

MicroProfile Health

The Microprofile community and its contributors

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MicroProfile Health

Rationale

The Eclipse MicroProfile Health specification defines a single container runtime mechanism for validating the availability and status of a MicroProfile implementation. This is primarily intended as a machine to machine (M2M) mechanism for use in containerized environments like cloud providers. Example of existing specifications from those environments include [Cloud Foundry Health Checks](#) and [Kubernetes Liveness, Readiness and Startup Probes](#).

In this scenario health checks are used to determine if a computing node needs to be discarded (terminated, shutdown) and eventually replaced by another (healthy) instance.

The MicroProfile Health architecture consists of three `/health/ready`, `/health/live` and `/health/started` endpoints in a MicroProfile runtime that respectively represent the readiness, the liveness and the startup health of the entire runtime. These endpoints are linked to health check procedures defined with specifications API and annotated respectively with `@Readiness`, `@Liveness` and `@Startup` annotations.

A 4th endpoint `/health` is also available and can be used to provide a combination of the previous endpoints.

These endpoints are expected to be associated with a configurable context, such as a web application deployment, that can be configured with settings such as port, virtual-host, security, etc. Further, MicroProfile Health defines the notion of a procedure that represents the health of a particular subcomponent of an application.

In an application, there can be zero or more procedures bound to a given health endpoint. The overall application health for a given endpoint is the logical AND of all of the procedures bound to it.

The current version of the MicroProfile Health specification does not define how the defined endpoints may be partitioned in the event that the MicroProfile runtime supports deployment of multiple applications. If an implementation wishes to support multiple applications within a MicroProfile runtime, the semantics of individual endpoints are expected to be the logical AND of all the application in the runtime. The exact details of this are deferred to a future version of the MicroProfile Health specification.

Proposed solution

The proposed solution breaks down into two parts:

- A Java API to implement health check procedures
- A health checks protocol and wireformat

Contributors

- John Ament
- Heiko Braun
- Clément Escoffier
- Emily Jiang
- Werner Keil
- Jeff Mesnil
- Andrew Pielage
- Heiko Rupp
- Antoine Sabot-Durand
- Scott Stark
- Martin Stefanko
- Kevin Sutter

Java API Usage

This specification provides the following API to define health check procedures.

Common API check

The main API to provide health check procedures (readiness or liveness) on the application level is the `HealthCheck` interface:

```
@FunctionalInterface
public interface HealthCheck {

    HealthCheckResponse call();
}
```

Applications provide health check procedures (implementation of a `HealthCheck`), which will be used by the runtime hosting the application to verify the healthiness of the computing node.

Different kinds of Health Checks

This specification provides different kinds of health check procedures. Difference between them is only semantic. The nature of the procedure is defined by annotating the `HealthCheck` procedure with a specific annotation.

- Readiness checks defined with `@Readiness` annotation
- Liveness checks defined with `@Liveness` annotation
- Startup checks defined with `@Startup` annotation

A `HealthCheck` procedure with none of the above annotations is not an active procedure and should be ignored.

Readiness check

A Health Check for readiness allows third party services to know if the application is ready to process requests or not.

The `@Readiness` annotation must be applied on a `HealthCheck` implementation to define a readiness check procedure, otherwise, this annotation is ignored.

Liveness check

A Health Check for liveness allows third party services to determine if the application is running. This means that if this procedure fails the application can be discarded (terminated, shutdown).

The `@Liveness` annotation must be applied on a `HealthCheck` implementation to define a Liveness check procedure, otherwise, this annotation is ignored.

Startup check

A Health check for startup allows applications to define startup probes that are used for initial verification of the application before the liveness probe takes over. This is useful for applications which require additional startup time on their first initialization.

The `@Startup` annotation must be applied on a `HealthCheck` implementation to define a startup check procedure, otherwise, this annotation is ignored.

Multiple HealthChecks procedures for a given kind

There can be one or several `HealthCheck` exposed for a given kind, they will all be invoked when an inbound protocol request is received (i.e. HTTP).

If more than one `HealthCheck` are invoked, they will be called in an unpredictable order.

The runtime will `call()` each `HealthCheck` which in turn creates a `HealthCheckResponse` that signals the health status to a consuming end:

```
public class HealthCheckResponse {  
    public enum Status { UP, DOWN }  
  
    public abstract String getName();  
  
    public abstract Status getStatus();  
  
    public abstract Optional<Map<String, Object>> getData();  
  
    [...]  
}
```

The status of all `HealthCheck` 's determines the overall status for the given Health check kind.

