# Removable media

Any Ministry of Justice (MoJ) systems or removable storage media used for work purposes must be encrypted to MoJ security standards. Security encryption is a mandatory government measure, and one of the most important methods we have to protect MoJ information.

## What is ‘removable’ media?

Laptops and [USB memory sticks](#usb-memory-sticks) are the MoJ’s most commonly used items of removable media. Removable storage media covers items available to users, such as USB memory sticks, writeable CDs/DVDs, floppy discs, and external hard drives.

Strictly speaking, magnetic tapes are also removable storage media, but it would be very unusual for the average user to have access to or to use magnetic tapes for business purposes.

MoJ security guidance specifies that USB memory sticks and other user-removable media should not be used to store departmental data. Only in exceptional circumstances, and where there is compelling business justification, should MoJ-approved USB sticks with device encryption be used.

## USB memory sticks

This guidance is intended to ensure that MoJ data remains secure, and to mitigate the potential impact of lost data sticks.

1. You must only connect approved external removable storage media to MoJ systems.
2. Connecting non-approved memory sticks is a breach of MoJ security guidelines, and could result in disciplinary action.
3. If there is a genuine business requirement to save, retrieve or transfer data via removable media, fill in one of:
   * [Removable media business case form](/documents/2015/04/removable-media-business-case-form-for-usb-sticks.doc)
   * [Data Movement form](/documents/2015/04/data-movement-form.doc) Additional guidance information is available about the [Data Movement form](/documents/2015/04/data-movement-form-guide.doc). When the form is ready, send it to: [OperationalSecurityTeam@justice.gov.uk](mailto:OperationalSecurityTeam@justice.gov.uk).
4. Each request is evaluated by MoJ Operational Security, with a view to recommending the safest and most appropriate method to contain risk of loss.
5. Normally, you’ll get a response within 5 working days.
6. Requests to use a memory stick or other removable media will normally only be granted when there is no other practical alternative. Where approval is granted. only encrypted memory sticks or other removable devices provided by the MoJ are allowed. Use of memory sticks or other removable devices will be subject to stringent conditions, and permitted only after user training.

If you need further assistance or information about this process, [ask](#contact-details).

## How do I know if my laptop, or USB stick, is encrypted?

All equipment provided through the MoJ’s recognised central procurement systems are encrypted and protected to MoJ security standards. You must use MoJ processes to obtain any equipment used for business purposes, including mobile computing devices and removable media.

## What’s expected of you

Keeping MoJ information safe is everyone’s responsibility. Anyone using portable computing equipment must take particular care to safeguard the equipment and the information stored on it. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary procedures.

## Contacts

For any further questions relating to security, contact: [security@justice.gov.uk](mailto:security@justice.gov.uk), or for security advice, contact the [Cyber Assistance Team](mailto:CyberConsultancy@digital.justice.gov.uk).

## Feedback

If you have any questions or comments about this guidance, such as suggestions for improvements, please contact: [IT policy content](mailto:itpolicycontent@digital.justice.gov.uk).