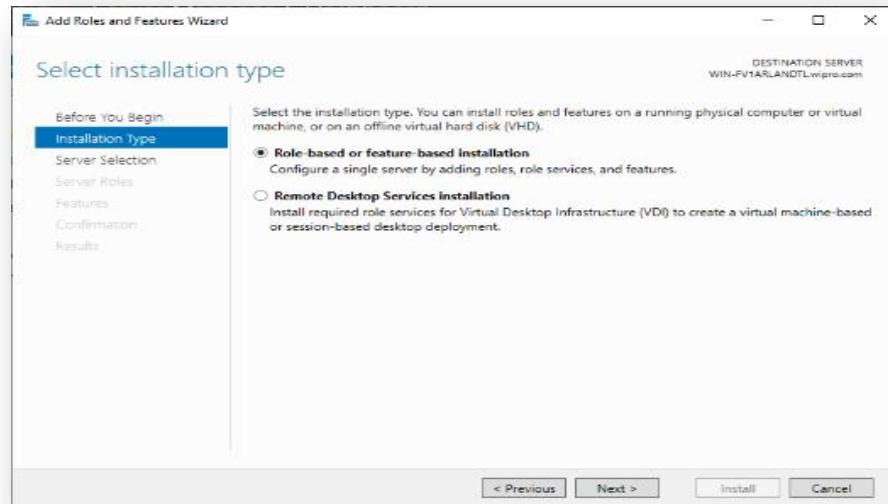
- Click Server Manager, then select Add roles and features.



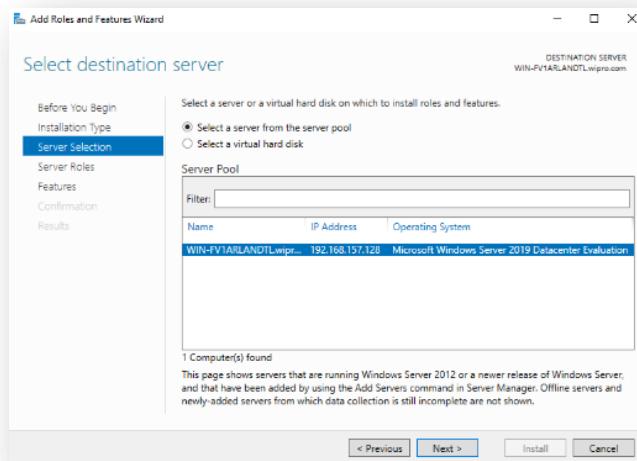
- Click Next on the page before you begin.



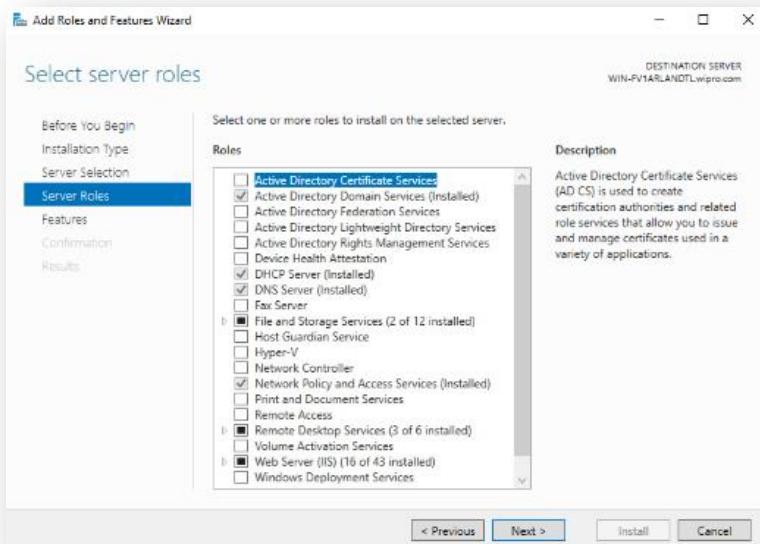
- Select Role-based or feature-based installation.



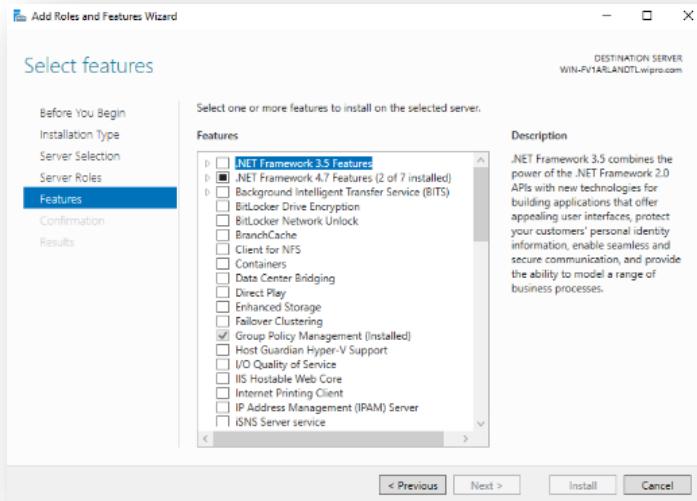
- Click Next on Select destination server



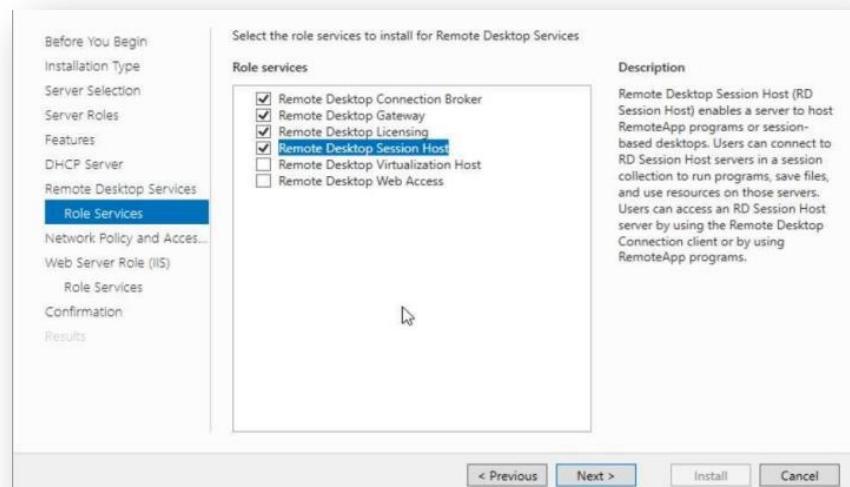
- Select the server you need, then select Active Directory Domain Services.