Combining multiple kinds of checks

A `HealthCheck` implementation may be annotated with multiple kinds of checks. The procedure will be used to resolve every kind of health check for which it is annotated.

For instance this procedure will be used to resolve liveness and readiness health check.

```
@Liveness
@Readiness
public class MyCheck implements HealthCheck {

    public HealthCheckResponse call() {
        ...
    }
}
```

Constructing `HealthCheckResponse` 's

Application level code is expected to use one of static methods on `HealthCheckResponse` to retrieve a `HealthCheckResponseBuilder` used to construct a response, i.e. :

```
public class SuccessfulCheck implements HealthCheck {
    @Override
    public HealthCheckResponse call() {
        return HealthCheckResponse.up("successful-check");
    }
}
```

The `name` is used to tell the different checks apart when a human operator looks at the responses. It may be that one check of several fails and it's useful to know which one. It's required that a response defines a name.

`HealthCheckResponse` 's also support a free-form information holder, that can be used to supply arbitrary data to the consuming end:

```
public class CheckDiskSpace implements HealthCheck {

    @Override
    public HealthCheckResponse call() {
        return HealthCheckResponse.named("diskSpace")
            .withData("free", "780mb")
            .up()
            .build();
    }
}
```

`HealthCheckResponse` also provides a constructor to allow instantiation on the consuming end.

Integration with CDI

Any enabled bean with a bean of type `org.eclipse.microprofile.health.HealthCheck` and `@Liveness`, `@Readiness`, or `@Startup` qualifier can be used as health check procedure.

Contextual references of health check procedures are invoked by runtime when the outermost protocol entry point (i.e. `http://HOST:PORT/health`) receives an inbound request.

```
@ApplicationScoped
@Liveness
@Readiness
@Startup
public class MyCheck implements HealthCheck {

    public HealthCheckResponse call() {
        [...]
    }
}
```

Health check procedures are CDI beans, therefore, they can also be defined with CDI producers:

```
@ApplicationScoped
class MyChecks {

    @Produces
    @Liveness
    HealthCheck check1() {
        return () -> HealthCheckResponse.named("heap-memory").status(getMemUsage() <
0.9).build();
    }

    @Produces
    @Readiness
    HealthCheck check2() {
        return () -> HealthCheckResponse.named("cpu-usage").status(getCpuUsage() <
0.9).build();
    }

    @Produces
    @Startup
    HealthCheck check3() {
        return () -> HealthCheckResponse.named("startup-cpu-usage").status(getCpuUsage() <
0.95).build();
    }
}
```

Protocol and Wireformat

Abstract

This document defines the protocol to be used by components that need to ensure a compatible wireformat, agreed upon semantics and possible forms of interactions between system components that need to determine the “liveliness” or “readiness” of computing nodes in a bigger system.

Guidelines

Note that the force of these words is modified by the requirement level of the document in which they are used.

1. **MUST** This word, or the terms "REQUIRED" or "SHALL", mean that the definition is an absolute requirement of the specification.
2. **MUST NOT** This phrase, or the phrase "SHALL NOT", mean that the definition is an absolute prohibition of the specification.
3. **SHOULD** This word, or the adjective "RECOMMENDED", mean that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing a different course.
4. **SHOULD NOT** This phrase, or the phrase "NOT RECOMMENDED" mean that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances when the particular behavior is acceptable or even useful, but the full implications should be understood and the case carefully weighed before implementing any behavior described with this label.
5. **MAY** – This word, or the adjective “OPTIONAL”, mean that an item is truly discretionary.

Goals

- MUST be compatibility with well known cloud platforms (i.e. <http://kubernetes.io/docs/user-guide/liveness/>)
- MUST be appropriate for machine-to-machine communication
- SHOULD give enough information for a human administrator

Terms used

Term	Description
Producer	The service/application that is checked
Consumer	The probing end, usually a machine, that needs to verify the liveness or readiness of a Producer
Health Check Procedure	The code executed to determine the liveness of a Producer
Producer status	The overall status, determined by considering all health check procedure results
Health check procedure result	The result of single check

Protocol Overview

1. Consumer invokes the health check of a Producer through any of the supported protocols
2. Producer enforces security constraints on the invocation (i.e. authentication)
3. Producer executes a set of Health check procedures (could be a set with one element)
4. Producer determines the overall status
5. The status is mapped to outermost protocol (i.e. HTTP status codes)
6. The payload is written to the response stream
7. The consumer reads the response
8. The consumer determines the overall status

Protocol Specifics

This section describes the specifics of the HTTP protocol usage.

