

# YubiKey PIV Deployment Guide

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Best Practices and Basic Setup  
YubiKey 4, YubiKey 4 Nano, YubiKey NEO,  
YubiKey NEO-n



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## Introduction

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Yubico changes the game for strong authentication, providing superior security with unmatched ease-of-use. Our core invention, the [YubiKey](#), is a small USB and NFC device supporting multiple authentication and cryptographic protocols. With a simple touch, it protects access to computers, networks, and online services for the world's largest organizations.

Our innovative keys offer strong authentication via Yubico one-time passwords (OTP), FIDO Universal 2nd Factor (U2F), and smart card (PIV, OpenPGP, OATH) — all with a simple tap or touch of a button. YubiKeys protect access for everyone from individual home users to the world's largest organizations.

### PIV and YubiKeys

The YubiKey 4, YubiKey 4 Nano, YubiKey NEO, and YubiKey NEO-n support the Personal Identity and Verification Card (PIV) interface specified in the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), [SP 800-73 document, Cryptographic Algorithms and Key Sizes for PIV](#). This enables you to perform RSA or ECC sign and decrypt operations using a private key stored on the YubiKey. Your YubiKey acts as a smart card in this case, through common interfaces like PKCS#11.

The structure of the YubiKey as a PIV card follows the specifications defined above. PIV can also be used for document signing, encryption, and physical access. There are four PIV slots and 20 retired slots (YubiKey 4 only) on the YubiKey. Each slot is reserved for a specific purpose as defined by the NIST specifications.

For more information about the slots, see the [Yubico website](#).

For more information about the PIV specifications, see the PIV standards on the [NIST website](#).

This document covers only slot 9a (PIV authentication).

### PIV Deployment

This document covers the basic steps required to set up an Active Directory domain environment for smart card authentication, including considerations before provisioning YubiKeys for smart card login. We recommend that a qualified domain administrator be placed in charge of the process and that you use these instructions as a guideline for deployment. Rather than cover the complexities inherent in a corporate environment (for example, an Enterprise Root Certification Authority, multiple Subordinate Certificate Authorities, Certificate Revocation Lists, and so on), these instructions cover only the basic topics.

The following topics are covered in this document:

- [Before you Begin](#)
- [Determining the Preferred Method of Enrollment](#)
- [Configuring a Certification Authority for Smart Card Authentication](#)
- [Preparing the Certification Authority for Smart Card Login with a YubiKey](#)

- [Creating a Smart Card Login Template for User Self-Enrollment](#)
- [Creating a Smart Card Login Template for Enrolling on Behalf of Other Users](#)
- [Publishing the Smart Card Login Templates in the Certification Authority](#)
- [Changing the Behavior for Your Domain When You Remove the Smart Card](#)
- [Next Steps](#)

## Getting Additional Help

For more information, and to get help with your YubiKeys, see:

- [Support home page](#)
- [Documentation](#) and [FAQs](#)
- [Start a Support ticket](#)

## Using YubiKey PIV for Smart Card Login Documentation Set

- YubiKey PIV Quick Start Guide
- YubiKey PIV Deployment Guide (this document)
- YubiKey PIV Manager User's Guide
- Yubico PIV Tool Command Line Guide
- CSIS Enrollment Station Guide

Each of the documents is available for download on the [Yubico website](#).

## Before you Begin

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Before performing the steps in this document, be sure your system meets these requirements:

- For servers, install Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 or later (the examples shown in this document are from Windows Server 2012 R2)
- For clients, install Microsoft Windows 7 Pro/Enterprise/Ultimate or later (for YubiKeys to log in to Windows)
- Set up a Microsoft Windows Active Directory domain environment
- If you are using Remote Desktop Connection (RDP), install both Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 or later *and* Microsoft Windows 7 Pro/Enterprise/Ultimate or later on *both* the source and the destination computers

## Determining the Preferred Method of Enrollment

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Before implementing smart card authentication in an Active Directory domain environment, it is important to consider the method of user enrollment that you will use.

The three options are:

- **User self-enrollment:** Distribute the YubiKey PIV Manager and YubiKeys to enable users to request their own login certificates. For more information, download *YubiKey PIV Manager User's Guide* from the Yubico website.
- **Enrolling on behalf of other users:** Using the CSIS Enrollment Station application, grant Enrollment Agent permissions to one or more administrators. This enables the administrators you granted permission to request enrollment on behalf of other users. For more information, download the *CSIS Enrollment Station Guide* and/or the *Yubico PIV Tool Command Line Guide* from the Yubico website.
- **Advanced enrollment:** Use the Yubico PIV command line tool to write custom command line scripts or build your own deployment application. For more information, download the *Yubico PIV Tool Command Line Guide* from the Yubico website.

**NOTE:** The first two options can be implemented at once to provide flexibility, but be sure to set up a separate certificate request template to cover each option.

Download all documentation from the [Yubico website](#).

## Configuring a Certification Authority (CA) for Smart Card Authentication

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This chapter covers the basic configuration, but you can instead accomplish this process using a PowerShell script (not covered in this document).

**NOTE:** If a Certification Authority already exists in your environment, skip this chapter.

### In this Chapter

- [Prerequisites](#)
- [Creating a Certification Authority](#)

### Prerequisites

**IMPORTANT:** The installation should be performed by an experienced system administrator. These instructions include steps for a basic configuration. For information about implementing advanced configurations, see [this Microsoft Technet article](#).

Before you create a Certification Authority (CA), be sure you set up a Microsoft Windows Active Directory domain environment.

We recommend that you do not deploy a Root Certification Authority (CA) on a Domain Controller. As an additional security measure, consider installing the Root CA on a standalone offline server, and use a Subordinate CA for all certificate signing.