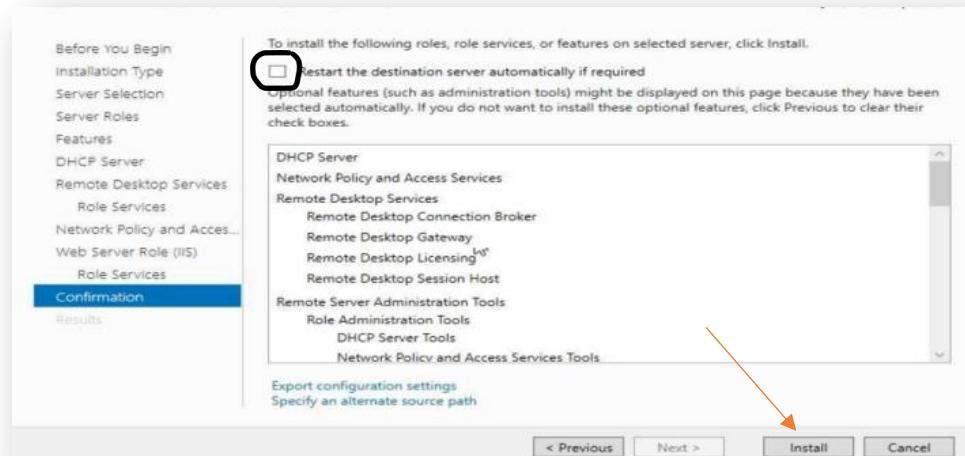
- Select the Features Required and click on Next.



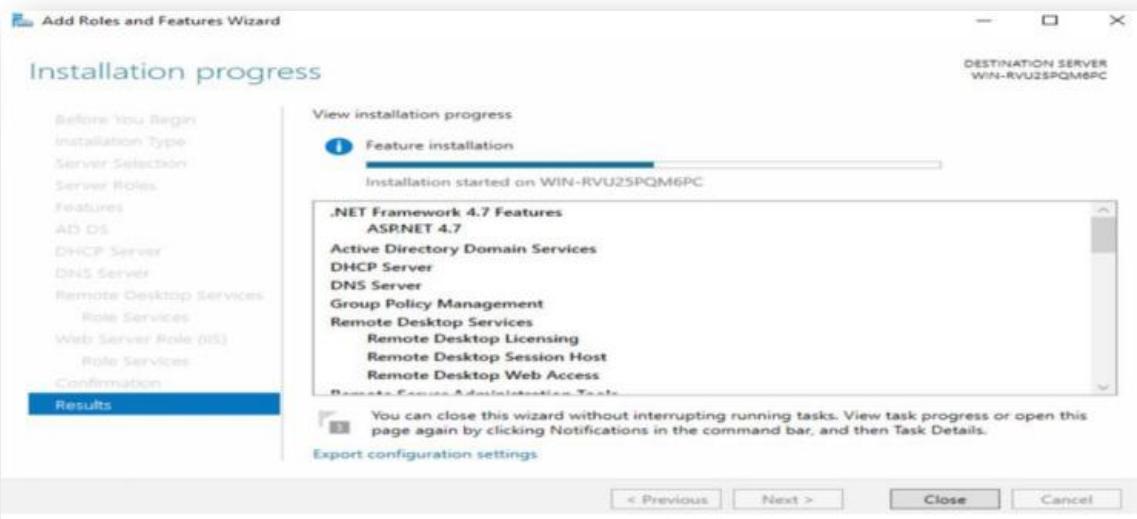
- Click on **Next** to proceed to the **Role Services** section. In this section, select the following options:
 - Remote Desktop Licensing**
 - Remote Desktop Session Host**
 - Remote Desktop Gateway**
 - Remote Desktop Connection Broker**



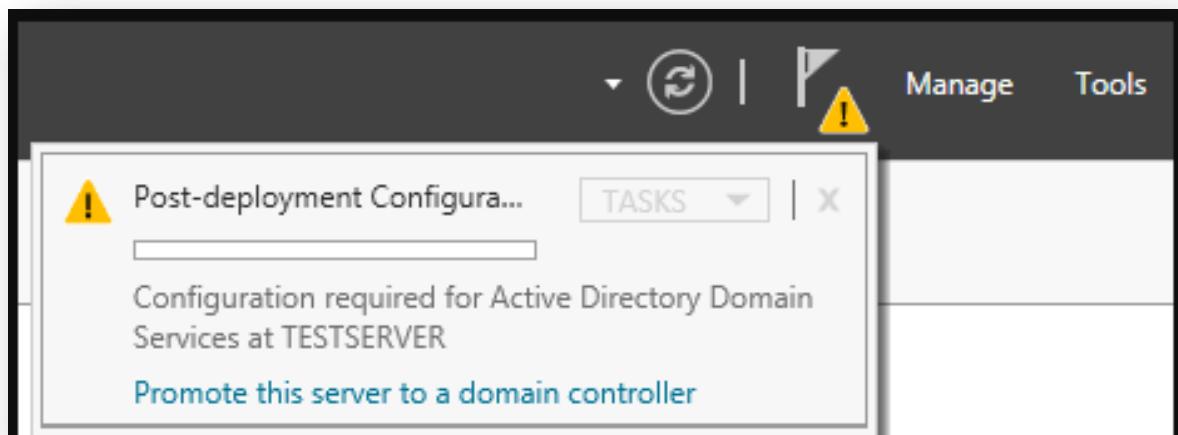
- Click on **Restart check box** and **Install Roles and Features**.



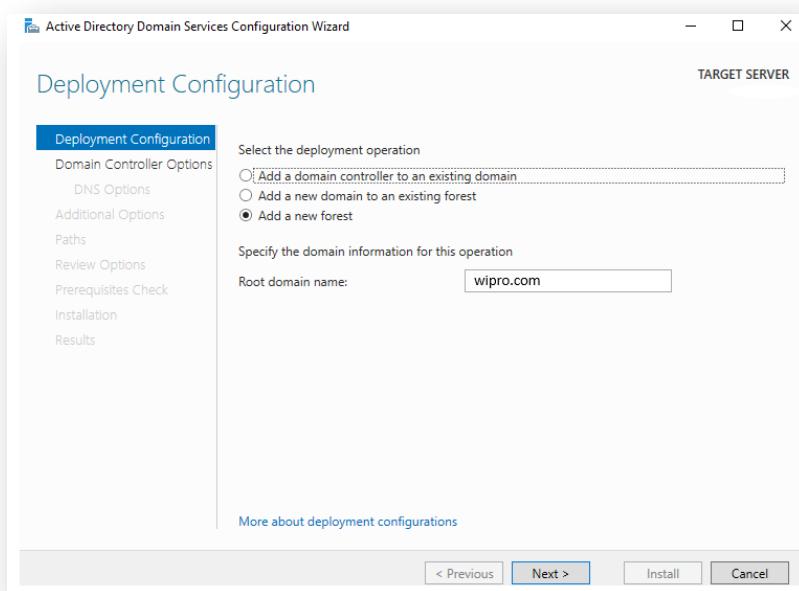
- Respond to the prompts about installing the AD DS role and features.



- After the installation is complete, Select Promote this server to a domain controller



- Add a new forest and Enter a Domain Name and complete the configuration.



- Restart the server to complete setup.

• DNS Configuration

DNS:

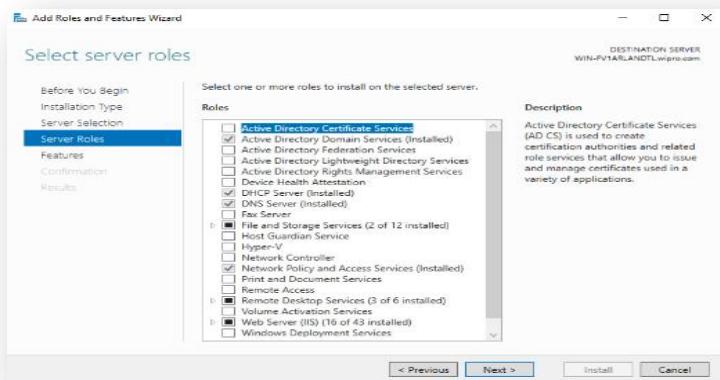
DNS (Domain Name System) translates domain names into IP addresses, essential for network resource accessibility and AD functionality.

