



Standard's & Protocol's
The Society for Paranormal Investigations, Research Ideas & Theory
Southwest Pennsylvania

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PART 1: GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1 OUR MISSION

- a. To discover more about the human condition, life, the universe, and the Greater Scheme of Things by scientifically investigating unusual and mysterious events and happenings, and to help others in the process.

1.2 OUR VISION

- a. To understand and help to understand.
- b. We seek to understand paranormal events through investigations using all tools at our disposal with an emphasis on the *true scientific method*, which means not approaching our investigations with pre-conceived notions and beliefs.
- c. We endeavor to help individuals who are experiencing unexplainable events to understand *why* these events are happening through interviews, investigations, and education. We endeavor to resolve the events so that all can live in peace. We pay as much—if not more—attention to the human aspect as we do the paranormal aspect. This means that we provide comfort to the client through education, understanding, and resolution.
- d. Regarding intelligent hauntings, we also endeavor to help the entity resolve any issues he/she is facing in an effort to move on.

1.3 OUR APPROACH

- a. Empirical evidence strongly suggests *something* of a paranormal nature exists in our world. Therefore, we endeavor to prove the existence of paranormal events by proving they don't exist. In other words, we approach the investigation of paranormal activity of any kind from the position of trying to explain it as a natural occurrence. We first endeavor to prove that paranormal activity is caused by explainable events. Thus, whatever remains is paranormal. Though we use the scientific method, this does not mean that we are skeptics; it means that we maintain a healthy skepticism tempered by an open-mind. Truth exists. Only falsehood must be fabricated. We seek to discover the truth.
- b. We view supernatural and extraterrestrial entities in the same way we view human beings, that is, as subject to the same universal laws and universal moral codes as human beings.

1.4 OUR TEAM

- a. Although directed by the Founder, Barry L. Brudnak Jr. *SPIRITSWP* is a self-leading team. That means that we are all out to discover the truth and we work together to do so. *SPIRITSWP* is based on shared-leadership; it is not a dictatorship.

1.5 TYPES OF PARANORMAL EVENTS WE INVESTIGATE

- a. Ghosts / Spirits / Hauntings
- b. Mysterious Creatures
- c. Mysterious Happenings

1.6 GEOGRAPHICAL AREA WE COVER

- a. *SPIRITSWP covers the Mon Valley and Pittsburgh Areas in Pennsylvania. SPIRITSWP will also travel to some parts of West Virginia.*

1.7 OUR PROCESS

- a. When an individual contacts us for help, we conduct an initial telephone interview about the event(s). After determining that further investigation is warranted, we will then conduct an onsite investigation to learn more and find answers. Next, we examine our data, do further research if necessary, and then meet with or call the client to discuss our findings. We will provide the client with a CD of relevant evidence upon request. We understand that contacting a group such as us can be a big step for many people, therefore, we respect their privacy and maintain confidentiality unless permitted otherwise. It is important to reiterate that through the whole process, we not only help the client to understand what is happening, but also help them to feel comforted and understood. “Fixing” the client is as important or more important than investigating the phenomenon.

1.8 OUR TOOLS

- a. We use many different tools to find answers, such as infrared cameras, EMF meters; digital recorders; digital cameras; digital thermometers; etc. We also use subjective tools such as intuitive and psychic feedback, dowsing rods, séances, etc. Being open-minded, we do not necessarily rule out any particular tool that may be of value.

1.9 OUR RECOMMENDATION ON CROSSING SPIRITS

- a) CLIENT CASES - About “Crossing Spirits Over,” SPIRITswp’s recommendation (if a client is “On the fence”) is to attempt to cross the spirit over.
- b) LOCAL FOLKLORE – About “Crossing Spirits Over,” SPIRITswp’s decision is to leave the spirits remain until they come into a realm or area that they are unwanted or are seeking help.

PART 2: SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

2.1 REPUTATION & CREDIBILITY

- a. Our greatest asset is our reputation and credibility as professional researchers and investigators. Therefore, we always strive to maintain and uphold our good reputation in everything we do. Always use your good judgment when making decisions during investigations.
- b. All team members must represent the team in a professional manner. This means returning calls and emails in a prompt and timely fashion.
- c. In the paranormal field, any photographic, video, audio, or psychic evidence stands solely on the credibility of the people who gathered that evidence. Therefore, *SPIRITSWP* strives for outstanding credibility and we will only release paranormal evidence that has been thoroughly examined to eliminate natural occurrences.