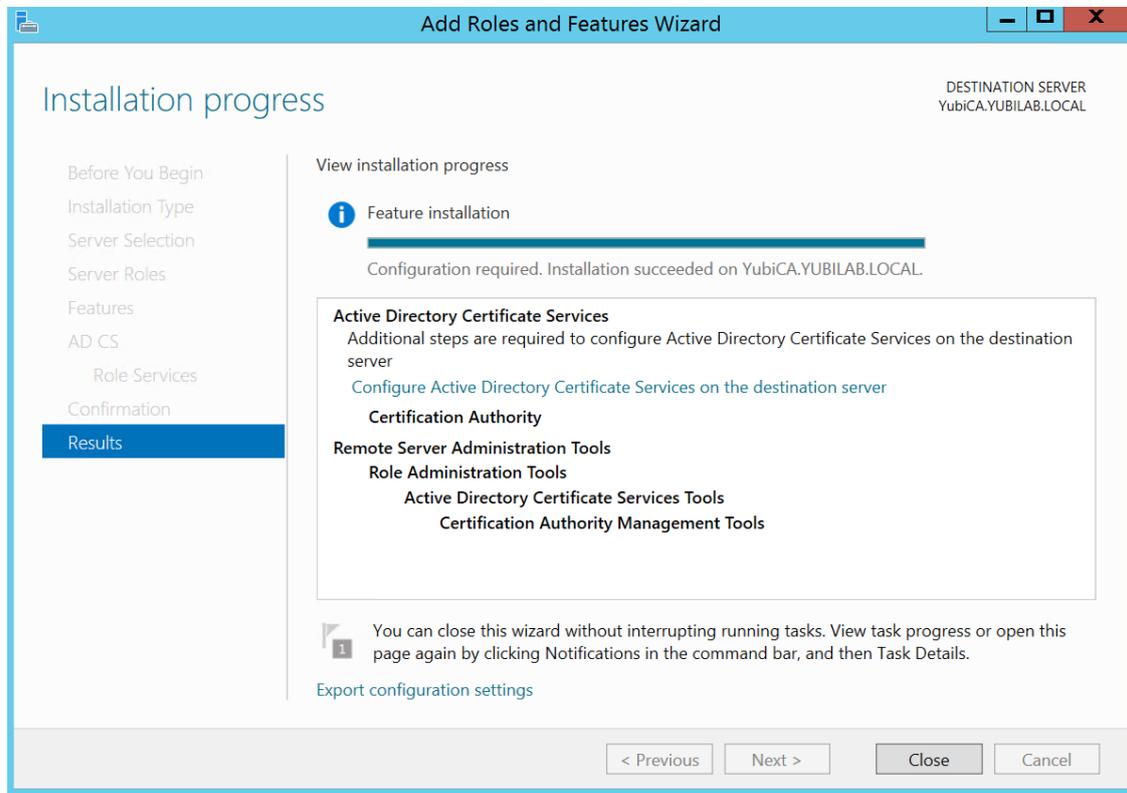
### Creating a Certification Authority

If a Certification Authority already exists in your environment, skip this section.

#### To create a Certification Authority

1. Open **Server Manager** and choose **Add roles and features**, and click **Next**.
2. Select **Role-based or feature-based installation**, and click **Next**.
3. Select **Select a server from the server pool**.
4. From **Server Pool**, select the server on which you want to install the Certification Authority, and click **Next**.
5. Under **Server Roles**, select **Active Directory Certificate Services**, and click **Next**.
6. Click **Add Features**, and click **Next**.
7. Click **Next** again.

8. Select **Certification Authority**, and click **Next**.
9. Click **Install**. Allow several minutes for the process to complete.



10. Select **Configure Active Directory Certificate Services on the destination server**, and click **Next**.
11. Select **Certification Authority**, and click **Next**.
12. Choose **Enterprise CA**, and click **Next**.
13. Choose **Root CA**, and click **Next**.
14. Select **Create a new private key**, and click **Next**.
15. Select the **cryptographic provider**, **hash algorithm**, and **key length** for the private key, and click **Next**.

**NOTE:** Changing the **cryptographic provider**, **hash algorithm**, and **key length** from the default values may increase the size of smart card login certificates beyond the available space on the YubiKey. Be sure the values you select are supported by the YubiKeys that you will use in your environment:

	Maximum supported certificate size	Supported key lengths	Supported hash algorithms
<b>YubiKey NEO</b>	2048 bytes	1024 RSA, 2048 RSA	SHA1, SHA256
<b>YubiKey 4</b>	3072 bytes	1024 RSA, 2048 RSA, 4096 RSA	SHA1, SHA256, SHA384, SHA512

**Common name** and **Distinguished name** will be automatically populated.

16. Confirm the values match the server name and domain name, and click **Next**.
17. Select the **validity period** for the Certification Authority certificate, and click **Next**.  
**TIP:** This period must be longer than what you set for the smart card login certificate template. We recommend the default value of **5 years**.
18. Click **Next** again.
19. Verify all settings match the desired values, and click **Configure**.

When the process completes, click **Close** to quit the installation wizard.

## Preparing the Certification Authority for Smart Card Login with a YubiKey

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Before smart card login certificates can be requested and loaded to YubiKeys, several steps need to be completed, including creating smart card login templates and publishing the templates in the Certification Authority.

The examples in this section use Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2. If you are using a different version of Windows Server, modify the steps to suit your environment.

### In this Chapter

- [Creating a Smart Card Login Template for User Self-Enrollment](#)
- [Creating a Smart Card Login Template for Enrolling on Behalf of Other Users](#)
- [Publishing the Smart Card Login Templates in the Enterprise Root Certification Authority](#)