Prerequisites

- Ensure Active Directory is installed if configuring AD-integrated DNS.
- Confirm network connectivity and correct server IP settings.

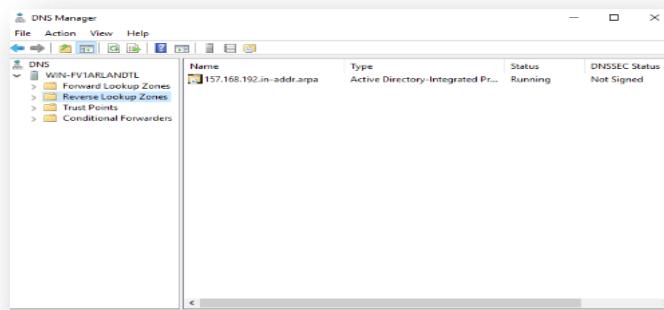
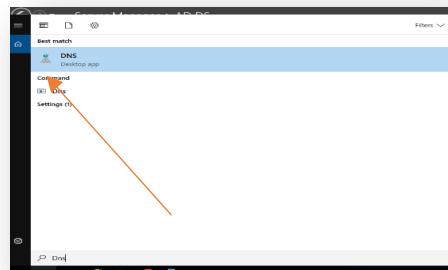
Steps for Installation

- In **Server Manager**, select **Add roles and features**.
- Choose **DNS Server** and proceed with installation.
- After installation, open **DNS Manager** to configure zones.

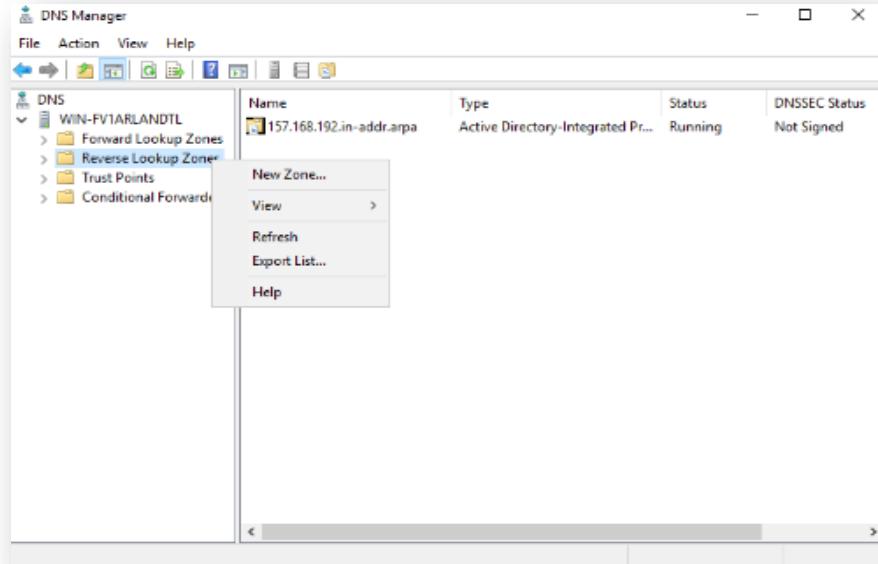


Configuring Forward and Reverse Lookup Zones

- Open **DNS Manager**.



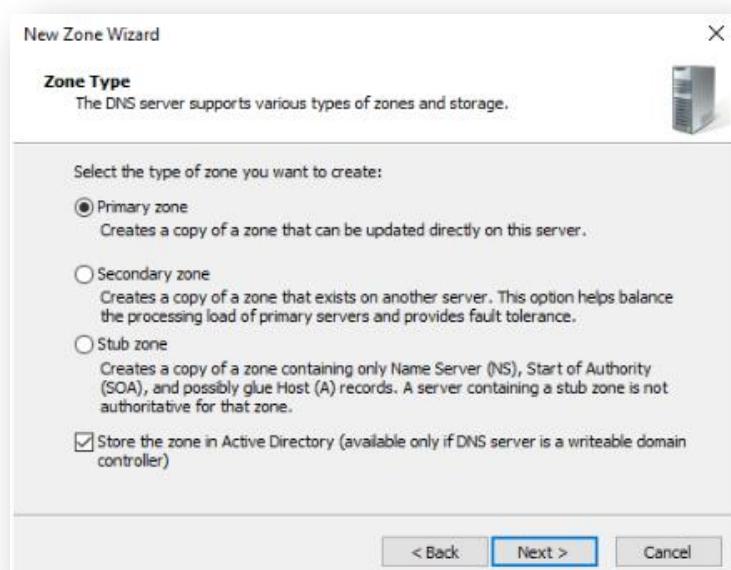
- Set up a **Reverse Lookup Zone** for IP-to-hostname resolution.
 - Right-click **Reverse Lookup Zones** > **New Zone**.



