

BLACK HILLS PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

Bylaws

Revised and ratified January 2010

All previous bylaws are nullified

ARTICLE 1 – *Name & Jurisdiction*

- Section 1:** This organization shall be known as **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**. It shall also be referred to informally by its acronym, **BHPI**.
- Section 2:** The headquarters of **BHPI** shall be located in the Black Hills within the State of South Dakota.
- Section 3:** The jurisdiction of this organization shall include the entirety of the United States, with special focus on the State of South Dakota, and more specifically, the Black Hills of western South Dakota, eastern Wyoming, and northwestern Nebraska.

ARTICLE 2 – *Objectives*

- Section 1:** To aid, assist, and educate those who are experiencing paranormal phenomena by providing professional, scientific, and logical investigation into cases of alleged paranormal activity, looking for evidence to either prove or disprove this activity without bias or prejudice.
- Section 2:** To educate the membership and public on paranormal subjects related specifically to “ghosts” and “hauntings”. This includes talks/lectures in the form of public and private meetings as well as appearances in various media outlets.
- Section 3:** To seek, using scientific methods and equipment, undisputable proof that paranormal activity as it relates to “ghosts” and “hauntings”, does indeed exist. This is accomplished through the proper collection and analysis of evidence collected through such means as photographic, audio, video, and any other physical evidence.

- Section 4:** To report any validated evidence related to the existence of “ghosts” and “hauntings” to the membership and public in any medium deemed appropriate by the membership as a whole including but not limited to publication on the organization’s website:
www.bhparanormal.com.
- Section 5:** To preserve the good name and integrity of **BHPI** and the paranormal profession by requiring from its membership at all times full observance of the highest standards of professional conduct.
- Section 6:** To promote professional and social interaction among its members.
- Section 7:** To protect the interest of its members and to promote their welfare.
- Section 8:** To support and endorse continuing education of the membership in the field of paranormal investigations, as well as the proper training of persons who desire to become paranormal investigators with **BHPI**.
- Section 9:** To promote the proper recognition and practices of legitimate paranormal investigations.
- Section 10:** **BHPI** shall remain a not for profit organization. However, it may receive, manage, expend or otherwise use any funds and property of this organization to carry out and achieve these objectives and purposes set forth in these by-laws and for such additional objectives and purposes not inconsistent therein that will further the interest of this organization and its members, either directly or indirectly.

ARTICLE 3 – Leadership

- Section 1:** **Lead Investigator:** Leadership of this organization consists of one lead investigator who shall have the responsibility to make decisions for this organization by a vote or general consensus of its membership. All decisions of the lead investigator are considered final, but may be appealed by a majority vote of the membership for reconsideration.

The lead investigator will oversee the daily operation of the organization. The lead investigator guides and advises the membership in established rules and protocols of this organization and its by-laws. The lead investigator shall preside over and maintain order in meetings, investigations, evidence review, and other events. The lead investigator shall serve as Webmaster and administrative

moderator of www.bhparanormal.com and all domains and utilities therein. The lead investigator shall maintain all membership records as well as all evidence obtained from investigations, organize investigations, and promote this organization professionally in various forums and media outlets. The lead investigator is also responsible for maintaining this organizations credibility and integrity. The lead investigator may at his/her convenience appoint a member(s) to assist with his/her daily responsibilities.

The position of lead investigator is a permanent position unless he/she steps down or leaves the organization. Prior to the lead investigator stepping down or leaving, a membership meeting shall be convened and a new lead investigator shall be chosen by the membership.

1a, Co-Lead Investigator: Serves as an advisor to the lead investigator. The co-lead investigator, upon the absence of the lead investigator, will take on the responsibilities and duties of the lead investigator ensuring the proper management of **BHPI**.

The position of co-lead investigator is a permanent position unless he/she steps down or leaves the organization. Prior to the co-lead investigator stepping down or leaving, a membership meeting shall be convened and a new co-lead investigator shall be chosen by the membership.

1b, Case Manager/Investigator: Serves as an advisor to the lead investigator and is responsible for contacting potential clients to set up the preliminaries of the investigation. The case manager is responsible for making timely contact with clients and keeping a written log of his/her activity as well as a final written report. All information obtained is to remain confidential and only shared with the lead investigator. The case manager/investigator reports directly to the lead investigator.

The case manager/investigator shall be a member of **BHPI** in good standing and serves at the discretion of the lead investigator. Outside of his/her role as case manager, their role reverts to that of an investigator.

1c, Researcher/Investigator: Serves as an advisor to the lead investigator and is responsible for providing the lead investigator with a written report of his/her findings with regards to the location to be investigated. The lead investigator has the final approval of the information obtained and will maintain a copy of the report in the

case file. The investigator/researcher reports directly to the lead investigator.

