

# SECURITY

## Personal Security for the American Business Traveler Overseas

### INTRODUCTION

Effective security precautions require a continuous and conscious awareness of one's environment as well as the need to exercise prudence, judgment, and common sense. This is especially true where the traveler must adapt to new cultures, customs, and laws. Personal security cannot be delegated to others; it is a responsibility of each one of us, as we promote American economic and commercial interests around the globe.

### TRAVEL PREPARATION AND TRAVEL ITINERARY

DO NOT publicize your travel plans, but limit that knowledge to those who need to know. Leave a complete itinerary (including contact numbers, if known) with your office and with family or a friend.

#### Passport

At least 6 months remaining validity?

3 copies of the page containing your photograph:

Place one in carry-on bag

Place one in luggage

Leave one with office or family Visas

Current/appropriate visa (s) (tourist/business)

Visa application information must be accurate. False information may be grounds for incarceration.

#### Documents

Take only the credit cards you need.

Carry only the documents you will need in a wallet or purse.

Realize all business documents might be subject to search, seizure, or copying.

Carry a U.S. driver's license with your photo on it.

Make two copies of the numbers of credit cards and traveler's checks, and telephone numbers to report loss, and air ticket numbers and store in your wallet or briefcase. (These items should be stored in separate locations to preclude loss of all the information.)

#### Health

Carry a copy of prescriptions and an ample supply of any prescription medications, in original containers if possible.

Bring an extra set of eyeglasses or contact lenses. Carrying your prescription with you will expedite the procurement of replacements. Carry an international shot record that certifies appropriate inoculations.

List with your blood type, allergies, medical conditions and special requirements. (Medical alert bracelets are a good idea.) If you do not have comprehensive medical coverage, consider enrolling in an international health program. (Hospitals in foreign countries do not take credit cards and most will not honor U.S.-based medical insurance plans.)

Keep your personal affairs up-to-date. Have an up-to-date will and insurance policy. Leave a power of attorney with a family member or friend should anything happen to you.

While traveling, eat moderately and drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. If possible, before you travel, make an effort to adjust your sleep patterns.

Sleep as much as possible during the flight.

Carry air sickness medication with you. Even the best traveler sometimes experiences air sickness. Avoid a demanding schedule upon arrival. Give yourself a chance to adjust to your surroundings. Sources of Information..

Talk with people who have visited the country recently.

*Check with the U.S. State Department, Bureau of Consular Affairs for traveling conditions and warnings. Dial (202) 647-5225.*

Use airlines, hotels, and car rental companies that are recommended by your travel agent.

If renting a car, will you need an international driver's permit for the country you plan to visit?

Items of value, such as cameras and laptop computers, can be registered with Customs before departing the United States.

The embassy of the country you plan to visit can provide a list or pamphlet describing customs restrictions or banned materials. (Minimize the possibility of an encounter with the local authorities.)

### Luggage

Hand carry sensitive information.

Be sure that your luggage is tagged with covered tags.

Put your name and address inside each piece of luggage and be sure it is secured.

The locks on your luggage are not secure. For added security, run a strip of nylon filament tape around the suitcase.

On luggage, use your business address and telephone number.

Check with the airline and your personal insurance company regarding coverage for lost luggage. Use sturdy luggage.

*Do not transport items for other people.* Any gifts received from a foreign business contact should be thoroughly inspected before being placed in your luggage. *If you are asked by airline personnel if you are carrying gifts or other items, respond affirmatively and allow the item to undergo security inspection.*

Leave all expensive and heirloom jewelry at home.

Never place your valuables (money or traveler's checks) in your checked luggage.

Never leave your bags unattended. Be especially alert to luggage thieves who target airline and railway terminals as well as car rental agency counter areas.

If available, obtain a modest amount of foreign currency before you leave your home country. (Criminals may watch for and target international travelers purchasing large amounts of foreign currency at airport banks and currency exchange windows.)

### TRANSPORTATION HUB SECURITY

To diminish the risks of becoming a victim of a terrorist attack and reduce your exposure to the criminal threat, remember the following when checking into a transportation hub:

*Go in the opposite direction of any disturbance.* **DO NOT GET INVOLVED!**

Always be aware of where you are in relation to exits. If an incident occurs, you need to know how to avoid it and get out of the area.

Check in early; avoid last minute dashes to the airport. Go directly to the gate or secure area after checking your luggage.