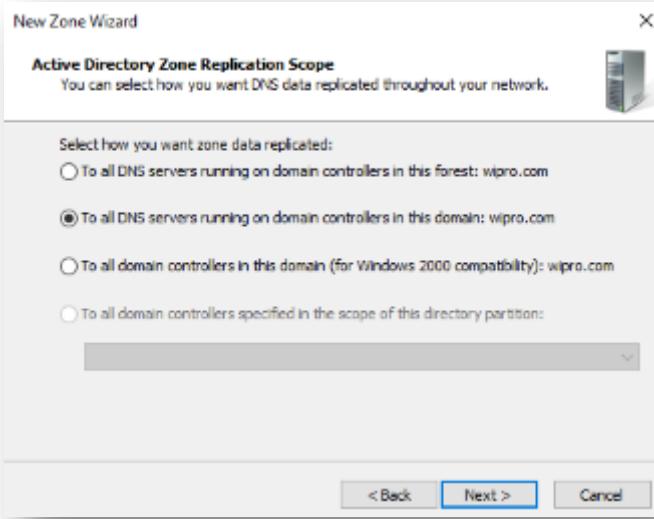
- Click ON Next



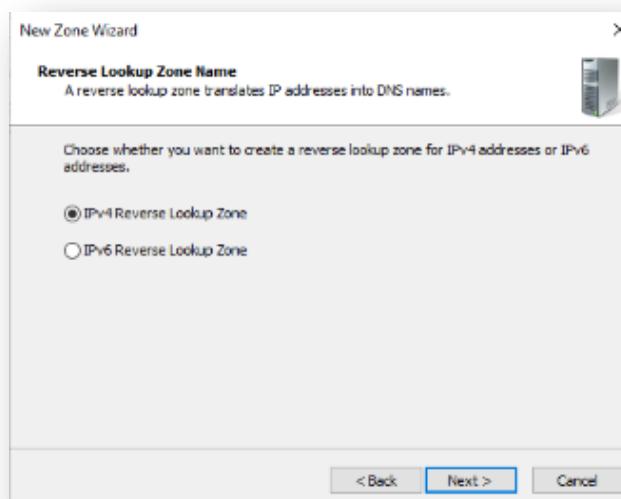
- Select Primary Zone and Click on Next



- Click On NEXT



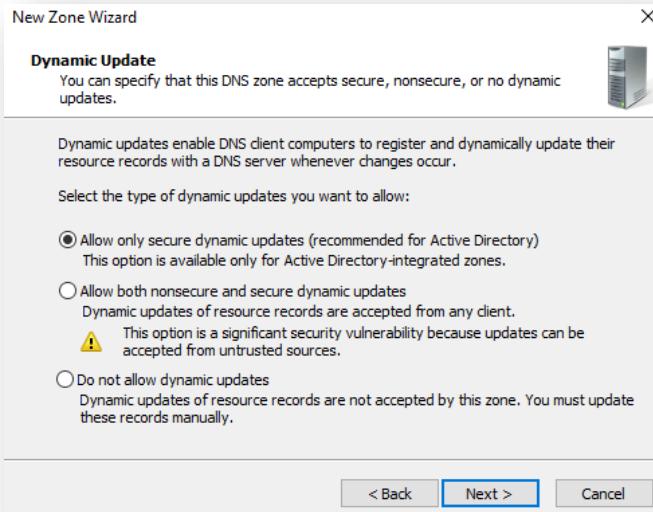
- Click on IPv4 Reverse Lookup Zone > click ok NEXT



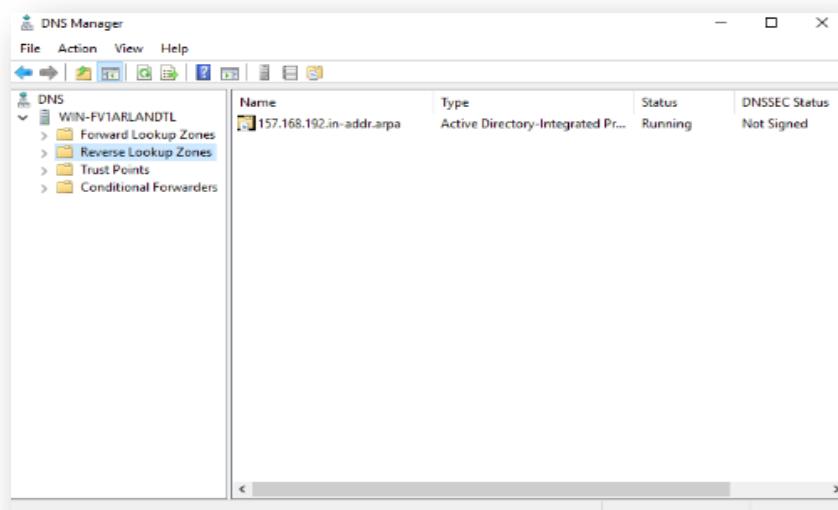
- Give Network ID which is IP Address
 - To check the IP Address -> Go to Command Prompt -> Type **Ipconfig** and press enter to see **IP Address**



- Select "Allow only secure dynamic updates" because we want to enhance security and prevent unauthorized or malicious updates to the reverse DNS records. It is recommended for Active Directory.



- Click on Finish



• DHCP Configuration

DHCP:

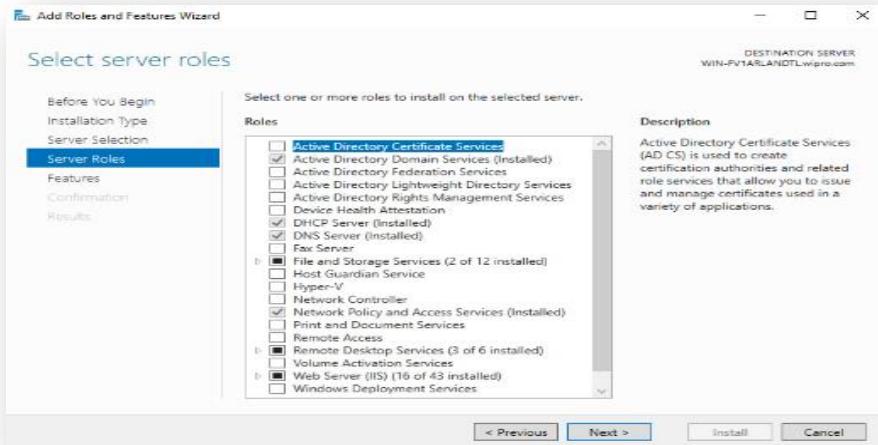
DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol) assigns IP addresses dynamically to devices on a network, reducing manual configuration needs.

Prerequisites

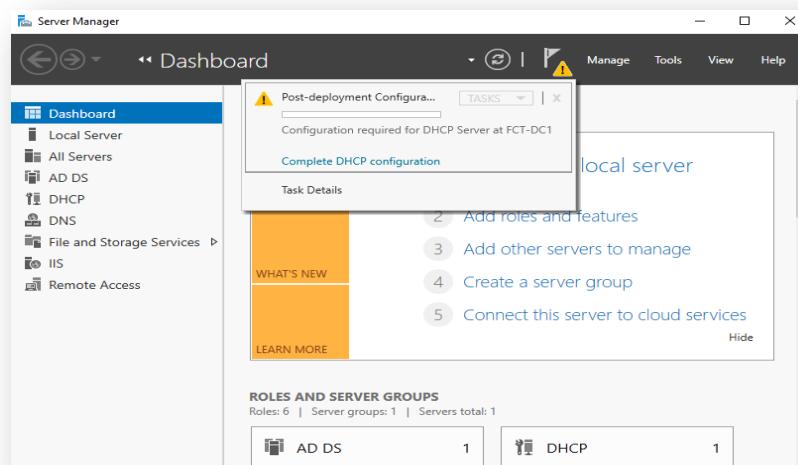
- Static IP configuration on the server.
- Confirm DNS settings are active.

Steps for Installation

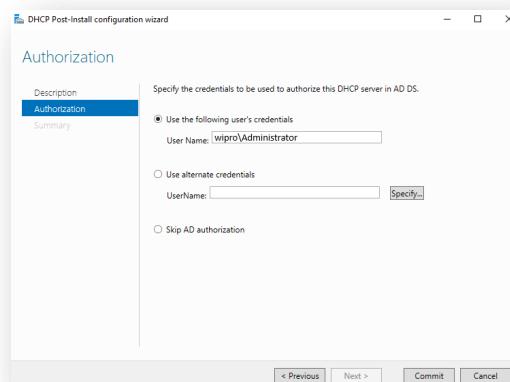
- In Server Manager, choose **Add roles and features** and Select **DHCP Server** and proceed with installation.



- After installation, open the **DHCP Console** for configuration.