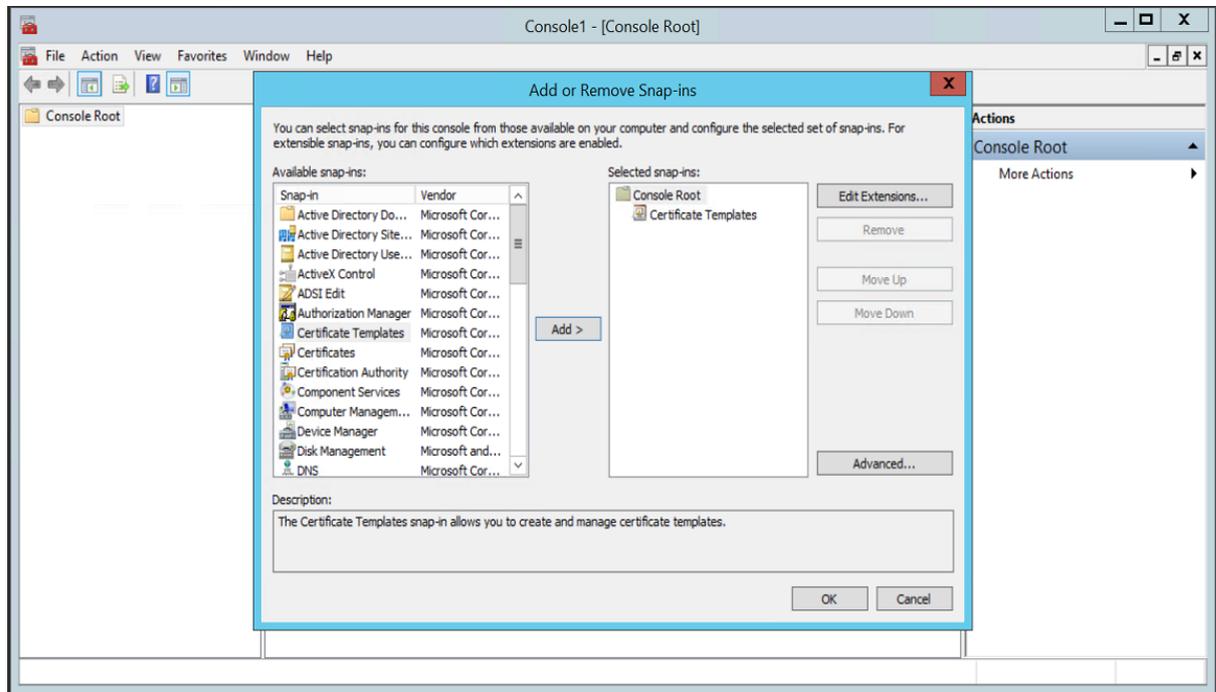
### Creating a Smart Card Login Template for User Self-Enrollment

It is important to create a smart card login certificate template in the CA before distributing YubiKey PIV Manager and YubiKeys to your users who will enroll themselves.

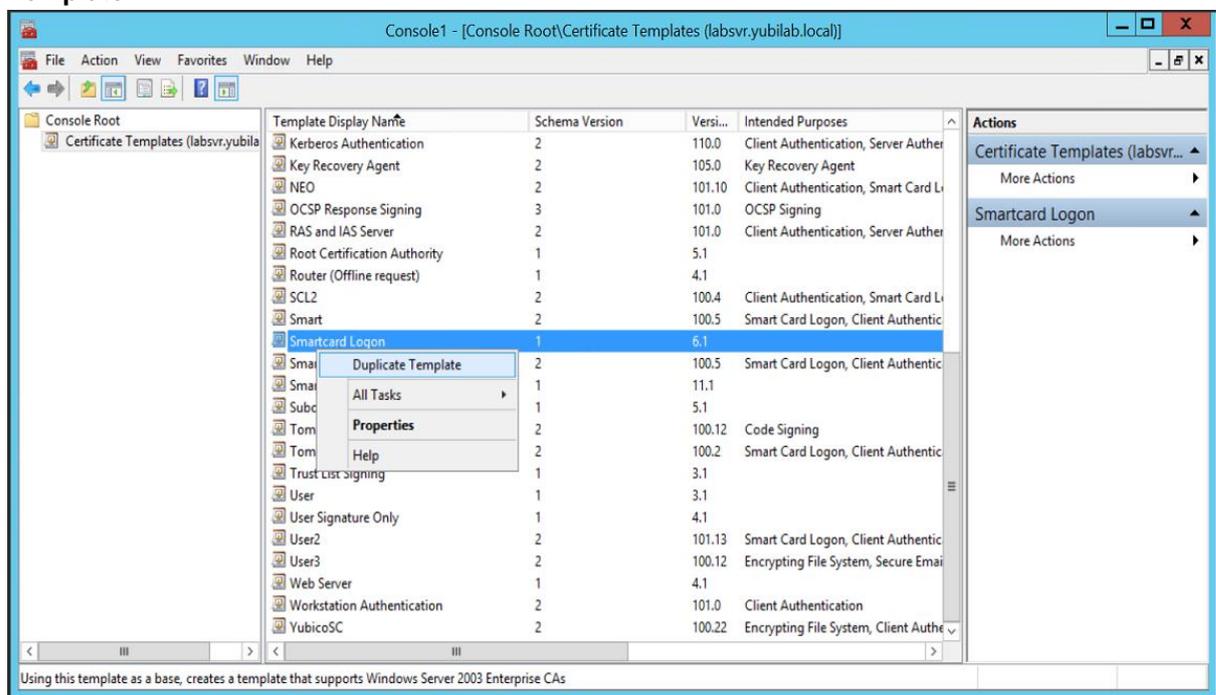
#### To create a smart card login template for user self-enrollment

1. Open **Microsoft Management Console (MMC)**, and select **File > Add/Remove Snap-in**.

- Under **Selected snap-ins**, add **Certificate Templates**, and click **OK**.

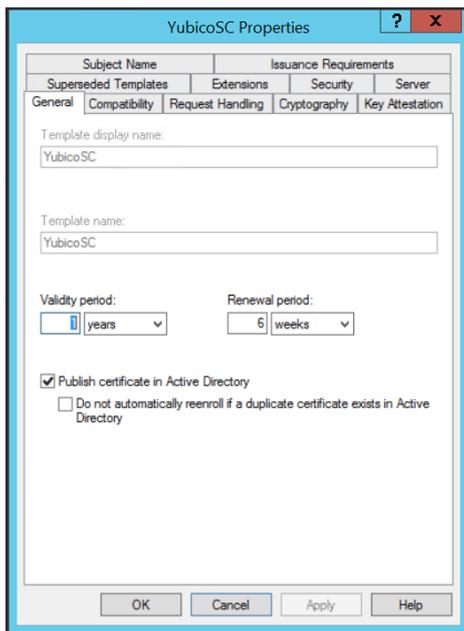


- Double-click **Certificate Templates**, locate and right-click **Smartcard Logon**, and select **Duplicate Template**.



