

Black Hills Paranormal Investigations

Investigation Protocol

The very fact we are providing an unorthodox service to the public, our actions are being closely scrutinized at all times. There is no central authority that certifies, trains, or holds accountable our actions and inactions. Therefore, it is necessary to prove to the public that we are responsible and hold ourselves to a high standard and have protocols in place to govern our processes along with our actions.

Following is a set of protocols that will be followed by all members of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**. Any failure to adhere to these protocols will result in the offending member being sanctioned, up to and including termination from the organization.

The intent of these written protocols is not intended to limit members to a strict confining set of rules. They are not intended to be looked upon as, "Letter of the Law", but instead, "Spirit of the Law".

If any protocol is contrary to the current bylaws of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**, the bylaws take precedent.

These protocols can be altered at anytime after a majority vote of the members of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations**.

It should also be noted that **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations** approaches investigations looking to find reasonable natural explanations for what people are experiencing. We believe that approximately 95-97% of the alleged paranormal activity that is reported can be explained by natural, environmental, chemical, structural, or biological explanations. That means 3-5% of the cases might be paranormal in nature. This does not mean there is not a reasonable explanation, just one that is outside of our knowledge base.

We are committed to continuing our education in the field of paranormal investigations as well as experimentation with the ever-changing methodologies and protocols being used to investigate paranormal phenomena.

We are a knowledge based, critical thinking, and skeptical group of individuals who have come together to logically investigate paranormal claims. We do not use paranormal means to investigate paranormal phenomena. This means we do not use Ouija boards, crystals, dowsing rods, pendulums, etc., etc. We have found no evidence that these items have any special powers associated with them, other than what people place in them in their minds.

We respect others interpretations and opinions about the paranormal and paranormal subjects. We do disagree when a statement is made that cannot be supported by evidence. However, for evidence to be considered compelling, it must not be manufactured or hoaxed, it must be collected properly, it must be analyzed properly, and it must be relevant to the study of paranormal studies.

Black Hills Paranormal Investigations does not charge for investigations. The members of the organization will absorb all costs incurred during the investigation. No member of **BHPI** will solicit any person or business for funds.

Black Hills Paranormal Investigations is not obligated in any way to investigate any claim of paranormal activity. If during the interview process or investigation it is learned that any information provided to **BHPI** and its members to be false or misrepresented, **BHPI** will immediately cancel their investigation.

Black Hills Paranormal Investigations makes no wild claim to rid you of paranormal activity. We study the paranormal phenomenon to document the proof of the existence of “ghosts” and “hauntings.” However, we do not want to leave our client(s) hanging either. We strive to educate our client(s) about the paranormal based on scientific research of other investigative teams as well as our experiences in an effort to help our client(s) deal with their situation. We have also found that those experiencing paranormal activity can contact their various religious affiliates, e.g., minister, pastor, priest, or any member of the clergy to assist them.

CONTACTING BHPI:

Black Hills Paranormal Investigations must provide the public access to contact the team for an investigation or questions. BHPI shall provide an up to date website with contact information that is easily accessed by the public. The lead investigator is responsible for maintaining all website, contact information.

The Case Manager after being notified, shall contact the person(s) within 2 (two) days of the request for assistance. This contact can be through e-mail or through phone contact. If through e-mail, the Case Manager must at least make contact with the person via phone within 5 (five) days.

The Case Manager shall begin a record of his/her actions and contacts with the potential client.

The Case Manager shall ask the potential client the pre-investigation questions that are BHPI standardized questions to determine the need for an investigation. The Case Manager shall notify the lead investigator within 1 (one) day of contact with the potential client of his/her findings.

These findings are:

Explained: The Case Manager was able to assist the potential client by discussing their concerns and answering their questions intelligently and with compassion.

Client being influenced by medications: The Case Manager has discretion in denying case based on medications used. Requires additional follow-up on medications and their side-affects.

Plausible: The potential client provides the Case Manager with scenarios that cannot be debunked over the phone. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled at the client's home for additional interview.

High likelihood that client is experiencing something: The potential client provides the Case Manager with compelling evidence that there is possible paranormal activity. This evidence could be the potential client claiming, he/she is being harmed; a child is involved. An investigation will be scheduled at the location where the activity is taking place.

The Case Manager is encouraged to attempt to resolve the potential client(s) issues by answering their questions and providing sound explanations for the alleged activity.

If the call for service can be adequately explained, the Case Manager will send either a letter or e-mail to the person making contact outlining the circumstances of the call and the outcome. A copy of this letter or e-mail will be kept in an investigation file by the lead investigator.

If a decision is made that a physical meeting is necessary, the Lead Investigator and Case Manager will meet with the potential client for a more in-depth interview and tour of the location. The Lead Investigator in his/her absence may appoint another member to attend this meeting. The Lead investigator will complete all necessary paperwork with the client at this meeting, e.g., waiver of confidentiality, waiver of liability.

