

Cisco Secure Client VPN Login Rejection on Battery Power Due to Privilege Service Unavailability

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Issue

When a PC is running on battery power, Cisco Secure Client VPN connections fail with a "login rejected" error message stating "your environment does not meet the access criteria defined by your administrator." The VPN connections succeed when the AC adapter is connected and the PC is receiving power from the wall outlet.

This behavior was not resolved by changing Windows power settings, including disabling power saving features and setting the power mode to optimal performance. The issue specifically affects users' ability to connect to VPN while working on battery power, while AC-powered connections work normally.

Environment

- Technology: Cisco Secure Access (Secure Client)
- Operating System: Windows
- Power Configuration: Issue occurs when PC operates on battery power only

Resolution

The resolution process involves analyzing DART logs to identify the root cause and implementing targeted troubleshooting steps to address the Windows privilege service availability issue.

Step 1: DART Log Analysis

How to collect DART - <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/docs/security/secure-client/221919-collect-dart-bundle-for-secure-client.html>

Extract the Dart file. Under Cisco Secure client > AnyConnect VPN > Logs > AnyConnectVPN.txt

Review the DART logs to identify the specific error condition. The logs will typically show entries similar to:

```
[Wed Jan 28 14:43:15.129 2026][csc_cscan] ... :privilege service is unavailable
```

This indicates that Secure Client failed to obtain device information due to the Windows privilege service being inaccessible during battery operation.

Step 2: System Restart

Restart the affected machines to refresh system services and clear any temporary service conflicts that may be preventing the privilege service from being accessible during battery operation.

Step 3: Windows Power Settings Review

Examine and modify Windows power management settings that may be affecting service availability during battery operation:

- Verify that power saving features are disabled
- Ensure the power mode is set to optimal performance
- Check that critical system services are not being suspended during battery operation
- Review USB selective suspend settings
- Examine processor power management settings

Step 4: Cisco Secure Client Re installation

Reinstall Cisco Secure Client to ensure all components and service dependencies are properly configured:

- Uninstall the current Cisco Secure Client installation
- Download the latest version of Cisco Secure Client
- Install with administrative privileges
- Verify that all required services are properly registered and running

Step 5: Additional Diagnostic Collection

If the issue persists after implementing the above steps, collect additional diagnostic information:

- Generate new DART logs during both successful (AC power) and failed (battery power) connection attempts
- Document whether the symptom is specific to particular device models
- Test on multiple machines to determine if the issue is system-wide or device-specific

Open a Support Case if issue still persists with above diagnostic information.

Cause

The root cause is the inability of Cisco Secure Client to access the Windows privilege service when the PC is operating on battery power. This service unavailability prevents the client from collecting necessary device information required for the VPN connection authentication process.

The issue appears to be related to Windows power management behavior that affects service availability during battery operation. The privilege service becomes inaccessible, causing the VPN client to fail the environment validation checks and reject the login attempt with the "environment does not meet access criteria" error message.

This condition is specific to battery-powered operation and does not occur when the system is connected to AC power, indicating that Windows power management policies are restricting service access as part of battery conservation measures.

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