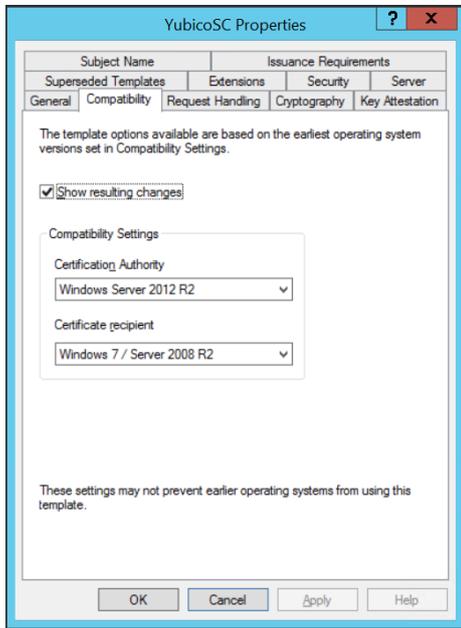
- Click the **General** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:

- a. Select **Publish certificate in Active Directory**.
- b. You can change the default **Validity period** of 1 year, but be sure that the timeframe you choose does not exceed the restrictions for your Certification Authority.
- c. We recommend that you change the **Template display name** and **Template name** to something short and simple (such as "YubiKey").

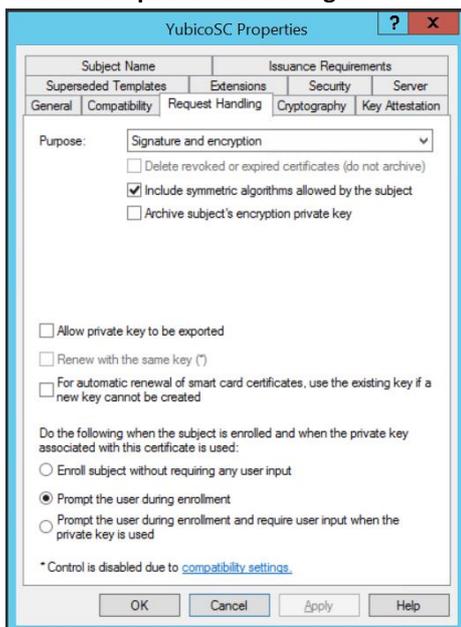


5. Click the **Compatibility** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. Under **Certification Authority**, select the operating system where the Certification Authority resides.

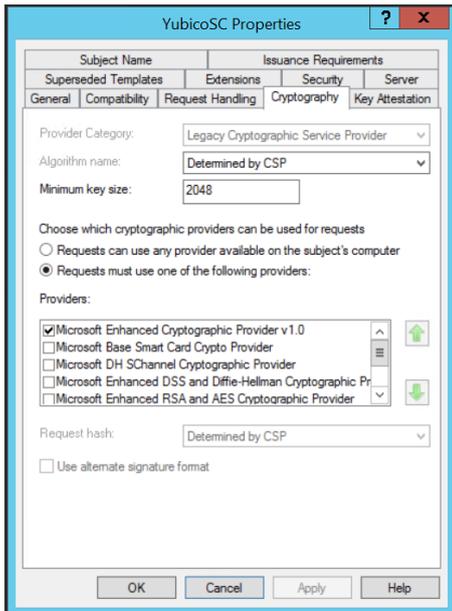
- b. Under **Certificate recipient**, select the oldest Windows operating system in your domain environment.



6. Click the **Request Handling** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. Select Signature and encryption.
  - b. Select **Include symmetric algorithms allowed by the subject**.
  - c. Select **Prompt the user during enrollment**.

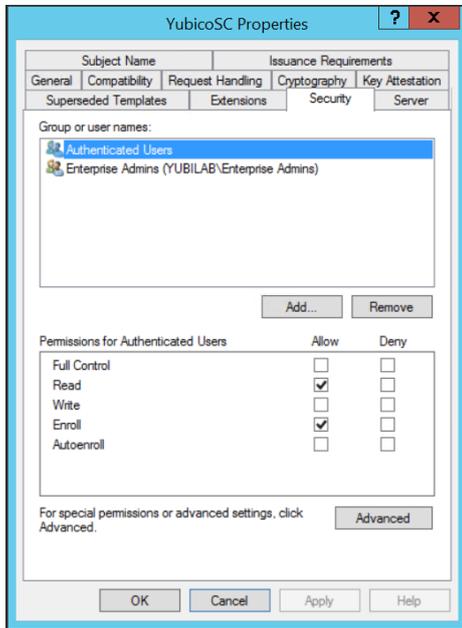


7. Click the **Cryptography** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. We recommend that you change the **Minimum key size** to **2048**.
  - b. Select **Requests must use one of the following providers**.
  - c. Select **Microsoft Enhanced Cryptographic Provider v1.0**.



8. Click the **Security** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. Be sure that **Authenticated Users** appears.
  - b. Select **Allow** for both **Read** and **Enroll**.

- c. To maintain your ability to make changes to this certificate template, be sure the appropriate administrator has **Write** permissions.