Avoid waiting rooms and shopping areas outside the secure areas.

At many airports, security personnel will ask you questions about your luggage. *Know what items you are carrying and be able to describe all electrical items.*

Cooperate with security personnel.

Do not exchange items between bags while waiting for security screening or immigration or customs processing. Cooperate if a conflict should arise while undergoing the screening process. Discuss the matter with a supervisor from the appropriate air carrier afterwards. At most airports, X-ray will not damage film, video tapes, or computer equipment. Therefore, such items can be cleared in this way without being handled by a screener.

Arrange to be met upon your arrival whenever possible.

*Alternately, consider transportation to and from the airport by a hotel vehicle.*

Declare all currency and negotiable instruments as required by law. NEVER leave your luggage or briefcase unattended at anytime. Dress casually when traveling to avoid attention. Always reconfirm onward flights at least 72 hours in advance. **DO NOT accept or deliver letters, packages, or anything else from anyone unknown to you. It could result in your being arrested for illegally exporting a prohibited item.**

## HOTEL SECURITY

Use hotels recommended by the corporate travel agency, where possible.

### Reservations

Make your own reservations when practical and consistent with company policies. (The fewer people who become involved in your travel and lodging arrangements, the better.) If traveling abroad, especially in high threat areas, consider making reservations using your employer's street address, without identifying the company, and using your personal credit card. Again, the less known about your travel itinerary, and who you represent, the better. If arriving in mid afternoon, ensure that reservations are guaranteed. Request information about hotel parking arrangements before renting an automobile.

Be aware that credit card information may be compromised by hotel, rental car, and restaurants. Always audit monthly credit card statements to ensure that unauthorized use has not been made of your account.

Join frequent travelers' programs. They are available with many lodging companies. These programs enable upgrades to executive or concierge floors where security is generally better. Arriving at and departing from the hotel. The most vulnerable part of your journey is traveling between the point of debarkation and embarkation and the hotel.

Disembark as close to a hotel entrance as possible and in a lighted area. Before exiting the vehicle, ensure there are no suspicious persons or activities.

Do not linger or wander unnecessarily in the parking lot, indoor garage, or the public space around hotel.

*Parking garages are difficult to secure.* Avoid dimly lit garages that are not patrolled and do not have security telephones or intercoms.

Watch for distractions that may be staged to set up a pickpocket, luggage theft, or purse snatch.

Stay with your luggage until it is brought into the lobby or placed in your taxi.

Use the bellman. Luggage in the “care, custody, and control” of the hotel causes the hotel to be liable for your property. Keep claim checks – they are your evidence! *Due to hotel liability limits, personal travel documents, laptop computers, valuables, and sensitive documents should be hand carried and personally protected.*

*Valets should receive only the ignition key.*

Women travelers should consider requesting an escort to their vehicles. Check-In.

In some countries, your passport may be held by the hotel for review by the police or other authorities. If so, retrieve it at the earliest possible time.

Position luggage against your leg during registration, but place a briefcase or a purse on the desk or counter in front of you.

Request a room between the second and seventh floor.

Most fire departments do not have the capability to rescue people above the seventh floor level with external rescue equipment (i.e., ladders). Avoid low-level rooms with sliding glass doors and easy window access.

Depending upon the situation, area, and security coverage, exercise a higher level of security if assigned a ground-level room.

Request rooms that are away from the elevator landing and stairwells. This is to avoid being caught by surprise by persons exiting the elevator with you or hiding in the stairwell.

Accept the bellman’s assistance upon check-in. Allow the bellman to open the room’s door, turn the lights on, and check the room to ensure that it is vacant and ready for your stay.

Inquire how guests are notified if there is an emergency.

Find the nearest fire stairwell.

Note the location of fire alarms, extinguishers, and hoses, and read any fire safety information available in your room.

Check outside your room window to ascertain if there is a possible escape route that would be feasible in an extreme emergency. Find the nearest house telephone in case of an emergency.

Note how hotel staff are uniformed and identified. Verify hotel employees with the front desk before permitting entry to your room.

While in the room, keep the door closed and engage the deadbolt and privacy latch or chain. A limited number of hotel emergency keys can override the deadbolt locks.