2.2 CLIENT CONTACT, INTERVIEWS, CONFIDENTIALITY, and RELEASE FORMS

- a. The Case Manager is primarily responsible for finding cases to investigate, client contact, and scheduling investigations.
- b. All Interviews will be performed primarily by the Case Manager, although other selected members may assist.
- c. Interviews of different witnesses/parties will be conducted individually first, and then together if necessary.
- d. All clients must consent to an initial Pre-Interview for an investigation to proceed, followed by detailed interview(s) onsite.
- e. All clients will be given an Information Brochure and must sign a Property Access and Liability Release as well as an Information and Evidence Release for an investigation to proceed.
- f. The Case Manager is responsible for getting the release forms signed by the client.
- g. Team members should not reveal ANY case details to any Psychics, Mediums, Sensitives, or Intuitives who are participating in the case. In addition, the only other members who should be briefed about case details are those members who have participated in the walk thru (if applicable).
- h. All client information is to be deemed confidential and private unless released by the client. Members must not divulge confidential client information to the public (including friends and family), such as client names, addresses, neighborhoods, etc., without client's consent. If in doubt, do not divulge information.

2.3 ACCEPTABLE CASES

- a. *SPIRITSWP* will only accept cases that meet the following conditions:
 - 1) In the case of a private residence/office, our services must be needed and we must believe that we can help in some way.
 - 2) Our investigations must be Win-Win (mutually beneficial). Investigations for clients who are just curious will be at the discretion of each individual Alumni Chapter.
 - 3) We politely decline cases where the client's mental and/or emotional stability is in question.
 - 4) Onsite, we will not continue an investigation if we question the client's mental and/or emotional stability. We will politely refer them to other trained professionals as appropriate.
 - 5) We decline cases in which we believe the client is simply seeking publicity, monetary gain, or a setup for skeptics to debunk.

2.4 PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- a. Professional behavior must be displayed always.
- b. Please use thoughtfulness and discretion as to your words and conduct when around clients.
- c. Professional and courteous behavior is also extended to any entities we encounter. Please remain respectful of both the living and the dead. Provoking of spirits may be done at times when appropriate. Please use discretion and ask yourself whether you would do the same to another person or not.

2.5 INVESTIGATIONS

- a. *Not all Alumni members will necessarily participate in every investigation. Investigator availability is the first determination in investigation attendance.*
- b. All cases that are referred through the *SPIRITswp* Website are appointed by the Founder.
 - a. Expertise, Online Interaction, and Continued Education will decide who is offered an investigator spot in these cases.
- c. Alumni Chapter's that seek out their own investigations, and those not coming through the *SPIRITswp* Website, will schedule investigators on their own.
- d. There are three primary objectives in any investigation:
 1. **Help the client.** We want to discover how the alleged paranormal events are impacting the witnesses, and to discover how the effects can be resolved. In other words, we want to discover the relationship between the events and the people who experience them. This information will help us help them as well as draw out the underlying truth of the event.

2. **Help the spirit(s)** (if possible). Part of our job is to help spirits as well to crossover, or resolve unfinished business, or even lose their fear of moving on.
 3. **Find answers.** To discover, document, and prove/disprove/explain the paranormal event, thus gain insight into the greater mysteries of our Universe.
- e. To the extent possible, any historical case research will be performed *after* the onsite investigation is completed to ensure team member objectivity.
 - f. The Case Manager must coordinate all investigations. **No member may investigate an event under the auspices of SPIRITSWP without the knowledge of the Founder.**
 - a. Alumni Chapter's that seek out their own cases must notify the Founder in writing by sending the following information to contact@spiritswp.org :
 - i. Nature of the Investigation – including the events that led to the Chapter securing the referral (I.e. family member's house; word of mouth, etc.); location of the case; and demographics of the client.
 - ii. Walk-Through – when/if a walk-through was conducted.
 - iii. Reason for Accepting the Case – the reason(s) the Chapter decided to investigate.
 - iv. Investigation Date & Time.
 - b. This information is also collected to create certain Board's on the Alumni Forum related to the investigations.
 - g. **Investigator's In Training/New Members/Non-Alumni Members** are only permitted to accompany Alumni Members on investigations after certain criteria have been met.
 - a. Please visit the Alumni Member Info Center for this criterion.
 - h. Active investigations must be performed by at least two team members together—no individuals are permitted to go alone to investigate. This provides at least two witnesses should anything paranormal occur, as well as limits any potential team liability. Further provisions:
 - 1) Each team of two should have basic equipment, i.e., two flashlights, two digital cameras, a digital recorder, an EMF meter, and a digital thermometer.
 - 2) One of the two team members should log any relevant occurrences.
 - 3) When taking pictures, one member should use flash, and one member should take pictures without flash (to detect potentially valid orbs). Remember to call out “flash” when snapping a picture.
 - i. Recording techniques (audio or video):
 - 1) All TV's and radios on the premises should be turned off.
 - 2) When talking, *DO NOT WHISPER*; speak in your regular voice. Any whispering will corrupt the evidence.
 - 3) Do not discuss things of a personal or private nature. Keep it focused on the investigation at hand.

