Fix "Unable to start Parallels services"

- Parallels Desktop for Mac Pro Edition
- Parallels Desktop for Mac Business Edition
- Parallels Desktop for Mac Standard Edition

Symptoms

Parallels Desktop cannot be started: *Unable to start Parallels services.*

Cause

- Parallels Desktop cannot connect to one of the required services.
- There has been an authentication failure of system kernel extensions.
- Parallels Desktop cannot access system kernel extensions.
- macOS® operating system doesn't allow Parallels Desktop kernel extensions to load due to system policy.

Most often the behavior is caused by a macOS® misconfiguration causing incorrect folder permissions resulting in access errors.

Troubleshooting and Solution

Note: The behavior has mostly been fixed in macOS® Big Sur and above. Therefore, as the very first step, it is advised to update macOS®, as described here. If it is not an option, the steps below may help fix it.

As a first troubleshooting step, please open Terminal (**Applications > Utilities > Terminal**) and execute the following command:

```
ls -Ol /private/var/db/ | grep 'restricted'
```

Check the command output, and if the resulting list is missing `KernelExtensionManagement` folder, then perform the following steps:

1. Restart your Mac into macOS Recovery. To do so, restart your Mac and hold down **Command+R** on the keyboard until the Apple logo appears on the screen.

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   Note: If you see a login window instead of the Utilities window, it's possible that you didn't press **Command+R** early enough. Restart your **Mac** and try again.
2. Once in Recovery, open **Disk Utility** and note the name of your Mac's main drive. By default, it's **Macintosh HD**.

3. Close Disk Utility and from the top menu bar click **Utilities > Terminal**.

4. In Terminal execute the following command:

```
chflags restricted "/Volumes/Macintosh HD/private/var/db/KernelExtensionManagement"
```

Please note that if your Mac's drive is called anything other than **Macintosh HD**, you need to adjust the command accordingly.

5. Restart your Mac by clicking **Apple logo > Restart...**

Advanced troubleshooting

1. Start **Terminal**: open **Finder** - **Applications** - **Utilities** - **Terminal**.
2. Execute the following command:

   sudo kextcache --clear-staging

   Note: You will need to enter your Mac password to run the command. No symbols will be shown due to security measures, so just hit the keys and use return/Enter.
3. Try starting Parallels Desktop. If the issue still persists, execute the next command:

   sudo touch /System/Library/Extensions

   Note: You will need to enter your Mac password to run the command. No symbols will be shown due to security measures, so just hit the keys and use return/Enter.
4. Restart the Mac and try launching Parallels Desktop.
5. If the issue still persists, restart your Mac into macOS Recovery. To do so, restart your **Mac** and hold down **Command+R** on the keyboard until the **Apple** logo appears on the screen.

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   Note: If you see a login window instead of the Utilities window, it's possible that you didn't press **Command+R** early enough. Restart your **Mac** and try again.
6. From the top menu bar select **Utilities** and then **Terminal**.

7. Execute the following command (keep in mind that all letters in the last part must be in the **upper case**, otherwise, the command won't work):

```
spctl kext-consent add 4C6364ACXT
```

   Note: Hit **return/Enter** after entering the command to execute it.
8. The result of performing this command should look like the below image:

9. To restart **Mac** into normal mode execute the command `reboot` or select **Apple** logo > **Restart...**
10. Try launching Parallels Desktop again.
11. If none of the steps above have helped, the only solution left is to reinstall macOS® from Recovery to update system files as per instructions from the article. By reinstalling macOS® from Recovery, only system files will be updated, keeping personal files and installed applications intact.

Using MDM for deployment of Parallels Desktop

In case you install Parallels Desktop in Enterprise environment, disable MDM or check its settings. It may block extension installation if certain settings are enabled for Manageable profile.

To configure MDM profile for use with Parallels Desktop, refer to Parallels Desktop for Mac Business Edition IT Administrator's Guide (p.31)

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