

# PROPERTY MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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## MISSING, DAMAGED, OR STOLEN PROPERTY

### POLICY

Assets may be subject to theft if not properly safeguarded and may be identified as missing if locations are not properly verified during annual inventories. The Property Custodian is responsible for reporting any property, which is lost, stolen or damaged by negligence to the Campus Police Department and Property Management. Failing to properly track and report missing property would represent negligence or fraud.

### PROCEDURE

When an asset is discovered to be stolen or missing, the department should notify the UH Police department and Property Management immediately.

Asset losses resulting from employee negligence will be reported to the Office of the Deputy General Counsel. The Deputy Counsel may investigate and take legal action to recover the loss, the value of which will be determined based on the depreciated value and the degree of responsibility of the employee(s) entrusted with the asset.

Missing assets remain on the department's inventory for two consecutive years before they are deleted. At the end of two years, Property Management may request that the fixed asset be deleted. Stolen assets are deleted upon receipt of required documentation. The department should notify the Police Department and Property Management if a missing or stolen asset is recovered.

### MISSING OR STOLEN

-MISSING PROPERTY – Asset whose location cannot be accounted for due to undetermined reason.

-STOLEN PROPERTY – Asset whose location cannot be accounted for due to theft, burglary or other criminal acts. The custodian should ensure that an employee entrusted with property exercises, at a minimum, reasonable care for its safekeeping.

- Reasonable Care means that steps have been taken to ensure:
- Acceptable upkeep and maintenance of the asset,
- Security of the Asset,
- The asset can be located at all times and
- Documentation "Authorization Off Campus Property Form" is retained specifying the person responsible for the asset.

### ➤ MISSING OR DAMAGED PROPERTY – EMPLOYEE NEGLIGENCE

If an asset is discovered missing or damaged, the employee/department must contact University Police Department at **713-743-3333**, Department Head and Property Management immediately. If the Departmental Property Custodian or Department Head has reasonable cause to believe that the property in the employee's possession has been lost, destroyed or damaged through the employee's negligence, then Departmental Property Custodian must report the loss, damage to Property Management within 48 hours using "Asset Update Form" and supporting documentation. Property Management will report the same to Comptroller State Property

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Account System and the Deputy General Counsel within 72 hours of discovery. Negligent employees will be held liable to reimburse the University for the loss. If the negligent employee does not reimburse the University, then the University and/or office of The Deputy General Counsel may take legal action to recover the value of the property from the negligent employee, as that office deems necessary.

## ➤ **MISSING OR DAMAGED PROPERTY – NO EMPLOYEE NEGLIGENCE**

If an asset is discovered missing or damaged, the Departmental Property Custodian has to report the same using “Asset Update Form” within 48 hours. Property Management will report the same to Comptroller State Property Account System. If the missing asset is found, the same needs to be reported by the Departmental Property Custodian to Property Management via “Asset Update Form.” Property Management will update PSAM (PeopleSoft Asset Management) accordingly.

## ➤ **STOLEN PROPERTY**

If the Departmental Property Custodian and/or employee in possession of the asset has a reasonable cause to believe that the property in his/her possession has been stolen, the custodian must report the theft to the nearest law enforcement agency or University Police and Property Management within 48 hours of discovering the theft. Property Management will report the same to Office of the Deputy General Counsel within 72 hours of its occurrence with required documentation.

If the investigation Police report reveals that a property loss occurred through the negligence of the employee, then the negligent employee will be held liable to reimburse the University for the loss. If the negligent employee does not reimburse the University, then the University and/or Office of the Deputy General Counsel, may take legal action to recover the value of the property from the negligent employee, as that office deems necessary.

## ❖ **HOW TO FILL OUT THE TEXAS STATE COMPTROLLER’S MISSING & STOLEN REPORT FORM**

### **Reporting Missing or Damaged Property to Property Management**

Department is required to inform Property Management when property is found to be missing, destroyed or damaged as a result of negligence with the following.

- Submit a complete [74-194 Missing / Damaged / Stolen Property Report \(uh.edu\)](http://uh.edu) to Property Management within 72 hours of the occurrence.
- On the form, please provide:
  1. Name of agency/institution
  2. Place of occurrence
  3. UH Tag Number (including description and location)
  4. Department business office conducts review of internal procedures to determine if preventable circumstances exist and assess possibility of employee negligence

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5. "Missing or Stolen Property Report for State Departments, Institutions, and Agencies" is prepared. The appropriate box concerning contributory negligence is marked
6. Report forwarded to department head for review and signature
7. Signed report and supporting documentation forwarded to Property Management.
8. Property Custodian responsible for the item has to sign as well as the Department Business Administrator, same person cannot sign twice

### ➤ **Reporting Stolen Property to Property Management**

Department is required to inform Property Management when the property is found to be stolen as a result of negligence with the following.

- Submit a complete [74-194 Missing / Damaged / Stolen Property Report \(uh.edu\)](#) to Property Management within 72 hours of the occurrence.
- On the form, please provide:
  1. Name of agency/institution
  2. Place of occurrence
  3. University of Houston Police Department notified of theft
  4. UHPD investigates loss, issues case number and report
  5. Department obtains copy of UHPD report
  6. UH Tag Number (including description and location)
  7. Department business office conducts review of internal procedures to determine if preventable circumstances exist and assess possibility of employee negligence
  8. "Missing or Stolen Property Report for State Departments, Institutions, and Agencies", is prepared. The appropriate box concerning contributory negligence is marked
  9. Report forwarded to department head for review and signature
  10. Signed report and supporting documentation forwarded to Property Management. (Include copy of completed checklist and copy of police report)
  11. Property Custodian responsible for the item has to sign as well as the Department Business Administrator, same person cannot sign twice

Property Management reviews the Missing or Stolen Property report within 48 hours (2 working days) of receipt

1. Incomplete forms will be returned to the submitting department
2. For items have been reported missing, Property Management will update the items as missing, but the items will remain on the departments inventory for two year after the report is filed, in compliance with the State of Texas Comptroller's policy.

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3. For items reported stolen, please provide a completed and signed State of Texas Missing or Stolen Property Report along with a copy of the police incident report. A narrative report from the department describing the incident and employees involved should be attached.
4. Property Management reviews the Missing, Damaged and Stolen form. If a department reports employee negligence, Property Management will report the loss to the Deputy General Counsel and request assistance in determining negligence. If negligence of a state official or employee is determined, Property Management will work with the Deputy General Counsel and other areas as appropriate to determine whether the employee should be responsible for repayment based on the depreciated value of the items.
5. Once a decision is made for employee financial responsibility, the check for payment will be made payable to the University of Houston.
6. Property Management will deposit the funds into their cost center and immediately transfer the funds back to the department into their original purchased PeopleSoft Cost Center for recovery of the value of the property loss.