



# **Understanding cluster monitoring**

## **Active IQ Unified Manager**

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# Understanding cluster monitoring

You can add clusters to the Unified Manager database to monitor clusters for availability, capacity, and other details, such as CPU usage, interface statistics, free disk space, qtree usage, and chassis environmental.

Events are generated if the status is abnormal or when a predefined threshold is breached. If configured to do so, Unified Manager sends a notification to a specified recipient when an event triggers an alert.

## Understanding node root volumes

You can monitor the node root volume using Unified Manager. The best practice is that the node root volume should have sufficient capacity to prevent the node from going down.

When the used capacity of the node root volume exceeds 80 percent of the total node root volume capacity, the Node Root Volume Space Nearly Full event is generated. You can configure an alert for the event to get a notification. You can take appropriate actions to prevent the node from going down by using either ONTAP System Manager or the ONTAP CLI.

## Understanding events and thresholds for node root aggregates

You can monitor the node root aggregate by using Unified Manager. The best practice is to thickly provision the root volume in the root aggregate to prevent the node from halting.

By default, capacity and performance events are not generated for root aggregates. Also, the threshold values used by Unified Manager are not applicable to the node root aggregates. Only a technical support representative can modify the settings for these events to be generated. When the settings are modified by the technical support representative, the capacity threshold values are applied to the node root aggregate.

You can take appropriate actions to prevent the node from halting by using either ONTAP System Manager or the ONTAP CLI.

## Understanding quorum and epsilon

Quorum and epsilon are important measures of cluster health and function that together indicate how clusters address potential communications and connectivity challenges.

*Quorum* is a precondition for a fully functioning cluster. When a cluster is in quorum, a simple majority of nodes are healthy and can communicate with each other. When quorum is lost, the cluster loses the ability to accomplish normal cluster operations. Only one collection of nodes can have quorum at any one time because all of the nodes collectively share a single view of the data. Therefore, if two non-communicating nodes are permitted to modify the data in divergent ways, it is no longer possible to reconcile the data into a single data view.

Each node in the cluster participates in a voting protocol that elects one node master; each remaining node is a secondary. The master node is responsible for synchronizing information across the cluster. When quorum is formed, it is maintained by continual voting. If the master node goes offline and the cluster is still in quorum, a

new master is elected by the nodes that remain online.

Because there is the possibility of a tie in a cluster that has an even number of nodes, one node has an extra fractional voting weight called epsilon. If the connectivity between two equal portions of a large cluster fails, the group of nodes containing epsilon maintains quorum, assuming that all of the nodes are healthy. For example, the following illustration shows a four-node cluster in which two of the nodes have failed. However, because one of the surviving nodes holds epsilon, the cluster remains in quorum even though there is not a simple majority of healthy nodes.



Epsilon is automatically assigned to the first node when the cluster is created. If the node that holds epsilon becomes unhealthy, takes over its high-availability partner, or is taken over by its high-availability partner, then epsilon is automatically reassigned to a healthy node in a different HA pair.

Taking a node offline can affect the ability of the cluster to remain in quorum. Therefore, ONTAP issues a warning message if you attempt an operation that will either take the cluster out of quorum or else put it one outage away from a loss of quorum. You can disable the quorum warning messages by using the cluster quorum-service options modify command at the advanced privilege level.

In general, assuming reliable connectivity among the nodes of the cluster, a larger cluster is more stable than a smaller cluster. The quorum requirement of a simple majority of half the nodes plus epsilon is easier to maintain in a cluster of 24 nodes than in a cluster of two nodes.

A two-node cluster presents some unique challenges for maintaining quorum. Two-node clusters use cluster HA, in which neither node holds epsilon; instead, both nodes are continuously polled to ensure that if one node fails, the other has full read-write access to data, as well as access to logical interfaces and management functions.

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