Guest should always place money or valuables in the safe deposit box at the front desk of the hotel. **Guest room safes are not secure.**

Stay only at hotels that have smoke detectors and/or sprinklers installed in all rooms and provide information about fire and safety procedures.

### In Case of a Fire

**KEEP CALM**

**DO NOT PANIC.**

Call the front desk and notify them of the location of the fire.

Check your door by placing your palm on the door and then on the door knob. If either feels hot, **DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR.**

If it is safe to exit from your room, head for the stairs. **TAKE YOUR ROOM KEY WITH YOU; YOU MAY HAVE TO RETURN TO YOUR ROOM.**

If the corridor is full of smoke, crawl to the exit and again check the door before opening it to see if it is hot. The fire could be in the stairwell.

**DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR!**

If you cannot leave your room or the stairwells are unsafe and you must return to your room, notify the front desk that you are in your room awaiting rescue.

Open a window for fresh air. Do not break the window as you may need to close it again if smoke starts to enter from the outside.

Fill the tub and sink with water. Soak towels and blankets as necessary to block vents and openings around doors to keep the smoke and fumes out.

A wet towel swung around the room will help clear the room of smoke.

**Cover your mouth and nose with a wet cloth.**

Stay low, but alert to any signs of rescue from the street or the halls. Let the firefighters know where you are by waving a towel or sheet out the window.

### PERSONAL SECURITY IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

All hotel rooms and telephones are not bugged; however, your business purpose will be more secure if you act as if they are.

Keep your hotel room key with you at all times, if possible.

At night, secure your passport and other valuables. Do not divulge the name of your hotel or room number to strangers. Street Smarts.

Invest in a good map of the city. Note significant points on the map such as your hotel, embassies, and police stations. Make a mental note of alternative routes to your hotel or local office should your map become lost or stolen.

Be aware of your surroundings. Look up and down the street before exiting a building.

Learn how to place a local telephone call and how to use coin telephones. Make sure you always have extra tokens or coins for telephone use.

Areas around public telephones are often used by criminals to stage pickpocket activity or theft. Keep briefcases and purses in view or “in touch” while using phones. Caution is urged in safeguarding telephone credit card numbers. Criminals wait for callers to announce credit card numbers on public phones and then sell the numbers for unauthorized use.

Avoid jogging or walking in cities you are not familiar with. If you must jog, be aware of the traffic patterns when crossing public streets. (Joggers have been seriously injured by failing to understand local traffic conditions.)

Speak with the bellman, concierge, and front desk regarding safe areas around the city to jog, dine, or sight see. Ask about local customs and which taxi companies to use or avoid.

Avoid renting vehicles or driving unless you are familiar with the local traffic laws and customs.

### Valuables

**DO NOT TAKE THEM!** However, if you must carry valuables, the best way to protect them is to secure them in your local offices. Second best is the hotel safe. Keep your passport with you at all times. Only relinquish it to the hotel if required by law when registering, or if you are required to identify yourself to local authorities for any reason.

Vary the time and route by which you leave and return to the hotel. Be alert for persons watching your movements.

### **Be cautions when entering public restrooms.**

Purse snatchers and briefcase thieves are known to work hotel bars and restaurants waiting for unknowing guests to drape these items on chairs or under tables only to discover them missing as they are departing. Keep items in view or “in touch.”

Be alert to scams involving an unknown person spilling a drink or food on your clothing. An accomplice may be preparing to steal your wallet, purse, or briefcase.

Pools or beaches are attractive areas for thieves. Leave valuables in the hotel, but carry a token sum to placate violent thieves. Sign for food and beverages on your room bill rather than carry cash.

Avoid persons you do not know. Prostitutes both men and women take advantage of travelers through various ploys: “knock out” drugs, confederates, and theft from the victim’s room.

### Workplace Security

Safeguard all sensitive or proprietary papers and documents; do not leave them lying around in the office or on top of a desk.

Guard your conversations so that unauthorized personnel are not able to eavesdrop on discussions pertaining to proprietary information, personnel issues, or management planning or problems.

In many countries local employees are debriefed by the intelligence or security services in an effort to learn as much as possible about activities of American companies and their personnel.

Be careful of all communications. Be aware that the monitoring of telephone, telegraph, and international mail is common in many countries.