9. Click **Apply**, and click **OK**.

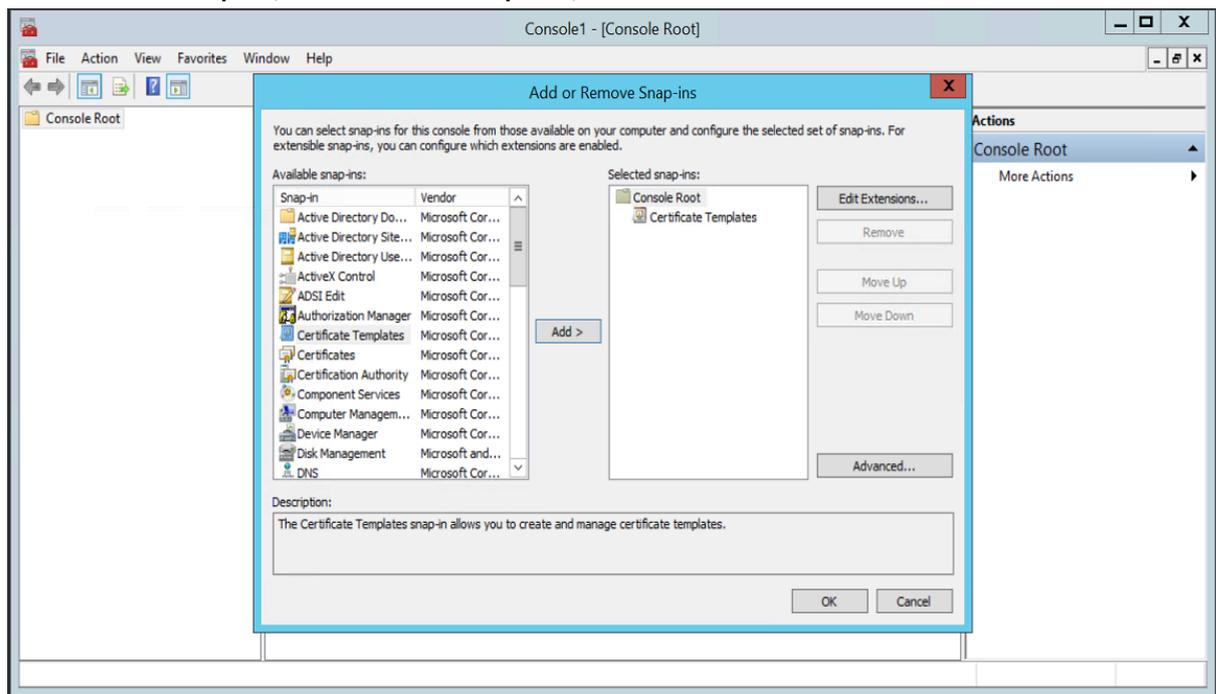
## Creating a Smart Card Login Template for Enrolling on Behalf of Other Users

This section provides instructions for creating a smart card login certificate template for Enrollment Agents in the CA, specifying permissions for the Enrollment Agents, and publishing the certificate so that the designated Enrollment Agents can enroll on behalf of other users. These topics are described:

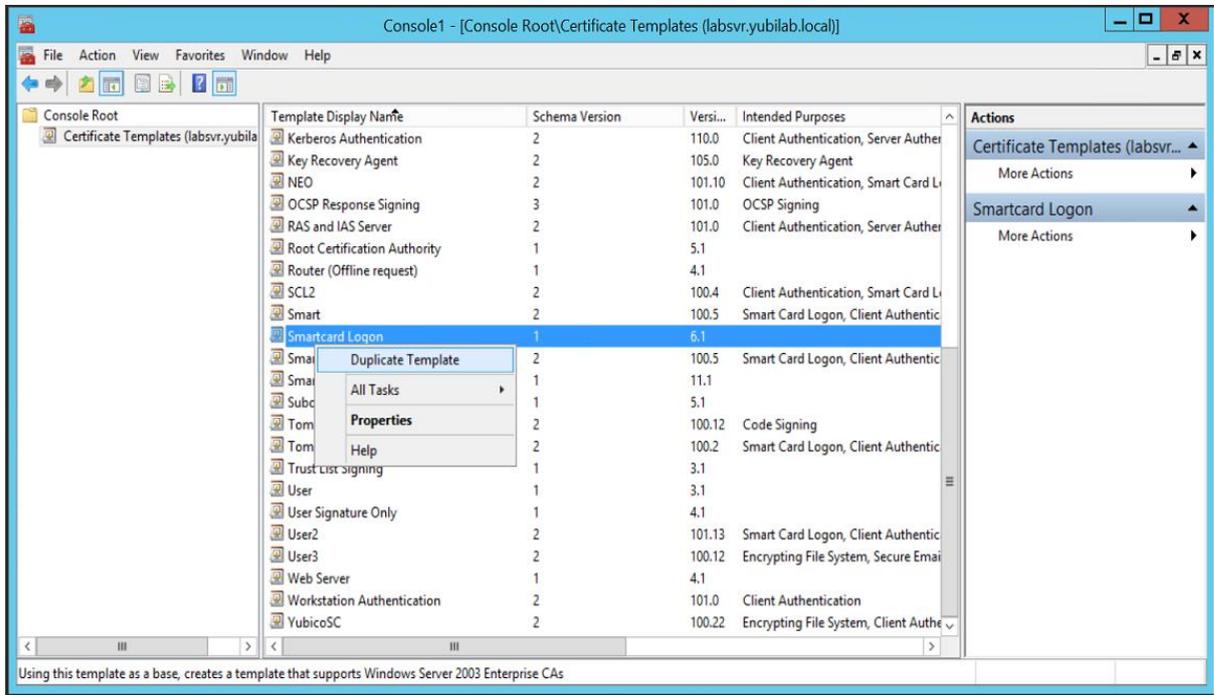
- [To create an Enrollment Agent enabled smart card certificate template](#)
- [To specify the permissions for the Enrollment Agents and publish the certificate](#)
- [To enroll the smart card enrollment agent certificate](#)

### To create an Enrollment Agent enabled smart card certificate template

1. Open **Microsoft Management Console (MMC)** and select **File > Add/Remove Snap-in**.
2. Under **Selected snap-ins**, add **Certificate Templates**, and click **OK**.

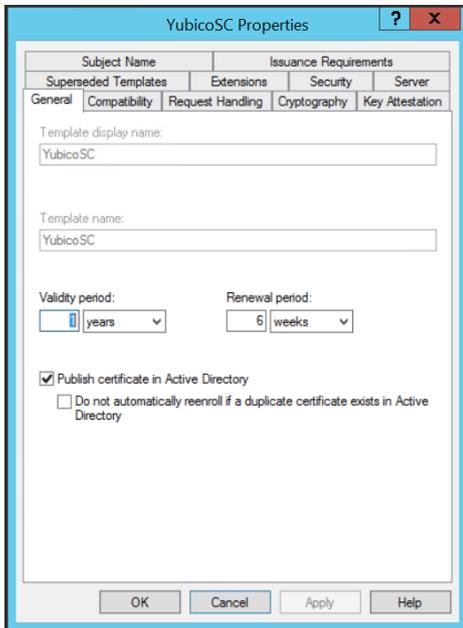


3. Double-click **Certificate Templates**, locate and right-click **Smartcard Logon**, and select **Duplicate Template**.

