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PLATFORM · TEMPLATE

# What \"Production-Ready\" *Actually* Means for a Kubernetes Cluster

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## ABOUT THIS TEMPLATE

Production-ready is a checklist, not a property. Forty items across five dimensions, scored honestly. The cluster either has them or it doesn't.

## THE TEMPLATE

Score your cluster row by row. Anywhere you can't honestly score 2, write a one-line note explaining the gap and the planned remediation.

Total score: \_\_ / 80

- **70-80: Production-ready.** Document the score, the date, the cluster, and circulate to whoever needs to approve.
- **60-69: Production-soft.** OK for non-customer-facing or non-regulated workloads. Not OK for the production workload your customers depend on.
- **Below 60: Demo.** Don't run production traffic. Don't put PHI on it. Don't claim it as "production" in customer contracts.

The number you produce will feel low the first time. That's the point. Most teams score around 50 on the first honest pass. The next quarter's work is moving 50 to 70.

## HOW TO USE IT

Re-score every cluster every six months. Drift happens. Items that scored 2 become 1 because a person left, a process lapsed, a tool changed. The score is a leading indicator.

When a new cluster is built, the scorecard is part of the launch criteria. Cluster cannot host production traffic until the score is documented and approved. This creates an explicit gate that engineering, security, and product can all point at.

When a customer asks "is your platform production-grade?" — share the scorecard methodology, not the raw score. The methodology builds trust; the raw score gets weaponized in contract negotiations.