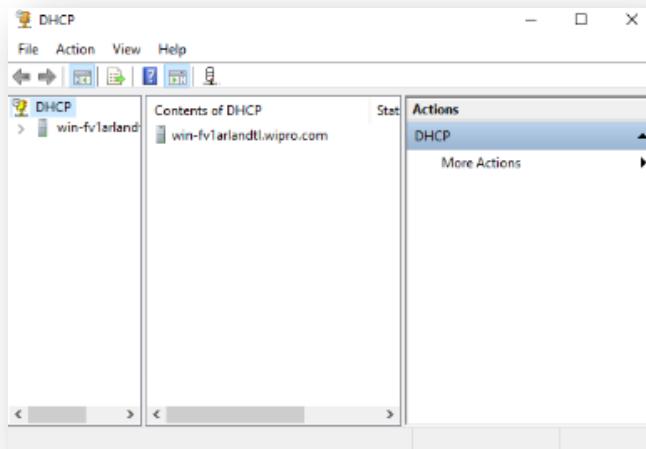
- Click on Connect



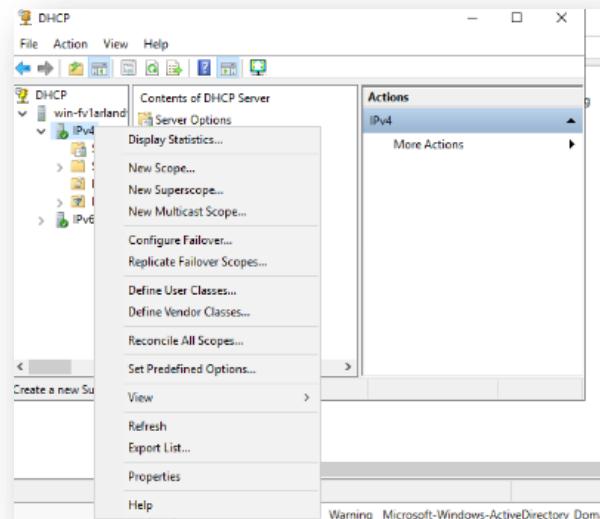
Configuring Scopes and Options

Then we should create the DHCP scope. So, we navigate to Tools > DHCP and open the DHCP console. Then we can see IPv4. Then right-click on it and select Create New Scope. Instead of this, we can also create scope by navigating Action > Create Scope.

- Open **DHCP Manager**.



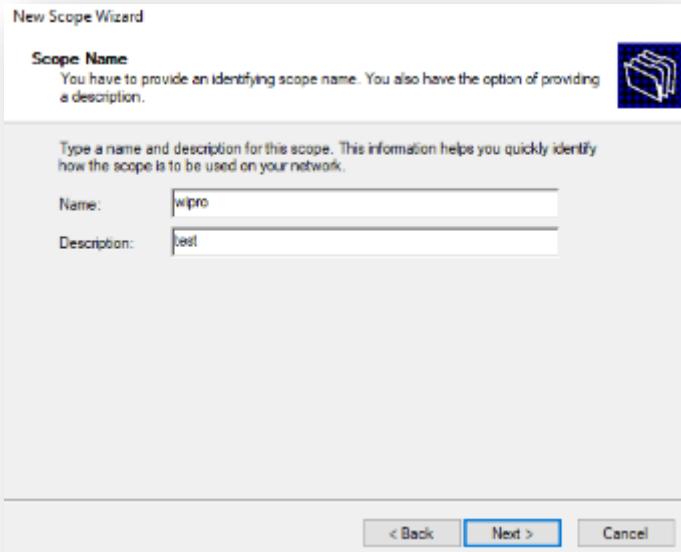
- Right-click **IPv4** and select **New Scope**.



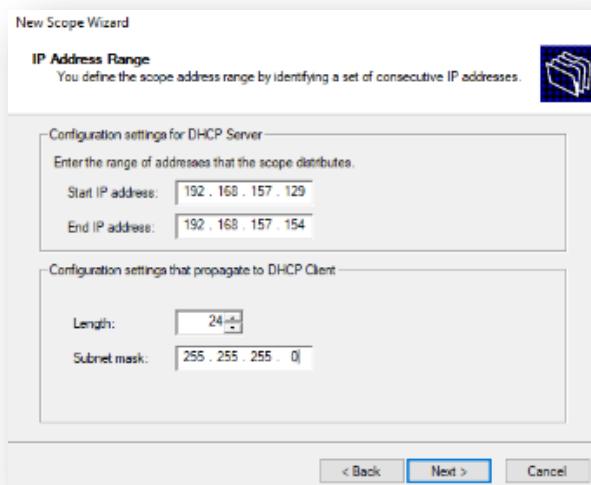
- Click on **New Scope** and click on **Next**



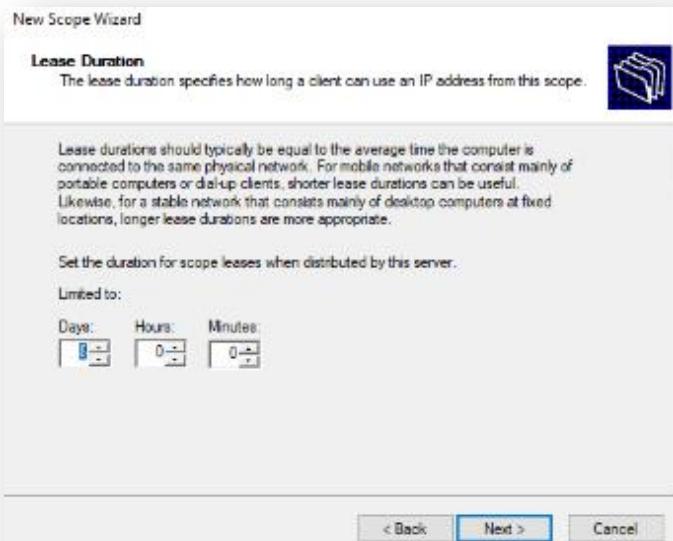
- Give Name and Description and click on **Next**



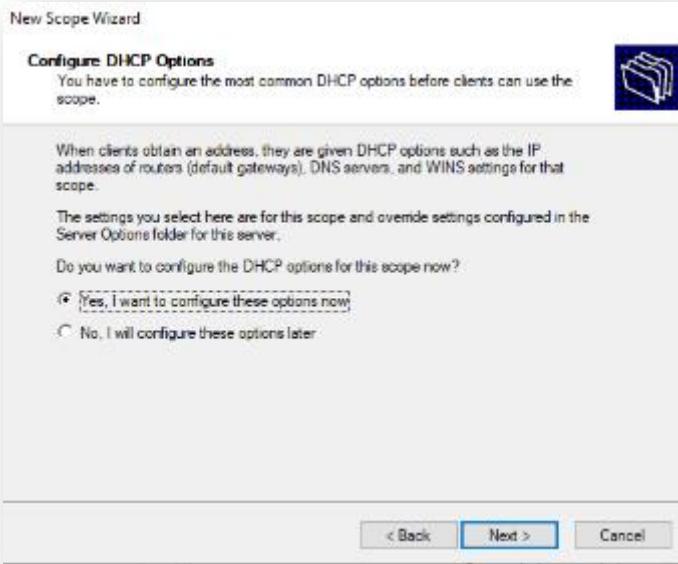
- Give Start IP Address and End IP Address and click on Next