Interacting with producers

How are the health checks accessed and invoked ? We don't make any assumptions about this, except for the wire format and protocol.

Protocol Mappings

Health checks (innermost) can and should be mapped to the actual invocation protocol (outermost). This section described some of guidelines and rules for these mappings.

- Producers MAY support a variety of protocols but the information items in the response payload MUST remain the same.
- Producers SHOULD define a well known default context to perform checks
- Each response SHOULD integrate with the outermost protocol whenever it makes sense (i.e. using HTTP status codes to signal the overall status)
- Inner protocol information items MUST NOT be replaced by outer protocol information items, rather kept redundantly.
- The inner protocol response MUST be self-contained, that is carrying all information needed to reason about the producer status

Mandatory and optional protocol types

REST/HTTP interaction

- Producer MUST provide a HTTP endpoint that follows the REST interface specifications described in Appendix A.

Protocol Adaptor

Each provider **MUST** provide the REST/HTTP interaction, but **MAY** provide other protocols such as TCP or JMX. When possible, the output **MUST** be the JSON output returned by the equivalent HTTP calls (Appendix B). The request is protocol specific.

Healthcheck Response information

- The primary information **MUST** be boolean, it needs to be consumed by other machines. Anything between available/unavailable doesn't make sense or would increase the complexity on the side of the consumer processing that information.
- The response information **MAY** contain an additional information holder
- Consumers **MAY** process the additional information holder or simply decide to ignore it
- The response information **MUST** contain the boolean **status** of each check
- The response information **MUST** contain the name of each check

Wireformats

- Producer **MUST** support JSON encoded payload with simple UP/DOWN statuses
- Producers **MAY** support an additional information holder with key/value pairs to provide further context (i.e. disk.free.space=120mb).
- The JSON response payload **MUST** be compatible with the one described in Appendix B
- The JSON response **MUST** contain the **name** entry specifying the name of the check, to support protocols that support external identifier (i.e. URI)
- The JSON response **MUST** contain the **status** entry specifying the status as String: "UP" or "DOWN"
- The JSON **MAY** support an additional information holder to carry key value pairs that provide additional context

Health Check Procedures

- A producer **MUST** support custom, application level health check procedures
- A producer **SHOULD** support reasonable out-of-the-box procedures
- A producer with no liveness procedures expected or installed **MUST** return positive overall status (i.e. HTTP 200)
- A producer with no readiness procedures expected or installed **MUST** return positive overall status (i.e. HTTP 200)
- A producer with no startup procedures expected or installed **MUST** return positive overall status (i.e. HTTP 200)
- A producer with liveness procedures expected but not yet installed **MUST** return positive overall status (i.e. HTTP 200)
- A producer with readiness procedures expected but not yet installed **MUST** return negative overall status (i.e. HTTP 503)
- A producer with startup procedures expected but not yet installed **MUST** return negative overall status (i.e. HTTP 503)

A producer with no procedures expected or installed can be for instance an application server without any deployments (focusing on some different function).

A producer with procedures expected but not yet installed can be for instance a standalone runtime packaged with the user application, or an application server with already deployed user applications. User defined health check procedures thus can be expected but they do not have to be already processed when the first invocations of `/health/*` endpoints are received. See also the [Empty default readiness and startup health check responses](#) section.

Policies to determine the overall status

When multiple procedures are installed all procedures **MUST** be executed and the overall status needs to be determined.

- Consumers **MUST** support a logical conjunction policy to determine the status
- Consumers **MUST** use the logical conjunction policy by default to determine the status
- Consumers **MAY** support custom policies to determine the status

Empty default readiness and startup health check responses

As readiness determines whether the container may consume requests, the container is **required to return negative overall status** until the user defined readiness checks can be executed. However, in some cases (e.g., the containers allowing multiple deployments) the container itself may be required to become ready before user defined readiness procedures can be deployed. This means that the container cannot know whether some procedures will be expected. For this reason, users are allowed to specify **MicroProfile Config** configuration value `mp.health.default.readiness.empty.response` to **UP** to give the container a hint that it can become ready.