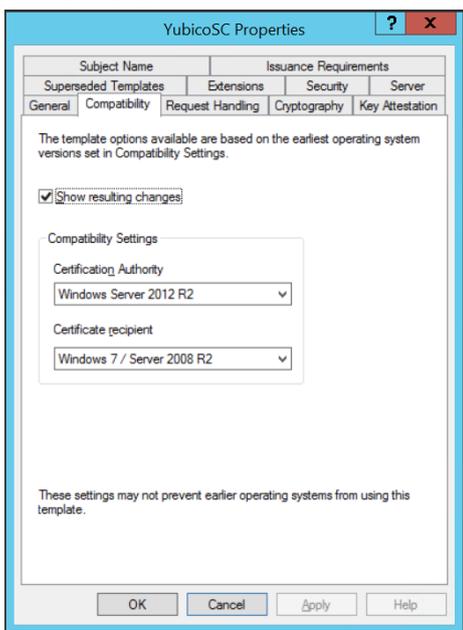


4. Click the **General** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. Select **Publish certificate in Active Directory**.
  - b. You can change the default **Validity period** of 1 year, but be sure that the timeframe you choose does not exceed the restrictions for your Certification Authority.

- c. We recommend that you change the **Template display name** and **Template name** to something short and simple (such as "YubiKey").

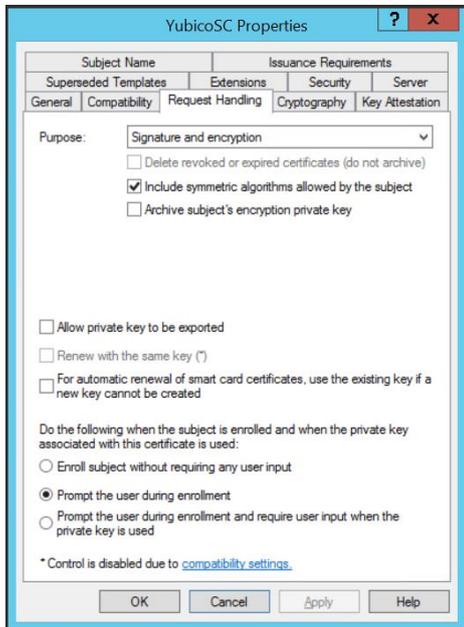


- 5. Click the **Compatibility** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. Under **Certification Authority**, select the operating system where the Certification Authority resides.
  - b. Under **Certificate recipient**, select the oldest Windows operating system in your domain environment.

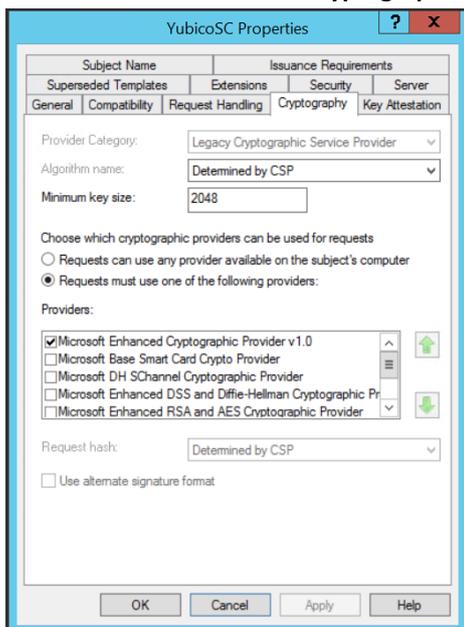


- 6. Click the **Request Handling** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:

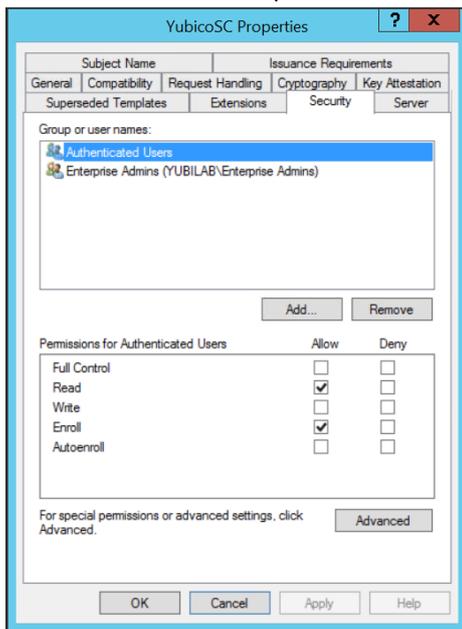
- a. Next to Purpose, select **Signature and smartcard logon**.
- b. Under **CSPs**, select the CSP that should be used for your smart cards.



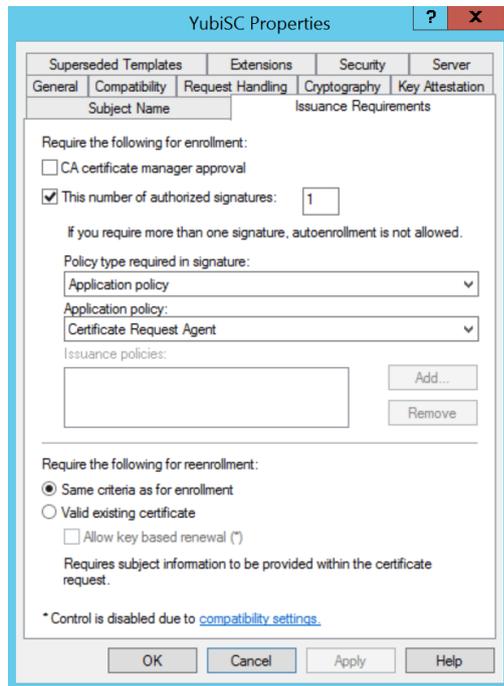
7. Click the **Cryptography** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. We recommend that you change the **Minimum key size** to **2048**.
  - b. Select **Requests must use one of the following providers**.
  - c. Select **Microsoft Enhanced Cryptographic Provider v1.0**.



8. Click the **Security** tab, and make the following changes, as needed:
  - a. Be sure that **Authenticated Users** appears.
  - b. Select **Allow** for both **Read** and **Enroll**.
  - c. To maintain your ability to make changes to this certificate template, be sure the appropriate administrator has **Write** permissions.