- Give 8 Hours and Click on Next



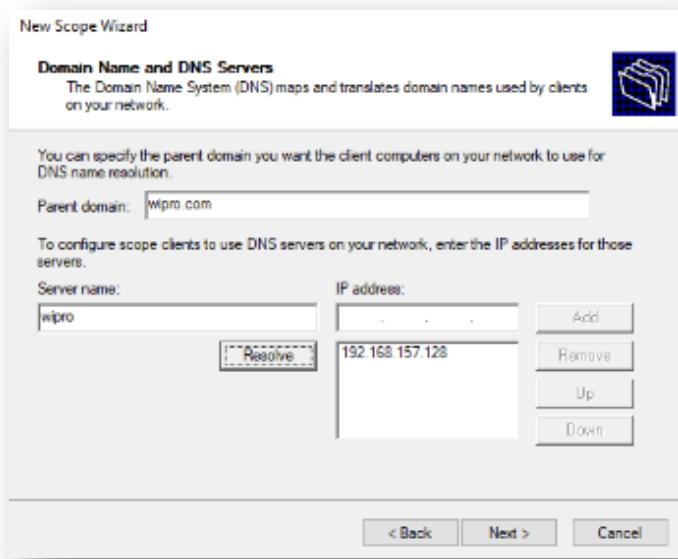
- Click on Yes and click on Next



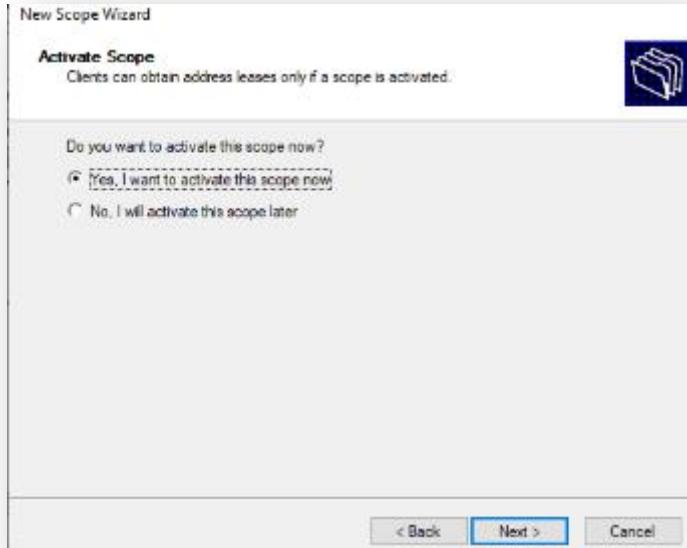
- Give IP Address > Click on ADD > Click on Next



- Give Server Name and Click on Next



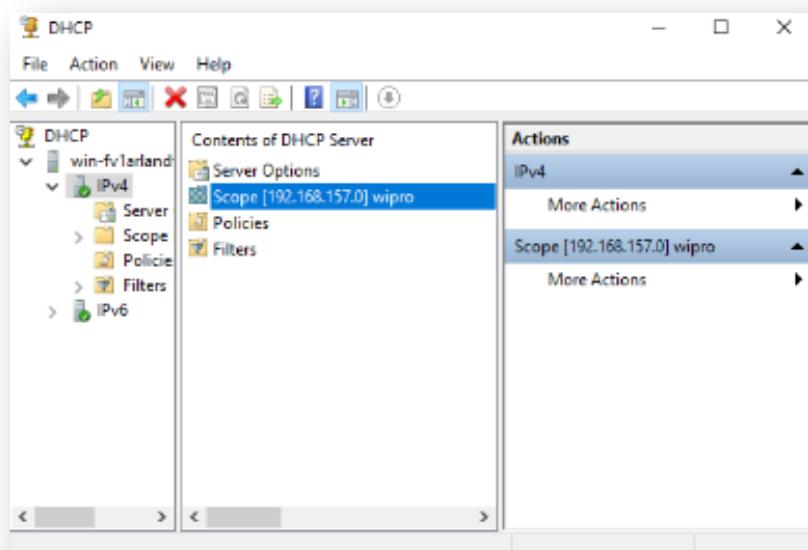
- Click on Yes and Click on Next



- Click on Finish



- New Scope is created



- Configuration of Remote Desktop Server (RDS)

RDS:

Remote Desktop Services (RDS) is a suite of technologies in Windows Server that enables users to access a virtual desktop or applications hosted on a server. RDS enhances productivity and flexibility by allowing centralized management of user desktops and applications.

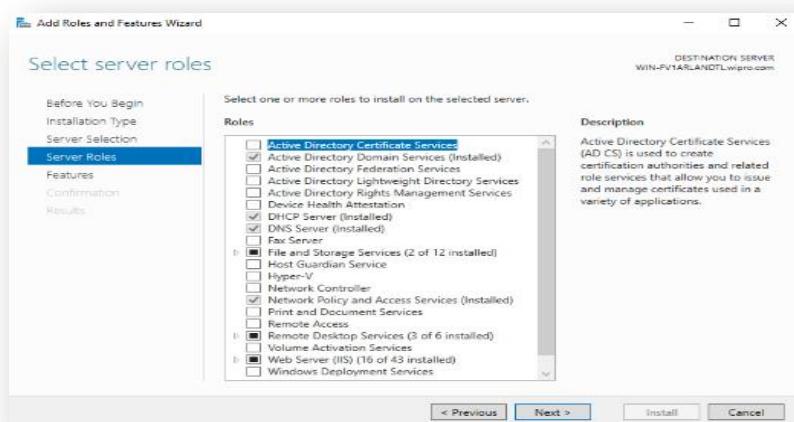
Prerequisites

- A physical or virtual machine running Windows Server 2016, 2019, or 2022.
- Administrative access to the Windows Server.
- Properly configured IP addressing (preferably static).
- A network with at least one physical or virtual client machine for testing.
- Active Directory Domain Services (AD DS) feature.
- Internet access for server updates (if needed).

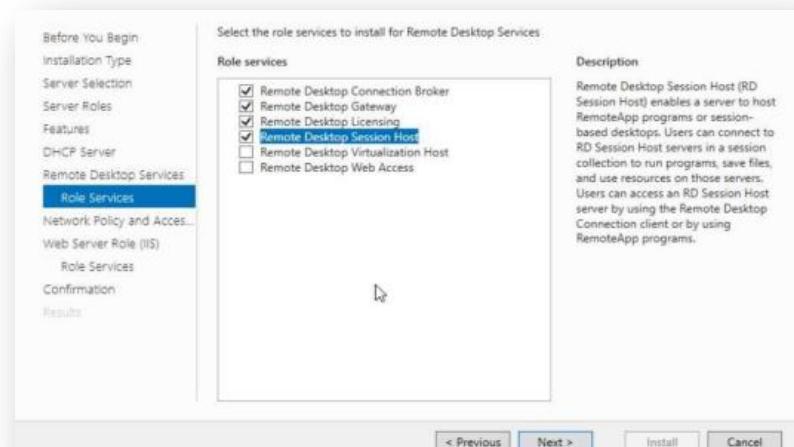
• Active Directory Configuration

- Install Active Directory Domain Services

- Open Server Manager and Click Manage > Add Roles and Features and select **Role-based or feature-based installation**. Choose the target server and select **Active Directory Domain Services**. Click **Add Features** when prompted, then continue with the installation.