The property `mp.health.default.readiness.empty.response` which defaults to **DOWN** (if not configured) should only be taken into account, when the user defined readiness check procedures are not processed or deployed yet. In other words, if the container is still starting up, the overall default readiness check status will reflect the `mp.health.default.readiness.empty.response` property status, with an empty payload response. Once the container has started up, the overall readiness check status and the payload response will reflect the processed readiness check procedures that are defined by the user. If there are not any readiness check procedures defined by the user, after the container has started, the overall default readiness check status **MUST** return a positive **UP** overall status (i.e. HTTP 200).

Similarly, for the startup health check, the users can additionally define `mp.health.default.startup.empty.response` to **UP** to achieve the same effect for the startup probes.

Executing procedures

When executing health check procedures a producer **MUST** handle any unchecked exceptions and synthesize a substitute response.

- The synthesized response **MUST** contain a `status` entry with a value of "DOWN".
- The synthesized response **MUST** contain a `name` entry with a value set to the runtime class name of the failing check.
- The synthesized response **MAY** contain additional information about the failure (i.e. exception message or stack trace)

Disabling default vendor procedures

An implementation is allowed to supply a reasonable default (out-of-the-box) procedures as defined in the [Health Check Procedures](#) section. To disable all default vendor procedures users can specify a **MicroProfile Config** configuration property `mp.health.disable-default-procedures` to **true**. This allows the application to process and display only the user-defined health check procedures.

Security

Aspects regarding the secure access of health check information.

- A producer **MAY** support security on all health check invocations (i.e. authentication)
- A producer **MUST NOT** enforce security by default, it **SHOULD** be an opt-in feature (i.e. configuration change)

Appendix A: REST interfaces specifications

Context	Verb	Status Code	Kind of procedure called	Response
/health/live	GET	200, 500, 503	Liveness	See Appendix B
/health/ready	GET	200, 500, 503	Readiness	See Appendix B
/health/started	GET	200, 500, 503	Startup	See Appendix B
/health	GET	200, 500, 503	Liveness + Readiness + Startup	See Appendix B

Status Codes:

- 200 for a health check with a positive status (**UP**)
- 503 in case the overall status is negative (**DOWN**)
- 500 in case the producer wasn't able to process the health check request (i.e. error in procedure)

Appendix B: JSON payload specification

Response Codes and status mappings

The following table gives valid health check responses for all kinds of health checks:

Request	HTTP Status	JSON Payload	Status	Comment
/health/live /health/ready /health/started /health	200	Yes	UP	Check with payload. See With procedures installed into the runtime .
/health/live /health/ready /health/started /health	200	Yes	UP	Check with no procedures expected or installed. See With no procedures expected or installed into the runtime
/health/live /health/ready /health/started /health	503	Yes	Down	Check failed
/health/live /health/ready /health/started /health	503	Yes	Down	Check with procedures expected but not yet installed. See With procedures expected but not yet installed into the runtime
/health/live /health/ready /health/started /health	500	No	Undetermined	Request processing failed (i.e. error in procedure)

JSON Schema:

```

{
  "$schema": "http://json-schema.org/draft-04/schema#",
  "type": "object",
  "properties": {
    "status": {
      "type": "string"
    },
    "checks": {
      "type": "array",
      "items": {
        "type": "object",
        "properties": {
          "name": {
            "type": "string"
          },
          "status": {
            "type": "string"
          },
          "data": {
            "type": "object",
            "patternProperties": {
              "[a-zA-Z]*": {
                "type": [
                  "string",
                  "boolean",
                  "number"
                ]
              }
            }
          },
          "additionalProperties": false
        }
      },
      "required": [
        "name",
        "status"
      ]
    }
  },
  "required": [
    "status",
    "checks"
  ],
  "additionalProperties": false
}

```

(See <http://jsonschema.net/#/>)

Example response payloads

With procedures installed into the runtime

Status **200** and the following payload:

```
{
  "status": "UP",
  "checks": [
    {
      "name": "myCheck",
      "status": "UP",
      "data": {
        "key": "value",
        "foo": "bar"
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Status **503** and the following payload:

```
{
  "status": "DOWN",
  "checks": [
    {
      "name": "firstCheck",
      "status": "DOWN",
      "data": {
        "key": "value",
        "foo": "bar"
      }
    },
    {
      "name": "secondCheck",
      "status": "UP"
    }
  ]
}
```

Status 500

```
{
  "status": "DOWN",
  "checks": [
    {
      "name": "example.health.FirstCheck",
      "status": "DOWN",
      "data": {
        "rootCause": "timed out waiting for available connection"
      }
    },
    {
      "name": "secondCheck",
      "status": "UP"
    }
  ]
}
```

With no procedures expected or installed into the runtime

Status **200** and the following payload:

