

Traveling with a Laptop or Other Electronic Device

UCLA faculty, researchers, and staff often travel internationally in conjunction with their University responsibilities. As there has been increased government concern regarding University research activities and national security in recent years, travelers are responsible for knowing how export controls apply when taking equipment, devices, software or technical data outside the US. In most situations, licensing is not required to take UCLA-owned items abroad under the TMP “tool of trade” license exception. However items such as laptops must remain under the traveler’s effective control during the trip. Additionally, information and data taken on laptops, PDA’s or storage devices must qualify as public domain. Other items such as research samples and devices; systems or software originally designed for military or space applications (such as a camera with a focal plane array or a high end GPS); technology associated with strong encryption; and controlled biological agents will not qualify for these exemptions and do require export licenses.

If U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials suspect that a regulated item or defense article has been or will be exported without a license, they may examine baggage, as well as files and software on laptop computers. In addition, inspectors in other countries may detain and copy hard drives. Before leaving the United States, International travelers are encouraged back up their hard-drives, and remove all non-essential data from their devices.

To qualify for the “tool of trade” exception, the export must:

- Be for less than one year.
- Consist of equipment that someone in the traveler’s discipline would generally recognize as a “tool of trade.”
- Be under the traveler’s effective control. This means that the item must be kept in the traveler’s physical possession at all times, or secured in a hotel safe, a bonded warehouse, or a locked conference facility. Items may be shipped to the destination unaccompanied within one month before the traveler’s departure from the U.S. or at any time after departure.

Travelers should not take ANY of the following without first obtaining specific advice:

- Data or information received under an obligation of confidentiality.
- Devices, equipment or computer software received with restrictions on export to or on access by foreign nationals.
- Devices, systems or software specifically designed or modified for military or space applications (even if these items are used in an academic research setting).

Travelers should not plan to visit a sanctioned country (Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria or Sudan) without first obtaining specific advice.

Traveling with Non-University Equipment

License Exception BAG ([Baggage 740.14](#)) allows travelers to carry personally-owned items including laptops, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and cell phones as personal baggage. The items and software must be for their personal use.

Please contact Claudia Modlin in the [Research Policy and Compliance Office](#) by email at cmodlin@research.ucla.edu or by phone at 310-794-2642 if you are taking personally owned equipment or devices out of the U.S. for use in University business or with any questions about the TMP and BAG license exceptions.



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**“TOOL OF TRADE” EXPORT LICENSE EXCEPTION (TMP) CERTIFICATION
for Export Administration Regulations (EAR) Controlled Items, Technology, and Software**

Name:

Date:

Re: Export License Exception for Temporary Exports/Reexports per 15 CFR 740.9(a)(2)(i)

Description of Items, Technology or Software to which this Certification applies:

By my signature below, I certify that:

1. These commodities are being exported under license exception [TMP \(740.9\)](#) as tools of the trade. No Electronic Export Information filing required per Customs exemption [15 CFR 30.37\(q\)](#).
2. This equipment will be temporarily exported to _____, and returned within 1 year.
3. The equipment is tools of the trade that will remain under my effective control.
4. If there are any losses, they will be reported to the UCLA Research Policy and Compliance Office which will then report them to the Department of Commerce.
5. My itinerary does not include travel to Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria or Sudan.

Signed: _____

Print Name of UCLA Traveler

Please keep a signed copy with you when traveling abroad.