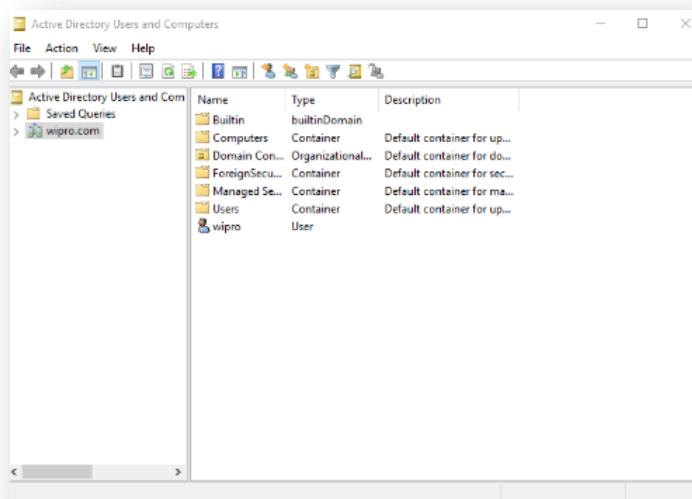


- Set Role Services. And in Role services select the options mentioned below:
 - Remote Desktop Licensing
 - Remote Desktop Session Host
 - Remote Desktop gateway.
 - Remote Connection broker.

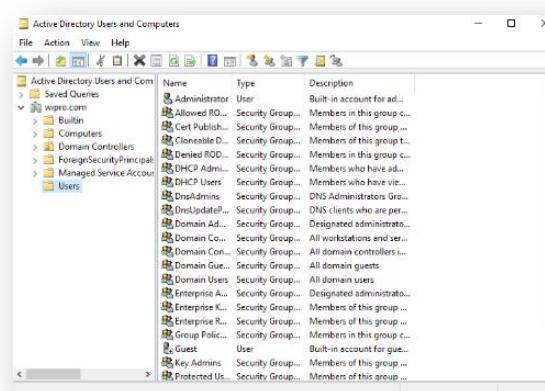


- To create a new user and add them to the 'Remote Desktop Users' and 'Administrators' groups on a **Windows Server 2019**:

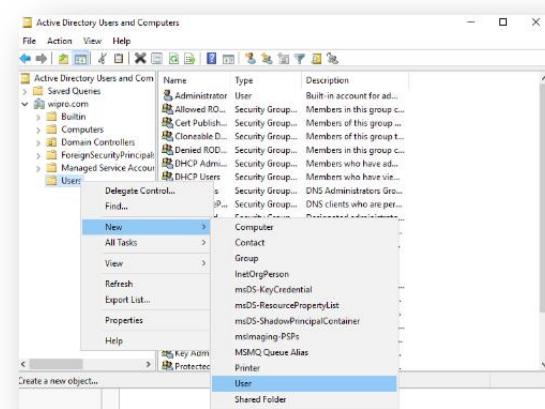
- **Open Active Directory Users and Computers:**
 - On the main server VM, go to the **Search** bar.
 - Type and open **Active Directory Users and Computers**.



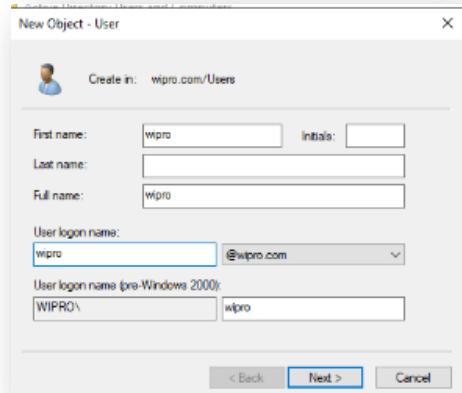
- **Create a New User:**
 - In the AD console, expand your domain and click on **Users**.



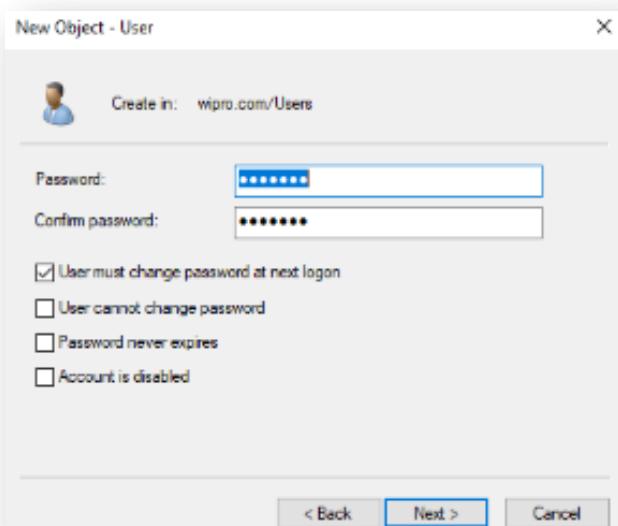
- Right-click on **Users**, select **New**, and then choose **User**.



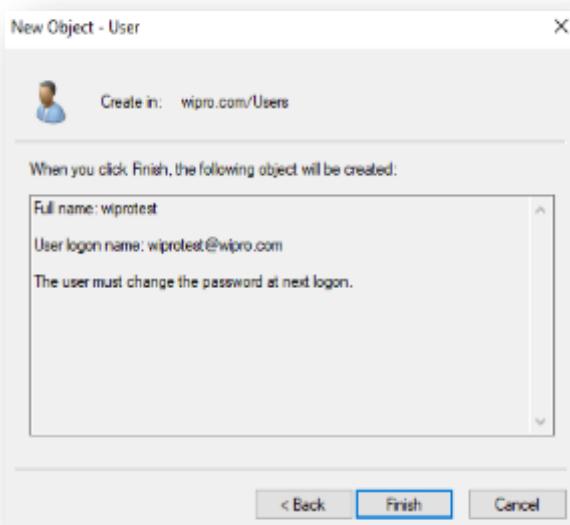
- Fill out the user details (e.g., First Name, Last Name, and User Logon Name) and click **Next**.



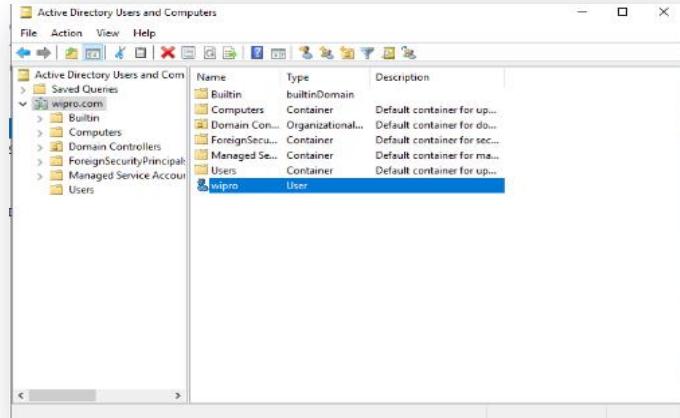
- Set a password for the user, ensure the appropriate password options are selected (e.g., "User must change password at next logon"), and click **Next**.



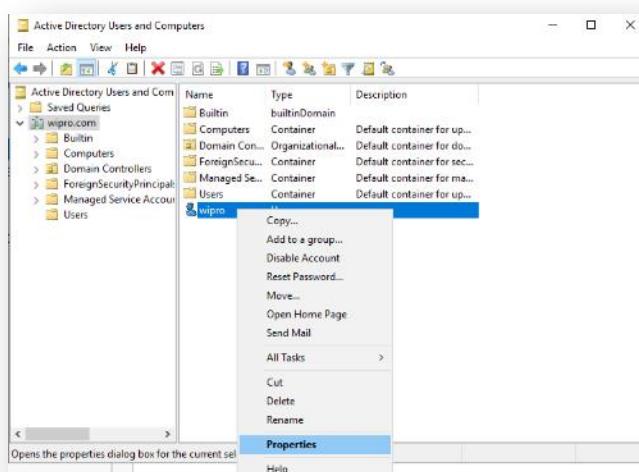
- Click **Finish** to create the user.