The researcher/investigator shall be a member of **BHPI** in good standing and serves at the discretion of the lead investigator. Outside of his/her role as researcher, their role reverts to that of an investigator.

ARTICLE 4 – Membership

Section 1: Subject only to the specific conditions set forth hereinafter, any person of good moral character, who has an interest in the paranormal shall be eligible for membership at the discretion of the lead investigator and membership.

Section 2: Any person expressing interest in joining this organization may become a member providing he/she meets the following requirements:

- A.** All members must be at least 21 years of age and possess a valid state issued ID or driver's license prior to applying. This provision applies to all members, new or current.
- B.** He/She must complete a membership application.
- C.** He/She must complete and pass an interview with the lead investigator of **BHPI**.
- D.** He/She must upon acceptance into the organization submit a digital photograph for inclusion on the membership roster.
- E.** He/She must sign a membership agreement. This provision applies to all members, new or current.
- F.** He/She must have their own form of transportation to and from all organization events.
- G.** He/She must agree to attend no less than 50% of all announced organization meetings, training sessions and other mandatory special events unless the lead investigator grants prior approval. This provision applies to all members, new or current.

H. He/She must agree to dress appropriately for the event in which they are involved.

Section 3: No person shall be eligible for membership if;

- A. He/She refuses to follow established rules and protocols of this organization or its by-laws.
- B. He/She refuses to obligate themselves to some type of acceptable participation in scheduled investigations, meetings, training sessions, or other mandatory special events.
- C. There is reason to believe that he/she may not adhere to or abide by the established rules and protocols of this organization or its by-laws.
- D. He/She provides any falsification of any membership information, or lies.
- E. He/She advocates race, religious or class hatred or discrimination.
- F. He/She refuses to dress appropriately for the event in which they are involved.
- G. He/She has ever been convicted of a felony crime by any court of law.
- H. He/She refuses to sign a disclosure, waiver of liability, and confidentiality agreement.

Section 4: Membership can be sanctioned or revoked if:

- A. Any member misses 2 (two) consecutive meetings without permission.
- B. Any member who attempts to undermine the credibility or integrity of this organization in any way.
- C. Any member divulges any privileged or confidential information gathered during investigations, research, meetings, training sessions or other special events with anyone who is not a member of this organization. All information is to be considered privileged or confidential and should only be discussed within the organization.

- D. Any member using alcohol prior to or during an investigation. A member found to be under the influence of illegal drugs or seen taking illegal drugs is immediately dismissed from the organization.
- E. Any member failing to act in a safe and professional manner during all events.
- F. Any member who trespasses or violates any criminal law.
- G. Any member who is dishonest or demonstrates other bad traits that may reflect negatively on this organization.
- H. Any member who falsifies any records, research, investigation logs or evidence.
- I. Any member who violates any established rule or protocol of this organization or its by-laws.

Section 5: Member code of conduct and regulations:

- A. It is the responsibility of all **BHPI** members to conduct themselves in a safe and professional manner at all times. All members are reminded they represent **BHPI** and their conduct reflects on this organization.
- B. All members while participating in investigations, research, meetings, training sessions or other special events must be dressed in appropriate attire for both the physical and social environment of the location. This includes but is not limited to comfortable safe footwear; dark non-reflective clothing that is in good condition. No loose hanging items such as wallet chains, key fobs, etc.
- C. In the absence of the Lead Investigator the co-lead investigator is in command and makes all decisions concerning the event. In the absence of the co-lead investigator, the most senior investigator will take on those responsibilities. Failure to follow directions, any established rule or protocol of this organization or its by-laws is grounds for immediate removal from the event and/or termination of membership.
- D. All events must be conducted in a courteous and professional manner.

- E.** Use of illegal drugs is grounds for immediate termination of membership. If you are taking prescription drugs, the member shall notify the lead investigator to determine if the drug might hinder the member's safety during an investigation.
- F.** All members will refrain from using obscene, foul or abusive language near clients or the public.
- G.** All members are required to respect the privacy of all clients.
- H.** All inquiries from the media, law enforcement, concerned citizens and others at the event scene will be directed to the lead investigator. In the lead investigators absence the senior member will be notified.
- I.** All members are expected to respect the event site.
- J.** All members must have a valid state issued ID in their possession during all events.
- K.** No member is to investigate alone due to safety and credibility concerns.
- L.** All members are required to collect evidence and take notes and submit said evidence and notes to the lead investigator.
- M.** All events are for members only. If you wish to bring a guest, the member must request permission from the lead investigator no less than a week prior to the meeting or investigation. The lead investigator has the final say.
- N.** All members are required to arrive at scheduled events in a timely manner. If a member must be absent from a scheduled event the lead investigator must be notified prior to the scheduled event. In case of emergency, please notify the lead investigator as soon as safely possible.
- O.** The lead investigator of **BHPI** retains the right to have "Final Say". Your opinion will be respected and considered in all decisions.

