



**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**  
WASHINGTON, DC

**Responsible University Official:**  
Director, Office of Risk Management  
**Responsible Office:** Office of Risk  
Management  
**Last Revised Date:** March 20, 2009

## **LAPTOP COMPUTER AND SMALL ELECTRONICS THEFT**

### **Policy Statement**

Faculty and staff in possession of university owned electronic devices are responsible for the protection of that equipment from theft or damage. The high value and portability of laptop computers make them particularly susceptible to theft and require the highest degree of care. Reimbursement to a department for a stolen university laptop computer or other small electronic device will only be considered if the laptop computer or electronic device is taken from a locked desk, cabinet, closet, or office, and there are signs of forced entry (e.g., burglary).

### **Reason for Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to (1) alert faculty and staff of their responsibility to protect university property, (2) raise awareness of portable electronics theft and (3) inform the university community regarding the criteria for reimbursement to a department for stolen laptop computers and small electronic devices.

### **Who is Governed by this Policy**

Faculty and staff

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## Policy

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Due to their high value and portability, laptop computers and other small electronic devices are highly susceptible to theft on university campuses, usually without any sign of forced entry.

University employees who possess university owned laptop computers and other portable electronic devices are expected to secure them whenever they are left unattended. Accordingly, the university will not reimburse a department for the loss of a laptop computer or other portable electronic device unless it is burglarized (i.e., taken from a locked desk, cabinet, closet, or office, and there are signs of forced entry thereto). If a university owned laptop computer is burglarized, the following steps should be taken:

- A. Immediately contact the GW Police Department and request that they file a report;
- B. Contact the Office of Risk Management [via webform](#) so that a stolen property claim can be filed; and
- C. Contact the Division of IT Support Center (ITSC) to report the incident which will initiate a risk assessment by Information Security and Compliance Services.

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## Definitions

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**Small/Portable Electronic Devices:** Electric or battery operated devices (e.g., laptop computers, electronic projectors, mini hard drives, portable music players, personal data assistants (PDAs), or cellular phones) which can be easily carried or moved.

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## Forms

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[The Office of Risk Management: Electronic Theft](#)

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## Related Information

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[Information Security Policy](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department – Tips for Preventing Laptop Theft](#)

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## Contacts

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Contact	Telephone	Email
GW Police	202-994-6110	<a href="mailto:gwpd@gwu.edu">gwpd@gwu.edu</a>
Risk Management	202-994-3265	<a href="mailto:risk@gwu.edu">risk@gwu.edu</a>
Division of IT	202-994-4948	<a href="mailto:ithelp@gwu.edu">ithelp@gwu.edu</a>

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## Document History

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- **Last Reviewed Date:** March 19, 2018
  - **Last Revised Date:** March 20, 2009
  - **Policy Origination Date:** October 7, 2002
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## Who Approved This Policy

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Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

*This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance and Privacy's](#) home page.*