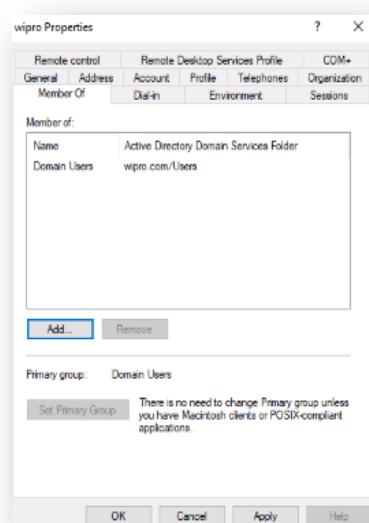
- **Add the User to the 'Remote Desktop Users' Group:**
 - In the AD console, locate the newly created user.



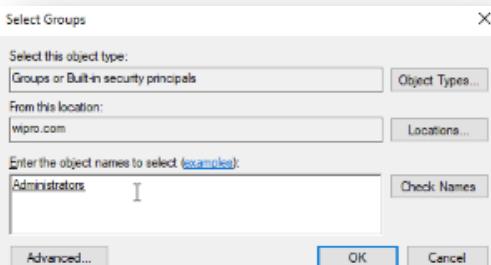
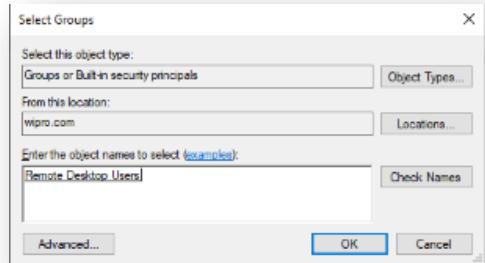
- Right-click the user and select **Properties**.



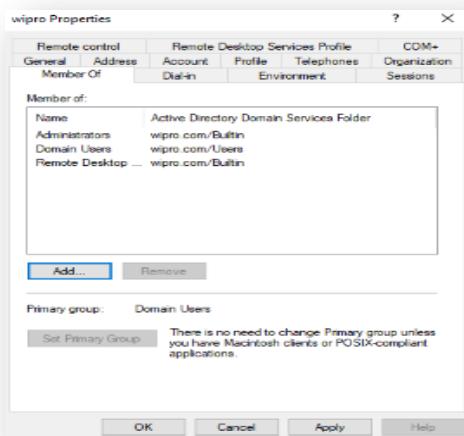
- Go to the **Member Of** tab and click **Add**.



- Type **Remote Desktop Users** and **Administrators** -> click **Check Names** to verify. Then click **OK**.

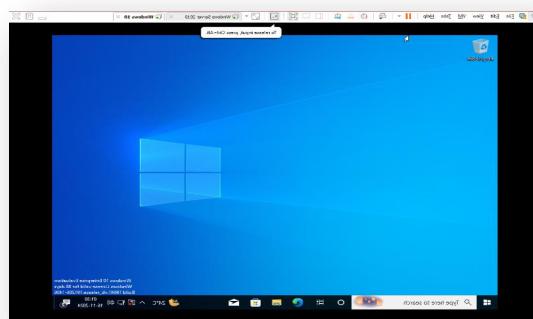


- Click **Apply** to save changes.



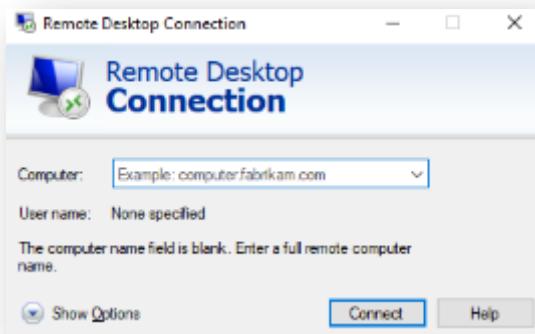
- Access Client VM:

- Access the client VM named 'Win 10 main' and use valid user credentials to log in into the client VM 'Win 10 main'.



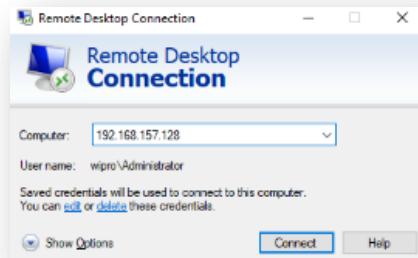
- Open Remote Desktop Connection:
 - ◆ After login click on Start menu or Search bar.

- ◆ In search bar type, Remote Desktop Connection and open it.

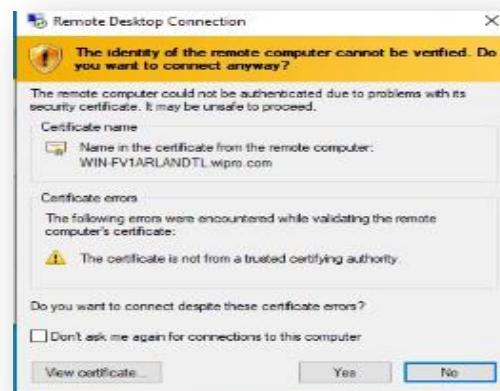


- Connect to Server:

- ◆ Simply type the IP address or hostname of the server in the Remote Desktop Connection window.



- ◆ Click on Connect and input the credentials of the user you created above if prompted.



- ◆ Click on OK to initiate the Remote Desktop connection to the server.



Conclusion:

- **Active Directory (AD) Configuration:**
 - Centralized management system for users, computers, and security policies
 - Advantages of Promoting a Server to the Domain Level. The server can take care of domain-related tasks.
 - Creates and uses OUs and users to give it a structured and meaningful way to organize your network environment
- **DNS Configuration:**
 - DNS is very critical in solving the domain names to IP addresses, therefore, makes communication within the network efficient and not breaking. Installation and configuration of DNS ensures that devices on the network can locate each other efficiently.
- **DHCP Configuration:**
 - DHCP automatically assigns the IP addresses, thus reduces the work load of an administrator.
 - Use DHCP to set up the scopes and options so that DHCP delivers proper settings for the clients, such as DNS and gateway.
- **Configuration of Remote Desktop Services (RDS):**
 - RDS allows the user access to servers from a remote location; therefore, users can be in any location and work from there. It is thus more comfortable and easier to work.
 - The related RDS roles, license, and access also need to be correctly configured for efficient and secure remote access to the server environment.
- **Simplified Management:**
 - configures AD, DNS, DHCP, and RDS to provide network management with more centralization, security, and scale; manage users and resources and secure access to the organisation's services.
- **Security and Best Practices:**
 - Regular backups, updates, proper access controls secure network and services.
 - The measures provide user-activity monitoring and auditing of DHCP leases and RDS sessions for additional security layers.
- **Improved User Experience:**
 - This is by proper configuration of RDS and DNS/DHCP settings so that the users connect better and access the resource needed.

The configuration of Active Directory, DNS, DHCP, and Remote Desktop Services in Windows Server 2019 improves the overall efficiency of an organization towards better management of the network while ensuring secure remote access, centralizing user, and resource management.

****Created By Mohammed Navaz Sareef****