9. Click the **Issuance Requirements** tab, and make the following changes:
  - a. Set **This number of authorized signatures** to **1**.
  - b. Set **Policy type required in signature** to **Application policy**.
  - c. Set **Application policy** to **Certificate Request Agent**.
  - d. Set **Require the following for reenrollment** to **Same criteria as for enrollment**.



10. Click **Apply** and click **OK**.

### To specify the permissions for the Enrollment Agents and publish the certificate template

1. Open **Microsoft Management Console (MMC)** and select **File > Add/Remove Snap-in**
2. Under **Selected snap-ins**, add **Certificate Templates**, and click **OK**.
3. Right-click the **EnrollmentAgent** template, and click **Properties**.
4. On the **Security** tab, make sure the user or group designated as an Enrollment Agent has **Read** and **Enroll** permissions on the template, and then click **OK**.
5. In the **Certificate Authority** snap-in, right-click **Certificate Templates** folder, and select **New**.
6. Select **Certificate Template to Issue**.
7. Select the **Enrollment Agent** template, and click **OK**. The Enrollment Agent certificate automatically saves to the user's personal drive.

### To enroll the smart card enrollment agent certificate

1. Log on to the domain with the Enrollment Agent account.
2. Open `certmgr.msc` to manage the current user's certificates.
3. Open the **Personal** folder, right-click in the right pane, and then click **All Tasks**.

4. Click **Request New Certificate**.
5. Complete the **Certificate Request Wizard**, and request an **Enrollment Agent** certificate.

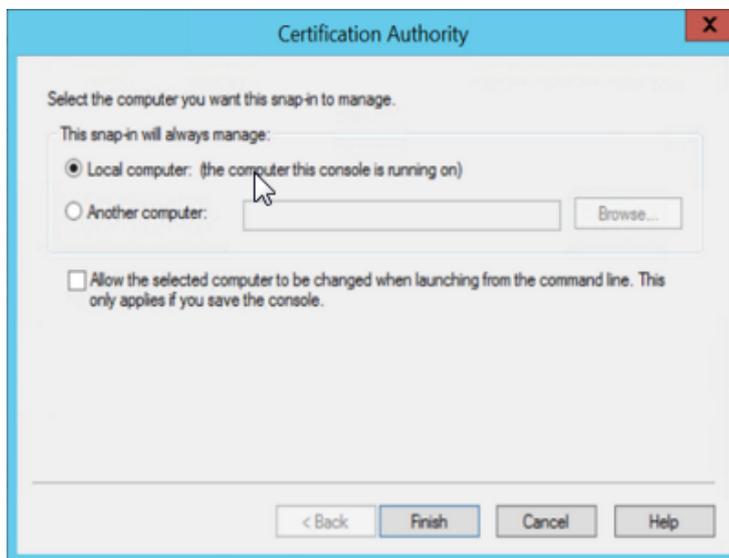
## Publishing the Smart Card Login Templates in the Certification Authority

Now that you have set up smart card login certificate templates, be sure you publish them in the Enterprise Root Certification Authority. Until you publish your templates, users see the following error message and the process fails when they request a smart card login certificate:

```
The requested certificate template is not supported by this CA [...] The request was for a certificate template that is not supported by the Active Directory Certificate Services Policy.
```

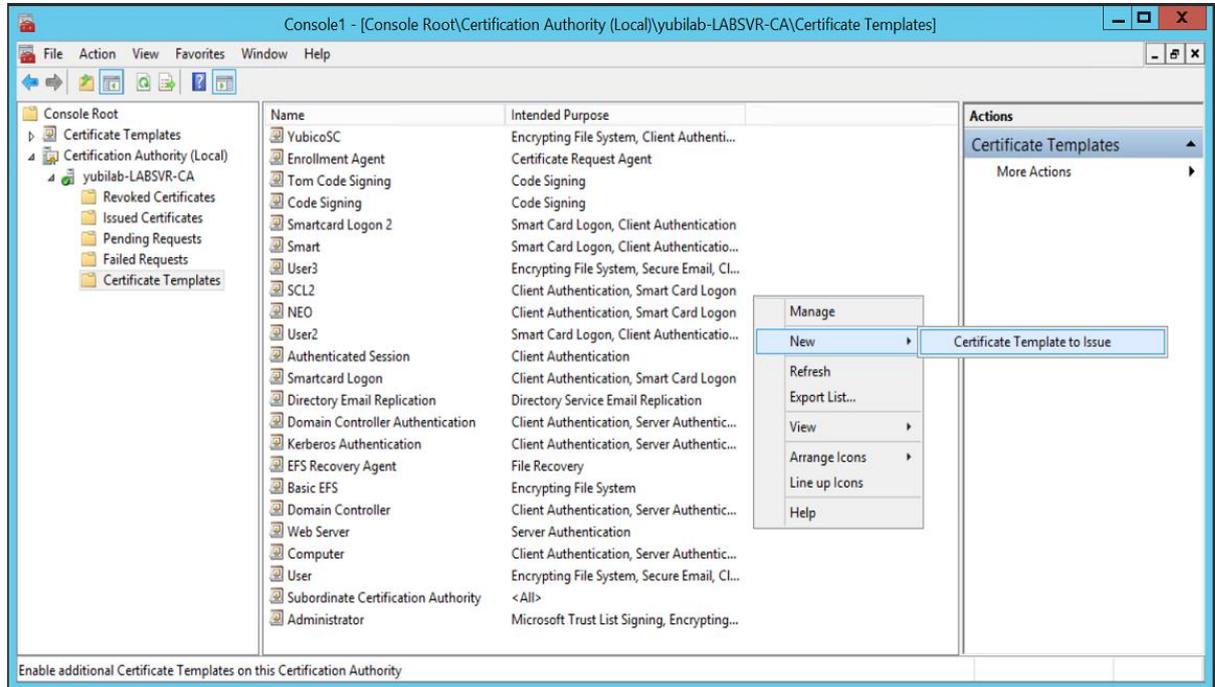
### To publish a smart card login certificate

1. Open **Microsoft Management Console**, and load the **Certification Authority** snap-in.
2. In the **Certification Authority** window, do one of the following:
  - If you are logged in to the server that also hosts the Certification Authority (CA), select **Local computer**. Click **Finish** to continue.
  - If the CA resides on another server, select **Another computer** and click **Browse** to locate the server. Click **Finish** to continue.