- 4) Always begin a recording by stating your name, the day, date, approximate time, client location, and who is with you. Ask the other team member to speak or say their name for reference purposes.
 - 5) Always verbally explain on the recording any type of natural sounds, such as “I bumped the wall,” or “I dropped the flashlight,” etc.
 - 6) When finished with a vigil, state that the vigil has concluded and the approximate time.
- j. Members must remain rational, objective, levelheaded, and professional in all situations (this means not running away from paranormal events).
 - k. Team members must strive to be as unintrusive as possible during investigations.
 - l. Any smoking must be done away from any area of investigation and not while actively investigating.
 - m. No alcohol or drugs are allowed on investigations. This includes any heavy medication that might influence a member’s judgment.
 - n. Please do not wear cologne, perfume, or anything that gives off a noticeable odor to not confuse members with potential paranormal phenomena.
 - o. What to bring on investigations: You may want to bring some snacks, water, soft drinks, etc. Everyone is responsible for his/her own items.
 - p. **Investigator’s In Training/New Members/Non-Alumni Members** are not permitted to lead any client interaction or vigil sessions. If this happens, please report these occurrences to the Founder at: contact@spiritswp.org

2.6 DRESS

- a. Team members must wear their official ID badge on all investigations. No exceptions.
- b. Team members are strongly encouraged to wear a team shirt or t-shirt, and may also wear a cap, jacket, or other team attire during investigations. Team members must wear a team shirt or t-shirt during team-related events such as public presentations. The only exception is when speaking to paranormal groups and professional attire is required.
- c. When working with another paranormal group as a visiting investigator, team members will wear team attire.
- d. Members will maintain a professional appearance when conducting investigations, i.e., no dirty, sloppy, or wrinkled clothing. Jeans, shorts, and sneakers are fine—be comfortable. Please also make sure your grooming is clean. Please use your own good judgment. We want to make a good impression.

2.7 EVIDENCE & CASE REPORTS

- a. All Alumni Chapters are responsible for their own Evidence Review. Each Alumni Chapter may create deadlines for file upload’s and evidence review.

- b. Team members **should** write case reports directly following an investigation (to prevent missing knowledge). All Alumni Chapters are responsible for setting these requirements and deadlines.
- c. Although determined by each Individual Chapter, any member who participates in an investigation should also help with evidence review. Assignments will be made by the Alumni Chapter members or another team member delegating in behalf of the Alumni Team.
- d. All evidence must be reviewed and presented **within fourteen (14) days** after the investigation.
- e. Members who review video footage and audio files must do so diligently with full presence of mind (frequent breaks encouraged).
- f. Once the evidence has been reviewed, the team will evaluate its relevance and plausibility either in-person or on the Alumni Forum.

2.8 PROOF OF PARANORMAL ACTIVITY

- a. In prospective hauntings, proof of paranormal activity will only be considered plausible after all other explanations are ruled out, and then only when corroborated by **two or more indisputable independent sources**, such as high EMF readings, cold spots, EVPs, etc. The more independent sources, the better.
- b. In the clear majority of circumstances, orbs are not considered proof of paranormal activity, or even paranormal at all. We may classify orbs as paranormally significant **ONLY** if they meet the following standards, and then *only* as the circumstances warrant on a case-by-case basis:
 - Seen unaided with the naked eye by at least two credible witnesses.
 - At least one Class 1, 2, or 3 EVP is recorded at the same time the orb is witnessed;
 - Measurable and substantial temperature changes not attributable to any natural source;
 - Measurable and substantial EMF readings not attributable to any natural source.
 - Other potentially significant (but not necessarily provable) criteria:
 - If the orb shows a flight path on a still photograph resulting in a vortex like image, it *may* be considered in the light of corroborating evidence.
 - If the orb is on video, it must have a decidedly intelligent flight pattern, e.g., it must move, hover for a substantial period (such as several seconds), and then move again in an intelligent way.
- c. Some orbs may appear as an elongated vortex. This can happen because of an orb traveling very fast at the instant the camera shutter opens. Vortexes *may* indicate paranormal activity.

