A guide to managing and monitoring security updates in Red Hat Enterprise Linux 9
Red Hat Enterprise Linux 9 Managing and monitoring security updates

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Abstract

This document describes how to learn about and install security updates, as well as displaying additional details about the updates.
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MAKING OPEN SOURCE MORE INCLUSIVE

Red Hat is committed to replacing problematic language in our code, documentation, and web properties. We are beginning with these four terms: master, slave, blacklist, and whitelist. Because of the enormity of this endeavor, these changes will be implemented gradually over several upcoming releases. For more details, see our CTO Chris Wright’s message.
PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON RED HAT DOCUMENTATION

We appreciate your feedback on our documentation. Let us know how we can improve it.

Submitting comments on specific passages

1. View the documentation in the Multi-page HTML format and ensure that you see the Feedback button in the upper right corner after the page fully loads.
2. Use your cursor to highlight the part of the text that you want to comment on.
3. Click the Add Feedback button that appears near the highlighted text.
4. Add your feedback and click Submit.

Submitting feedback through Bugzilla (account required)

1. Log in to the Bugzilla website.
2. Select the correct version from the Version menu.
3. Enter a descriptive title in the Summary field.
4. Enter your suggestion for improvement in the Description field. Include links to the relevant parts of the documentation.
5. Click Submit Bug.
CHAPTER 1. IDENTIFYING SECURITY UPDATES

Keeping enterprise systems secure from current and future threats requires regular security updates. Red Hat Product Security provides the guidance you need to confidently deploy and maintain enterprise solutions.

1.1. WHAT ARE SECURITY ADVISORIES?

Red Hat Security Advisories (RHSA) document the information about security flaws being fixed in Red Hat products and services.

Each RHSA includes the following information:

- Severity
- Type and status
- Affected products
- Summary of fixed issues
- Links to the tickets about the problem. Note that not all tickets are public.
- Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures (CVE) numbers and links with additional details, such as attack complexity.

Red Hat Customer Portal provides a list of Red Hat Security Advisories published by Red Hat. You can display details of a specific advisory by navigating to the advisory’s ID from the list of Red Hat Security Advisories.

Figure 1.1. List of security advisories
Optionally, you can also filter the results by specific product, variant, version, and architecture. For example, to display only advisories for Red Hat Enterprise Linux 9, you can set the following filters:

- Product: Red Hat Enterprise Linux
- Variant: All Variants
- Version: 9
- Optionally, select a minor version.

**Additional resources**

- List of Red Hat Security Advisories
- Anatomy of a Red Hat Security Advisory
- Red Hat Customer Portal

### 1.2. DISPLAYING SECURITY UPDATES THAT ARE NOT INSTALLED ON A HOST

You can list all available security updates for your system by using the `dnf` utility.

**Prerequisite**

- A Red Hat subscription attached to the host.

**Procedure**

- List all available security updates which have not been installed on the host:

  ```bash
  # dnf updateinfo list updates security
  ...
  RHSA-2019:0997 Important/Sec. platform-python-3.6.8-2.el8_0.x86_64
  RHSA-2019:0997 Important/Sec. python3-libs-3.6.8-2.el8_0.x86_64
  RHSA-2019:0990 Moderate/Sec. systemd-239-13.el8_0.3.x86_64
  ...
  ```

### 1.3. DISPLAYING SECURITY UPDATES THAT ARE INSTALLED ON A HOST

You can list installed security updates for your system by using the `dnf` utility.

**Procedure**

- List all security updates which are installed on the host:

  ```bash
  # dnf updateinfo list security --installed
  ...
  RHSA-2019:1234 Important/Sec. libssh2-1.8.0-7.module+el8+2833+c7d6d092
  ```
If multiple updates of a single package are installed, `dnf` lists all advisories for the package. In the previous example, two security updates for the `python3-libs` package have been installed since the system installation.

### 1.4. DISPLAYING A SPECIFIC ADVISORY USING DNF

You can use the `dnf` utility to display a specific advisory information that is available for an update.