3. In the left pane, expand **Certification Authority**, and select **Certificate Templates**.

- Click the white space in the center pane, and select **New > Certificate Template to Issue**.



- Select the new template that you created in a previous section, [Creating a Smart Card Login Template for User Self-Enrollment](#) or [Creating a Smart Card Login Template for Enrolling on Behalf of Other Users](#), and click OK.

You (or your users) will need to wait a short period of time before a certificate can be requested using this new template (we recommend waiting approximately 20 minutes). The precise timing depends on the complexity of your domain environment.

## Changing the Behaviour for Your Domain When You Remove the Smart Card

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When a user logs into the domain account using a smart card, by default, the user can remove the smart card at any point with no change to the login status.

For security reasons, you may want to enforce a different behavior. In Group Policy, you can specify that Windows locks the user account, or logs out the user if the smart card is removed at any point while the user is logged in to the account.

**Important:** If you are planning to implement additional functions of the YubiKey NEO (that is, U2F protocol on one or both of the configuration slots) and in Group Policy you specified that Windows locks the user's workstation or logs the user out, this temporarily disconnects the smart card from the operating system and locks the workstation or logs out the user account. This is the expected behavior for USB and smart card combination devices. This does not apply to the YubiKey 4 or YubiKey 4 Nano.

### In this Chapter

- [To edit Group Policy to lock the user's workstation when a smart card is removed](#)
- [To add a key to the Windows Registry to delay the smart card removal policy service](#)

#### To edit Group Policy to lock the user's workstation when a smart card is removed

1. In Microsoft Windows Server 2012, open **Group Policy Management Editor**.
2. Select **Computer Configuration > Policies > Windows Settings > Security Settings > Local Policies > Security Options**.
3. On the left pane, locate and right-click **Interactive Logon: Smart card removal behavior**, and select **Properties**.
4. Click **Local Security Setting**, and set it to **Lock Workstation** or **Force Logoff**, depending on your requirements.
5. Click **Apply**, and click **OK**.

#### To add a key to the Windows Registry to delay the smart card removal policy service

1. In Microsoft Windows Server 2012, open **Group Policy Management Editor**.
2. Select **Computer Configuration > Preferences > Windows Settings**.
3. Right-click **Registry**, and select **New > Registry Item**.
4. Set the following fields as indicated:

**Action:** Update

**Hive:** HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE

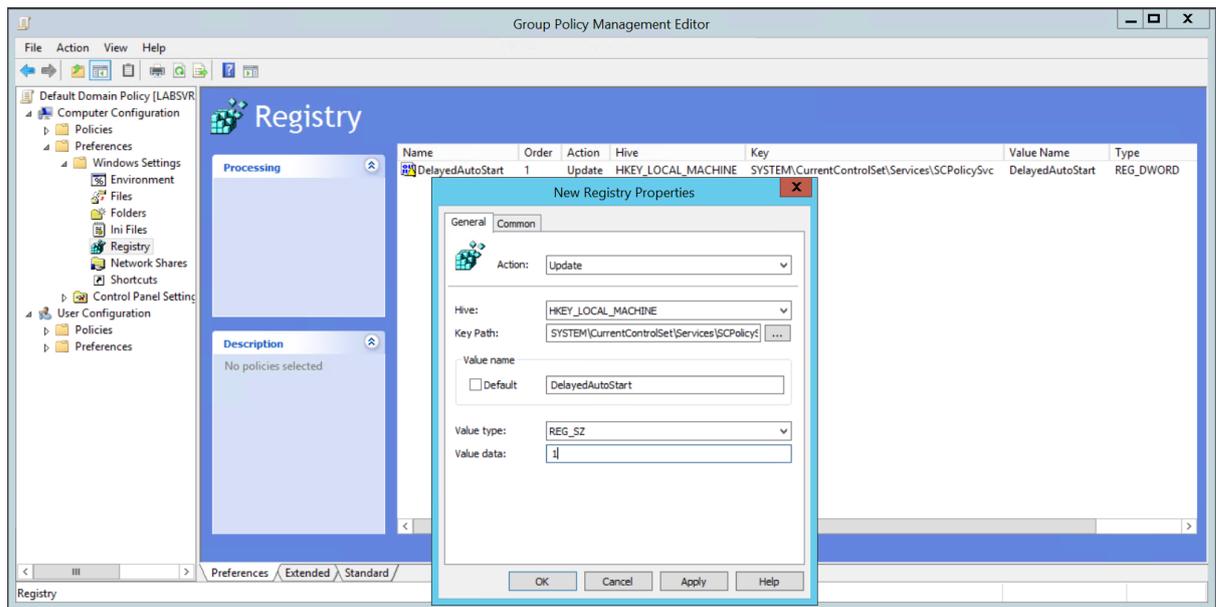
**Key Path:** HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\SCPolicySvc

**Value name:** DelayedAutoStart

**Value type:** REG\_DWORD

**Value data:** 1

5. Click **OK**.



## Next Steps

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This section helps you determine your next steps in your YubiKey PIV deployment process.

### User Self Enrollment

For users who will enroll themselves with PIV-enabled YubiKeys, the next step is to see the *YubiKey PIV Manager User's Guide*, which describes the process of requesting and importing certificates to log in to Microsoft Windows Active Directory domain environment.

### Enrollment on Behalf of Other Users

For administrators who will enroll on behalf of other users, the next step is to see the *CSIS Enrollment Station Guide* and/or the *Yubico PIV Tool Command Line Guide*. The CSIS Enrollment Station application enables administrators to whom the Enrollment Agent is assigned to enroll YubiKeys on behalf of other users.

The Yubico PIV Tool enables administrators to interact with the Privilege and Identification Card (PIV) application on a YubiKey. Using the Yubico PIV Tool, you can generate keys on the YubiKey, import keys and certificates, create certificate requests, and other operations. A shared library and a command line tool is included.

### Advanced Enrollment

For administrators who will use the Yubico PIV tool command line to write custom command line scripts or build their own deployment application, the next step is to see the *Yubico PIV Tool Command Line Guide*.