



12 Steps to Take Now if Your Laptop is Stolen

Is there any worse feeling than having your laptop stolen? It's an awful experience to be sure. While it can be difficult to bounce back into "action mode," try your best. Here are 12 immediate steps you should take if this happens to you:

1. Notify your IT department
2. Change your network user name and password
3. Consider changing your user name and password for all personal accounts – anything you access over the Web
4. Check the Lost-and-Found – laptops do get turned in, so don't give up hope until you try
5. Request a police report
6. Monitor [Craigslist](#), eBay, and local pawn shops
7. Make an insurance claim
8. Notify clients – A sample notification letter is available on the [PLF Web site](#). Select Practice Aids and Forms > Client Relations > "Notice to Clients re Theft of Computer Equipment."
9. Use laptop tracking software – [MyLaptopGPS](#) offers free help, even for non-customers
10. Going forward, consider storing passwords or other sensitive information in an encrypted storage vault application
11. Backup, backup, backup! Online backup services are a great way to automatically back up your laptop's data. Read more about backup protocols and available resources on the [PLF Web site](#). Select Practice Aids and Forms > Technology > "How to Backup Your Computer."
12. Call your friendly [Law Practice Management Advisor](#) for help.

Source: [Inc. "What to Do When You Lose Your Computer."](#) (Read the full article for great advice and further explanation of the 12 action steps.)

Keep in mind that your duty to inform clients is more than an ethical one. The [Oregon Consumer Identity Theft Protection Act](#) requires that you immediately inform clients of any security breach. A security breach is defined as "unauthorized acquisition of computerized data that materially compromises the security, confidentiality or integrity of personal information." Notification can be by mail, e-mail, phone, or substitute notice, but whatever you do, document your efforts. Read more about the act [here](#), and also see these informative articles posted on the PLF Web site:

- [Easy to Use or Easy to Lose? How to Protect Mobile Devices](#)
- [Laptop Computers: Protecting Confidential Client Information](#)
- [Identity Theft Protection Resources](#)

- [What To Do About Lost/Stolen Client Files](#)
- [To Catch a Thief: Tips and Tools to Protect Your Computer Investment](#)

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