### PERSONAL CONDUCT

**Hostile and even “friendly” intelligence organizations are always on the lookout for sources who are vulnerable to coercion, addictions, greed, or emotional manipulation.** To eliminate, or at least reduce, the possibility of inadvertently doing something that would bring your activities to the special attention of one of these agencies:

**Do not do anything that might be misconstrued, reflect poorly on your personal judgment, or be embarrassing to you or your company.**

Do not gossip about character flaws, financial problems, emotional relationships, or the marital difficulties of anyone working for the company, including yourself.

**Do not carry, use, or purchase any narcotics, marijuana, or other abused drugs.**

Some countries have very stringent laws covering the import or use of medications and other substances.

If you are using a prescribed medication that contains any narcotic substance or other medication that is subject to abuse, such as amphetamines or tranquilizers, carry a copy of the doctor's prescription for all medications and check local restrictions and requirements prior to departure.

Some countries may require additional documentation or certification from your doctor. Do not let a friendly ambiance and alcohol override your good sense and capacity when it comes to social drinking.

Do not engage in black-market activities such as the illegal exchange of currency or the purchase of religious icons or other local antiquities.

Do not carry any political or religious tracts or brochures or publications likely to be offensive in the host country, such as pornography or radical magazines.

**Do not photograph anything that appears to be associated with military or internal security of the country, including airports, ports, or restricted areas such as military installations, antennae, or government buildings.**

Do not purchase items that are illegal to import into the United States or other countries such as endangered species or agricultural products.

### ARRESTEED! WHAT DO I DO NOW?

Foreign police and intelligence agencies detain persons for a myriad of reasons or for no other reason than suspicion or curiosity. The best advice is to exercise good judgment, be professional in your demeanor, and remember these suggestions:

**Ask to contact the nearest embassy or consulate representing your country.**

As a citizen of another country you have this right, but that does not mean that your hosts will allow you to do so right away. Continue to make the request periodically until they accede and let your contact your embassy or consulate.

Stay calm, maintain your dignity, and do not provoke the arresting officer (s).

**Admit nothing; volunteer nothing.**

**Sign nothing.** Often, part of the detention procedure is to ask or tell the detained to sign a written report.

**Decline politely until such time as the document is examined by an attorney or an embassy or consulate representative.**

Accept no one at face value. When the representative from the embassy or consulate arrives, request some identification before discussing your situation.

Do not fall for the ruse of helping those detaining you in return for your release. They can be very imaginative in their proposals on how you can be of assistance to them. Do not sell yourself out by agreeing to anything. If there appears to be no other way out, tell them that you will think it over and let them know. Once out of their hands, contact the affiliate or your embassy for assistance in getting out of the country.

### TARGETING RECOGNITION

Persons traveling abroad on business should be aware that they could be targeted by an intelligence agency, security service, terrorists, criminals, or a competitor if they are knowledgeable of, or carrying, sensitive or proprietary information.

In the course of doing business abroad, there are indicators that should be recognized as potential hazards and indicate unwarranted interest in your activities:

Repeated contacts with a local or third-country national who is not involved in your business interests or the purpose of your visit, but as a result of invitations to social or business functions, appears at each function. This individual's demeanor may indicate more than just a passing interest in you and your business activities.

A close social relationship with a representative of a host government is often unavoidable for business reasons. Be cautious and do not allow the relationship to develop any further than the business level.

Accidental encounters with an unknown local national who strikes up a conversation and wants to:

Practice English or another language.

Talk about your country of origin or your employment.

Buy you a drink because he or she has taken a liking to you.

Talk to you about politics.

Use other excuses to begin a "friendly" relationship.

### SURVEILLANCE RECOGNITION

Foreign intelligence, security services, terrorists, and criminals use surveillance for operational preparation prior to taking action.

**The main terrorist threat to a traveler is that of being at the wrong place at the wrong time and becoming an inadvertent victim of a terrorist act.**

Be observant and pay attention to your sixth sense. If you get the funny feeling that something is not right or that you are being watched, pay attention! Report your suspicions or any information to the general manager of the local affiliate or your embassy or consulate just in case something does occur. If you have reason to believe that you are under surveillance, continue to act naturally.

Do not try to slip away, lose, or embarrass the surveillance as this may anger and alert them. It also may cause them to question whether you are, in fact, just a business person.

**In your hotel room, do not play investigator and start looking for electronic listening devices.**

**Ensure that you do not say or do anything in your hotel room that you would not want to see printed on the front page of The New York Times.**