



ORS Security Bulletin

March 2026

*From the Desk of Denise Spiller, Director
Office of Research Security (ORS)*

Happy Spring Break UAH Community!!!

With Spring Break comes lots of travel, both domestic and abroad. Keep in mind when planning a trip abroad and prior to your travels, you will need to read the Foreign Travel Related Vulnerability Pamphlet and Traveling Safely with Technology and Devices. After you have read the information, please complete the Notification of Foreign Travel form. This form, along with your itinerary, needs to be forwarded to ORS prior to your travels.

The Notification of Foreign Travel form, as well as the itinerary, can be submitted by campus mail, email, or in person with a scheduled appointment. When you return to the United States you are required to complete the Notification of Foreign Travel Debriefing form, which needs to be submitted to our office. This process is required for each trip. These forms can be found at <https://www.uah.edu/ors/travel-safety>.

The Department of State urges U.S. citizens living overseas or planning to travel abroad to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). When you enroll in STEP, we can update you with important safety and security announcements. Enrolling will also make it easier for the embassy or consulate to contact you in the event of an emergency. You should remember to keep all of your information in STEP up to date; it is particularly important when you enroll or update your information to include a current phone number and email address.

STEP Program: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring>

State Department: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html.html>



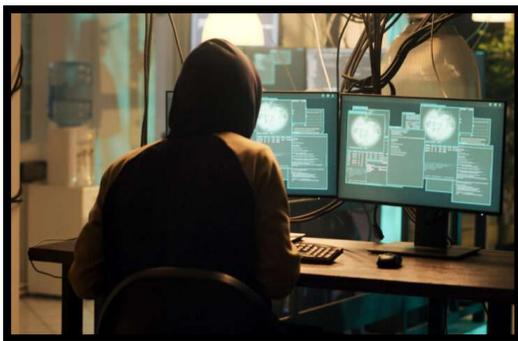
Why the Simplest Espionage Tricks Still Work—and Who They're Targeting Now

Our world has become stranger by the day. Recently, China declared “dangerous” those small souvenir trinkets their travelers might pick up at conferences overseas or at international university events. You know the gifts they mean. These are the ubiquitous bracelets, backpack pins, keychains, free USBs, and any other types of inexpensive handouts a conference booth attendant may offer. The Chinese Counter-espionage Services warn that these small items could be used to spy on China.

From Souvenirs to Surveillance

How they would work is as follows. First, the unsuspecting Chinese scholar goes to a conference. He wanders past all the booths, collecting swag at each one, meeting colleagues at the coffee gatherings during breaks, and attending presentations. At each step of the way, he is subject to nefarious spies. These spies seek to ‘force a gift,’ a small memento, on our unwary Chinese traveler. Said traveler goes home, or, more usefully for the mysterious purposes of China’s adversaries, to his workplace. There, at his work desk, the insidious device is activated once attached to his computer. He is utterly unwitting of any of this. Could it be that all conversations, electronic messages, and communications via phone or computer are compromised using some free gift? And all of this happens because our traveler accepted an almost forgettable USB or similar handout from a booth at a scholarly gathering?

To read the full article: <https://news.clearancejobs.com/2026/01/31/why-the-simplest-espionage-tricks-still-work-and-who-theyre-targeting-now/>



2026 Annual Security Refresher Training

ORS has the following dates reserved for in-person Security Refresher Training. Registration and lunch will be from 11:00-11:30. **Training starts promptly at 11:30.**

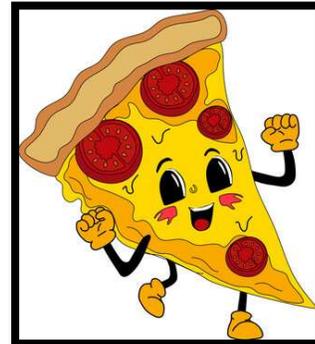
For admission to training events, you must RSVP (using your UAH email account) at the link below which corresponds to your chosen date of attendance.

- Wednesday, April 22nd: <https://forms.gle/xEogf9ut722xCoDX8>
- Wednesday, April 29th: <https://forms.gle/wJ3d8knCNVcyncPj7>
- Wednesday, May 13th: <https://forms.gle/SJTbAngp3PFvMm3T9>
- Wednesday, May 20th: <https://forms.gle/N71iZJcWhRSbuqhz8>

For anyone who does not work in VBH, ***meet at ORS at 10:50*** for escort to the training location.

Keep in Mind – One of the requirements to maintain your PCL is to complete Annual Refresher Training. Per the 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 117.12(k), contractors will provide all cleared employees with security education and training every 12 months. Refresher training will reinforce the information provided during the initial security briefing, keep cleared employees informed of changes in security regulations, and address issues or concerns identified during contractor self-reviews.

All cleared employees will need to attend an in-person session if they are local to the Huntsville area and within a 2-hour drive.



Please remember to report any suspicious contacts or activity to ORS.

Stay aware and stay safe!



KNOW YOUR SECURITY TEAM!



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