If the situation warrants further investigation by the organization, the Lead Investigator will contact the Researcher and direct him/her to begin research of the location. The Lead Investigator will provide the Researcher with appropriate information that will assist the Researcher with his/her duties.

The Lead Investigator will call a meeting of the members, within one (1) week of the initial meeting of the client, to discuss the potential investigation and any hazards that were noted. The Lead Investigator will also provide photographs of the location to plan possible locations for equipment placement. The Lead Investigator will not divulge too much information about activity, so as not to influence the members during the actual investigation. Based on the size of the venue to be investigated, the

Lead Investigator may limit the number of members attending the investigation. The Lead Investigator's decision is final. Those members not selected, may assist with evidence review after the investigation. If a follow-up investigation is required, those members not on the first investigation should be selected. However, the Lead Investigator has final say.

THE INVESTIGATION:

Once the client and BHPI have agreed upon a date for the investigation, all members will be directed by the Lead Investigator to meet at a specific time at the event venue.

The Lead Investigator will provide a tour of the event venue pointing out potential locations for equipment placement. The Lead Investigator will be responsible for pointing out potential hazards, and all members will acknowledge these hazards. If conditions are unsafe at the event venue, the Lead Investigator has the authority to stop the investigation until the unsafe condition is rectified.

If the client(s) are present during the investigation **BHPI** encourages their active participation. At no time will **BHPI** place the client(s) in a position of danger.

Following are basic guidelines all members of **BHPI** will adhere to while on investigations:

- All members will conduct themselves in a safe professional manner at all times.
- All members will refrain from using obscene, foul or abusive language near clients or the public.
- All members will respect the privacy of the client(s).
- Use of illegal drugs is grounds for immediate termination and will not be tolerated.
- All members will be dressed in appropriate attire that is in good condition and safe comfortable footwear. No reflective material, no loose hanging items such as wallet chains, key fobs, etc.
- Smoking is forbidden within the event venue. An area outside away from the event venue will be provided if a member must smoke.
- All members will respect the event site.
- All members must have a valid state issued ID in their possession.
- The Lead Investigator must possess the permission to investigate paperwork at the event venue, in the event law enforcement officials are notified and require documentation of permission to be legally on the property.
- All members are required to arrive at investigations in a timely manner.
- All members will be responsible for their equipment, ensuring it is in good working order. Members are responsible for providing their own batteries.
- All members will be responsible for equipment owned by the organization.
- All members will respect other member's equipment.

- No member is to investigate alone due to safety and credibility concerns.
- All members are required to collect evidence and take notes and submit said evidence and notes to the Lead Investigator.

Prior to the set-up of equipment, the Lead Investigator will assign a team of investigators to obtain base Electromagnetic Field (EMF) reading of the event venue. Another investigator will photograph the location. During the equipment set-up photographs will be taken to document where the equipment is located. Once the IR static cameras are positioned a photograph will be taken to show each cameras position and sight of view.

Once the investigation gets underway, the Lead Investigator will assign teams that will investigate together. At no time will any investigator be allowed to investigate or walk through the event venue alone. A sign-in, sign-out log will be placed at the command post and each team is responsible for filling out the log when they begin and end their investigation.

If any member experiences something, he/she will state they are experiencing something, however they should not state their experience out loud to influence other team members. The team members will investigate with their own equipment to document any unusual activity. The team member experiencing something will document in writing their experience. These documented experiences will be discussed at the end of the investigation.

If at any time an investigator experiences something that overwhelms them and feels the need to leave the general location. They should advise their team member of the situation and both investigators should calmly walk back to the command post. Some experiences can be intense and yes, it can even shock your senses, and the first thought is to get away from what scares you as fast as you can by running. We do not condone running as it can be dangerous for the investigator and if the client is present, it is unprofessional, and could unnecessarily cause undue strain to the client.

Once the investigation is completed for the night, all members are responsible for retrieving the equipment. Once the equipment is retrieved, the members will ensure that any pieces of furniture or items in the home are moved back to their original locations and there is no trash left. The event venue will be left in the same condition, as it was when we entered. Unfortunately, there are times when accidents do occur. In the slight chance any client property is damaged or broken, **BHPI** will be responsible and pay for damages.

EVIDENCE REVIEW:

Each team member is responsible to review the evidence collected on his/her equipment. The Lead Investigator may call for a meeting at an agreed upon location to review evidence as a team. This review must take no longer than two (2) weeks,

and all evidence collected must be reviewed with the client within two (2) weeks. All investigative reports must be completed and provided to the client within this time frame as well.

In accordance with the by-laws of this organization any evidence collected may be posted to the organizations website and other websites for peer review. We believe peer review is a necessary step in presenting possible paranormal evidence to the public.

CONCLUSIONS:

These are basic guidelines that members of **Black Hills Paranormal Investigations** follow on investigations. We strive to adhere to tough standards we set down for ourselves simply because it is the right thing to do and it reflects our commitment to excellence and integrity as an organization.