

Configuration Files Exposed

What This Means

This finding indicates that one or more configuration files are publicly accessible.

These files may contain sensitive information about your site.

Why It Matters

Configuration files often include critical details such as:

- database credentials
- API keys
- application settings
- internal paths

If exposed, attackers may use this information to:

- gain unauthorized access
 - compromise your database
 - escalate attacks against your site
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How Steel Security Detects This

Steel Security checks for common configuration files that should not be accessible via a browser.

This may include:

- backup copies of configuration files
- misnamed or duplicated config files
- files stored in publicly accessible locations

If a file can be accessed directly, it is flagged.

How to Fix It

To resolve this issue:

- restrict access to configuration files using server rules
- remove unnecessary or duplicate configuration files
- ensure sensitive files are not stored in public directories

You may also use Steel Security hardening controls related to file protection.

What to Expect After Fixing

After applying protections:

- configuration files will no longer be accessible via browser
 - requests to these files should return an error (e.g., 403 Forbidden)
 - sensitive data will be better protected
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How to Verify

To verify the fix:

1. attempt to access the file via its URL
2. confirm that access is denied

Ensure that:

- the file is no longer publicly accessible
 - your site continues to function normally
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Common Causes

- leftover backup files (e.g., `.bak`, `.old`, `.zip`)
 - misconfigured server rules
 - manual file uploads to public directories
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Best Practices

- never store sensitive files in publicly accessible locations
 - remove unused or outdated configuration files
 - apply server-level access restrictions
 - review file structure regularly
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Related

- [Protect Configuration Files](#)
 - [Protect Backup Files](#)
 - [Limit Exposure of System Info](#)
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Revision #1

Created 2026-04-04 18:46:57 UTC by Jason Wassing

Updated 2026-04-04 18:46:57 UTC by Jason Wassing