```
{
  "status": "UP",
  "checks": []
}
```

With procedures expected but not yet installed into the runtime

Status **503** and the following payload:

```
{
  "status": "DOWN",
  "checks": []
}
```


Architecture

SPI Usage

Implementors of the API are expected to supply implementations of `HealthCheckResponse` and `HealthCheckResponseBuilder` by providing a `HealthCheckResponseProvider` to their implementation. The `HealthCheckResponseProvider` is discovered using the default JDK service loader.

A `HealthCheckResponseProvider` is used internally to create a `HealthCheckResponseBuilder` which is used to construct a `HealthCheckResponse`. This pattern allows implementors to extend a `HealthCheckResponse` and adapt it to their implementation needs. Common implementation details that fall into this category are invocation and security contexts or anything else required to map a `HealthCheckResponse` to the outermost invocation protocol (i.e. HTTP/JSON).

Release Notes

This section documents the changes introduced by individual releases.

Release Notes for MicroProfile Health 4.0

The following changes occurred in the 4.0 release, compared to 3.1.

A full list of changes may be found on the [MicroProfile Health 4.0](#)

Incompatible Changes

- This release aligns with Jakarta EE 9.1, so it won't work with earlier versions of Jakarta or Java EE.

API/SPI Changes

- There are no functional changes introduced in this release, except the dependency updating from javax to jakarta.

Functional Changes

- None

Other Changes

- None

Release Notes for MicroProfile Health 3.1

The following changes occurred in the 3.1 release, compared to 3.0.

A full list of changes may be found on the [MicroProfile Health 3.1](#)

Incompatible Changes

- None

API/SPI Changes

- Added `@Startup` qualifier for the Kubernetes startup probes health check procedures ([#274](#))
- Introduction of `/health/started` endpoint that must call all the startup procedures

Functional Changes

- Specify the behavior of the startup health checks ([#274](#))
- Specify the `mp.health.default.startup.empty.response` config property ([#274](#))

Other Changes

- Integrated MicroProfile Parent POM ([#282](#))
- Clarified `mp.health.default.readiness.empty.response` usage ([#283](#))

Release Notes for MicroProfile Health 3.0

The following changes occurred in the 3.0 release, compared to 2.2.

A full list of changes may be found on the [MicroProfile Health 3.0](#)

Incompatible changes

- Pruning `@Health` qualifier ([#252](#))
- Fix `HealthCheckResponse` deserialization issue ([#243](#))

Other changes

- Add configuration value for default readiness status ([#244](#))
- Update dependencies scope and version to align on latest Jakarta EE 8 version ([#214](#))

Release Notes for MicroProfile Health 2.2

The following changes occurred in the 2.2 release, compared to 2.1

A full list of changes may be found on the [MicroProfile Health 2.2](#)

API/SPI Changes

- Add Annotation literals for all Qualifier in spec to ease programmatic lookup
- Make `HealthCheckResponse` a concrete class to allow its usage on consuming end

Miscellaneous

- Update version of CDI API to 2.0
- Remove Guava exclusion since its required to run TCK

Release Notes for MicroProfile Health 2.1

The following changes occurred in the 2.1 release, compared to 2.0

A full list of changes may be found on the [MicroProfile Health 2.1](#)

API/SPI Changes

- Add new method to create responses

- Add config property to disable implementation health check procedures
- Improve javadoc

TCK enhancement

- Testing JSON format
- Add delayed test
- Add test name before each tests

Miscellaneous

- Remove duplicate Arquillian import
- Remove EL API transitive dependency

Release Notes for MicroProfile Health 2.0

The following changes occurred in the 2.0 release, compared to 1.0

A full list of changes may be found on the [MicroProfile Health 2.0](#)

API/SPI Changes

- Deprecation of `@Health` qualifier
- Introduction of `@Liveness` and `@Readiness` qualifiers

Protocol and wireformat changes

- In response JSON format replaced `outcome` and `state` by `status`. **This change breaks backward compatibility with version 1.0**
- Introduction of `/health/live` endpoint that must call all the liveness procedures
- Introduction of `/health/ready` endpoint that must call all the readiness procedures
- For backward compatibility, `/health` endpoint should now call all procedures having `@Health`, `@Liveness` or `@Readiness` qualifiers
- Correction and enhancement of response JSON format.

TCK enhancement

- Adding tests for new types of health check procedures
- Cleaning existing tests