**Prerequisites**

- A Red Hat subscription attached to the host.
- You have a security advisory **Update ID**. See identifying the security advisory updates.
- The update provided by the advisory is not installed.

**Procedure**

- Display a specific advisory:

  ```bash
  # dnf updateinfo info <Update ID>
  ```

  Replace the **Update ID** with the required advisory. For example, `# dnf updateinfo info <RHSA-2019:0997>`.
CHAPTER 2. INSTALLING SECURITY UPDATES

2.1. INSTALLING ALL AVAILABLE SECURITY UPDATES

To keep the security of your system up to date, you can install all currently available security updates using the `dnf` utility.

**Prerequisite**
- A Red Hat subscription attached to the host.

**Procedure**

1. **Install security updates using `dnf` utility:**
   
   ```
   # dnf update --security
   ```

   **NOTE**
   
   The `--security` parameter is important. Without it, `dnf update` installs all updates, including bug fixes and enhancements.

2. **Confirm and start the installation by pressing `y`:**
   
   ```
   ...
   Transaction Summary
   ================
   Upgrade ... Packages
   Total download size: ... M
   Is this ok [y/d/N]: y
   ```

3. **Optional: list processes that require a manual restart of the system after installing the updated packages:**
   
   ```
   # dnf needs-restarting
   1107 : /usr/sbin/rsyslogd -n
   1199 : -bash
   ```

   **NOTE**
   
   This command lists only processes that require a restart, and not services. That is, you cannot restart processes listed using the `systemctl` utility. For example, the `bash` process in the output is terminated when the user that owns this process logs out.

2.2. INSTALLING A SECURITY UPDATE PROVIDED BY A SPECIFIC ADVISORY
In certain situations, you might want to install only specific updates. For example, if a specific service can be updated without scheduling a downtime, you can install security updates for only this service, and install the remaining security updates later.

**Prerequisites**

- A Red Hat subscription attached to the host.
- You have a security advisory Update ID. See identifying the security advisory updates.

**Procedure**

1. Install a specific advisory:

   ```
   # dnf update --advisory=<Update ID>
   ```

   Replace the `Update ID` with the required advisory. For example, `# dnf update --advisory=<RHSA-2019:0997>`

2. Confirm and start the installation by pressing `y`:

   ```
   ...
   Transaction Summary
   ===========================================
   Upgrade ... Packages
   Total download size: ... M
   Is this ok [y/d/N]: y
   ```

3. Optional: List the processes that require a manual restart of the system after installing the updated packages:

   ```
   # dnf needs-restarting
   1107 : /usr/sbin/rsyslogd -n
   1199 : -bash
   ```

   **NOTE**

   This command lists only processes that require a restart, and not services. This means that you cannot restart all processes listed by using the `systemctl` utility. For example, the `bash` process in the output is terminated when the user that owns this process logs out.

**2.3. INSTALLING SECURITY UPDATES AUTOMATICALLY**

Use the following procedure to update your system automatically with security updates.

**Prerequisites**

- A Red Hat subscription attached to the host.

**Procedure**
1. Install dnf-automatic using dnf

```
# dnf install dnf-automatic
```

2. Confirm and start the installation by pressing y:

```
... Transaction Summary
===========================================
Upgrade ... Packages
Total download size: ... M
Is this ok [y/d/N]: y
```

3. Open the `/etc/dnf/automatic.conf` file in a text editor of your choice, for example:

```
# vi /etc/dnf/automatic.conf
```

4. Configure the `upgrade_type = security` option in the `[commands]` section:

```
[commands]
# What kind of upgrade to perform:
# default = all available upgrades
# security = only the security upgrades
upgrade_type = security
```

5. Enable the `systemd timer unit`

```
# systemctl enable --now dnf-automatic-install.timer
```

Additional resources

- **dnf-automatic(8) man page**

2.4. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- See practices of securing workstations and servers in Security Hardening document.
- **Security-Enhanced Linux** documentation.