Section 6: Other membership points:

- A.** The lead investigator of this organization has the exclusive right to deny membership to anyone who does not meet the high standards of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**.

- B.** All new members are placed on a 90-day probationary period upon being accepted into **BHPI**. This period may be lengthened at the discretion of the lead investigator.
- C.** **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations** is not obligated in any way to retain any member that does not meet the high standards set down. Continuing membership is based on the discretion of the lead investigator and may be terminated at any time by a majority vote of the membership.
- D.** Any member who has been terminated from this organization for any violation of any provision of these by-laws specifically outlined in **Article 4, section 3 (D), (E), (G), (H)** and **section 4 (B), (C), (D), (F), (H)** shall not be eligible for reinstatement. Any member, who has been terminated for any other provision of these by-laws not mentioned above, may reapply for membership after one (1) year.
- E.** Any member who leaves the organization for any reason and is reinstated forfeits standing in any position(s) of leadership they once held as well as their seniority in the organization.

Section 7: Special consultants may be retained by this organization that are not necessarily members. They may be utilized for their expert opinions or talents to further the goals and interests of this organization.

ARTICLE 5 – Meetings

Section 1: **BHPI** shall hold monthly meetings. These meetings will serve to discuss organization business, potential membership, investigations, evidence, training, and any other business deemed necessary by the lead investigator.

Section 2: All meetings/events are for members only. If a member wishes to bring a guest, (non-member) the member must obtain permission from the lead investigator no less than 7 (seven) days prior to the meeting/event. There will be absolutely no non-member allowed at meetings/events that are considered to be confidential. The lead investigator has the final say.

Section 3: The first meeting after the first of the year will serve as this organization's annual meeting.

ARTICLE 6 – Evidence Ownership

- Section 1:** All evidence collected during an investigation including but not limited to; audio, photographic, video, and any other data is the property of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**.
- Section 2:** All evidence collected may be considered for publication on **BHPI's** website www.bhparanormal.com, in the form of audio, photographic, video, and any other data deemed appropriate by the lead investigator. Confidential evidence shall remain in the custody of the lead investigator and not be used for public review.
- Section 3:** The lead investigator shall be guardian of evidence and records of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**. And shall maintain all investigative files.

ARTICLE 7 – Equipment

- Section 1:** All equipment owned by **BHPI** shall be maintained and stored properly by the lead investigator. Each member has a responsibility to assist in the maintenance of this property when necessary. Any non-member of **BHPI** shall not use this property.
- Section 2:** Personal equipment is the responsibility of the individual member who owns it and is responsible for its maintenance. All personal equipment should be properly marked with ownership information.
- Section 3:** **BHPI** is not liable for any personal equipment that is damaged or lost during an investigation or any function sanctioned by **BHPI**.

ARTICLE 8 – Donations and Funding

- Section 1:** **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations** shall be non-profit and shall not charge for any service that it provides.
- Section 2:** **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations** can accept monetary and equipment donations to aid in furthering the goals and interests of

this organization and its members. Monetary donations will be accepted via a PayPal link on, www.bhparanormal.com.

Section 3: All members of **BHPI** are required to assist in the cost of maintaining the organizations equipment, website, and other member approved expenses. ~~These expenses shall not exceed fifty US dollars (\$50.00) per annum, per member.~~ Membership dues will be Ten US dollars (\$10.00) per month per member. Associate membership dues will be Five US dollars (\$5.00) per month per member. (Enacted March 2010)

Section 4: The fiscal year of this organization shall be from 01 January to 31 December.

ARTICLE 9 – Official Logos

Section 1: All official logos of this organization shall remain the property of this organization. This includes all official forms and documents, all publications both physical and published on the organization’s website, www.bhparanormal.com. The official logo may not be reproduced in any form without the express written permission of the lead investigator of this organization.

Section 2: The title, “**Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**”, “**BHPI**”, www.bhparanormal.com” remains the exclusive property of the lead investigator and membership of this organization, and may not be used by any other individual, organization or business without the express written permission of the lead investigator.

Section 3: All members, in good standing and not on probation, may use the official logo of this organization providing this use is consistent with acceptable practices of this organization as deemed appropriate by the lead investigator.

ARTICLE 10 – Amendments

Section 1: **These by-laws may be amended, altered, repealed by a majority vote of the membership. The lead investigator shall give notice to all members of the noted changes, and call a meeting. All members shall be present and allowed to vote on any change to these by-laws. Probationary members do not have voting rights.**