2.9 EQUIPMENT

- a. Each Alumni Chapter is primarily responsible for all equipment, including the setting up and taking down of equipment, assisted by other team members.
- b. If any Chapter needs equipment, they should post to the General Category/Board of the Alumni Forum asking to borrow equipment.
- c. All equipment must be handled with extreme care.
- d. All equipment must be inventoried after each investigation. This can be a visual inspection by the equipment owner.
- e. Team members must acquire their own basic equipment including an EMF meter, thermometer, digital recorder, flashlight, and camera. No one team member is responsible or required to provide all equipment—it is a team effort.

2.10 LEADERSHIP, TEAM ATTITUDE, AND SHARED VALUES

- a. *SPIRITSWP* is a self-leading and open-minded team, directed by individual Chapter's over the Southwestern Pennsylvania Area. The Founder, Barry Brudnak, oversees each individual Alumni Chapter, only in terms of upholding professionalism and Standard's/Protocol's. Alumni Chapters are responsible for the way they operate as long as the operation is in line with the Standard's & Protocol's.
- b. Every effort will be made to get Alumni input on decisions.
- c. Team members practice self-respect, self-responsibility, and respect for free will toward others. No fighting will be tolerated. Before reacting, think about the situation carefully, and defer to another member's experience, knowledge, and judgment when appropriate.
- d. Team members maintain a fun and positive attitude; negativity and hard-core combative skepticism will not be tolerated.
- e. Team members maintain a dedicated and open-minded attitude toward the discovery of truth regarding paranormal events.
- f. Team members must be reasonably available, able, and willing to travel reasonable distances at their own expense for investigations. Car pooling will be done whenever possible. As much notice as possible will be given before investigating.
- g. Team members must be dependable regarding investigations, i.e., showing up, being mentally and physically present during investigations, etc.

2.11 MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TEAM AND THE PARANORMAL FIELD

- a. All team members must make meaningful contributions to the team, such as helping with setup, evidence review, talking to people to spread the word about the team, posting in the Alumni Members Forum, welcoming new members, and generally being a positive influence, etc.
- b. All team members must make meaningful contributions to the paranormal field. This can be in any number of ways such as:

- 1) Writing articles to express a different perspective on a paranormal issue;
- 2) Appearing on radio talk shows as a representative of *SPIRITSWP*;
- 3) Seeking media mentions, such as newspaper interviews, etc.;
- 4) Speaking at public or paranormal field events;
- 5) Participating in team projects.

2.12 CLIENT CHARGES AND FEES

- a. We do not charge for our services, nor do we ask for money for conducting an investigation. If a client brings up the subject of money or donations, please refer him/her to the Founder/Team Director.
- b. Clients are informed of the provision for making a donation on the release form and may donate if they wish.

2.13 DONATIONS AND TEAM MEMBER EXPENSES

- a. All donations made through the website will be channeled to the Founder.
- b. The use of financial donations shall be solely governed by the Founder, and generally used to offset expenses, such as the website.
- c. All donations (including actual equipment donations) or equipment purchased with monetary donations shall become the property of the Chapter it was donated to originally.
- d. Obviously, equipment purchased by an individual team member will remain the property of the member.

2.14 HONORARIUMS AND FEES FOR SPEAKING EVENTS AND MEDIA INTERVIEWS

- a. Any honorariums or fees for speaking will be payable directly to the speaker.
- b. In the case of more than one speaker, an equitable agreement shall be reached by the members involved.

2.15 ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER PARANORMAL GROUPS

- a. *SPIRITSWP* is extremely open to working with other paranormal groups as well as sharing and exchanging findings and information.
- b. We accept and respect the different approaches and methods that other groups may use.
- c. We understand that no one has all the answers and only by working together will we be successful.

