

RESEARCH SECURITY GUIDANCE

IT Security During Foreign Travel

Adapted from [FBI International Travel Safety Brochure](#)

If you can do without the device, Do Not Take It!

Request for a Loaner Laptop from your department LAN Manager.

1. Do not leave electronic devices unattended.
2. Do not transport electronic devices in your checked baggage.
3. Avoid Wi-Fi networks. In some countries they are controlled by security services; in all cases they are insecure.
4. Prior to travel review data on your laptop and ensure the laptop does not contain any sensitive contact, research, or personal data.
5. If conducting research overseas, store data in cloud based applications such as UHealth Houston instance of [REDCap](#).
6. Ensure that your laptop has up-to-date protections for antivirus, spyware, security patches, and firewalls.
7. Don't use thumb drives given to you – they may be compromised.
8. Clear your browser after each use: delete history files, caches, cookies, and temporary internet files.
9. In most countries, you have no expectation of privacy in Internet cafes, hotels, airplanes, offices, or public spaces.
 - a. All information you send electronically (fax, computer, telephone) can be intercepted, especially wireless communications.
 - b. If information might be valuable to another government, company or group, you should assume that it will be intercepted and retained.
 - c. Security services and criminals can track your movements using your mobile phone and can turn on the microphone in your device even when you think it is turned off. Beware of “phishing.”
 - d. Foreign security services and criminals are adept at pretending to be someone you trust in order to obtain personal or sensitive information.
10. If your device is stolen, report it immediately to the local US Embassy or Consulate.
11. Change all your passwords including your voicemail and check devices for malware when you return.
12. Report any unusual circumstances or noteworthy incidents to your IT LAN Manager upon your return.

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