- d. Team members are free to work with other groups if desired to the extent that such involvement doesn't take time and attention away from duties within the team. Members should inform their individual Alumni Chapter Members of any such an association.
- e. We refuse to compete with other groups, nor promote or get caught up in petty rivalries with other groups. We maintain our focus on discovery and aiding our clients.

2.16 ATTITUDE TOWARD SKEPTICS AND DEBUNKERS

- a. We place fundamentalist religion and fundamentalist mainstream science in the same category—closed minded. Therefore, we ignore any criticism advanced by such groups.
- b. We refuse to become distracted with hard-core skeptics and individuals simply bent on ridicule and faultfinding. Therefore, we do not acknowledge nor answer any attacks made on us by said individuals or unreasonable people (there is nothing to be gained by doing so). Explanations rarely explain.
- c. We are open to reasonable and rational discussion when we perceive that discussion to be mutually beneficial to discovery and better understanding of paranormal phenomena.

2.17 CONTINUING EDUCATION AND MEETINGS

- a. Members shall make every attempt to attend any meetings set by the Alumni Chapter. Every effort will be made to make meetings convenient, fun, and valuable.
- b. General team meeting agenda will include discussion of previous/pending investigations, training on equipment and/or investigative techniques, socializing with like-minded individuals, and having fun.
- c. **Investigator's In Training/New Members/Non-Alumni Members** of *SPIRITSWP* must complete certain criteria set forth within their first 90 Days, also known as the "Probationary Period." During this period, the new member title is SPIRITswp "Investigator In Training (I.I.T)." This is not intended to demean anyone with previous paranormal experience, as the title suggests the in-training is for SPIRITswp and not as a paranormal investigator.
- d. SPIRITswp member's are required to earn 12 SCEC's (SPIRITswp Continuing Education Credit's) per calendar year (the Calendar Year ends each 12/31). Please visit the Alumni Forum for more information on SCEC's.

2.18 MEMBERS ONLY AREA WEBSITE & GROUP EMAIL

- a. Because the Alumni Members Area, also known as the Alumni Forum, is a primary means of team communication, members are strongly encouraged to visit the Members Area at least once ***daily***.
- b. Members are not permitted to share login information with anyone else, team member or not (does not apply to spouses or significant others *in the same household*).

- c. Members are strongly encouraged to participate in team discussions, as well as post information of interest to the team.
- d. **Active Alumni Status:** All members must communicate regularly with the team via the Alumni Members Area/Forum. Any individual whom does not log into the Alumni Members Area/Forum for a period of longer than seven (7) days will forfeit their position on the SPIRITswp Alumni Team. Any Chapter caught involving individuals who have been forfeited in their individual position will forfeit their rights as an Alumni Chapter, and that Alumni Chapter will be abolished.

2.19 MEDIA INTERACTION

- a. All members are encouraged to seek media interest.
- b. All members are free to write articles and press releases. However, any articles and press releases must be approved by the Founder *before* submission to the media simply to aid in fact checking and readability (it helps to have a second pair of eyes read it).
- c. If you are contacted by the media, please refer them to the Founder. Please do not submit to an interview without prior authorization of the Founder. In other words, Team members are not authorized to do media interviews without the knowledge and approval of the Founder. This is to ensure accuracy as well as to safeguard against potential media misrepresentation. Permission will be granted unless there is Just Cause for denial.
- d. All members are encouraged to do radio and TV interviews if desired. However, all radio/TV interviews must be done with the prior knowledge and approval of the Founder. Permission will be granted unless there is Just Cause for denial.

PART 3: MEMBER POSITIONS

While individual Alumni Member Positions will differ between Alumni Chapters, this section is included for your information. The “Team” below refers to each Chapters “Alumni Team.”

3.1 CORE MEMBER POSITIONS (A.K.A. FULL-TIME INVESTIGATORS)

- a. The primary members who participate in all investigations are the Team Director, Assistant Director, Case Manager(s), Historical Researchers, an Equipment Manager, Documentarian & Medium. Other members will be invited as the specific case requires and allows.
- b. Larger locations will of course accommodate many team members, but private residences will accommodate only a few.

3.2 TEAM DIRECTOR

- a. The Team Director is also the team’s Lead Investigator and is primarily responsible for directing the team. He/she is the ultimate authority regarding any team decisions or disputes. When appropriate, the Team Director will defer to another member’s

experience, knowledge, and judgment. The Team Director is responsible and accountable for team members, and has the authority to invite new members or dismiss current members.

- b. The Team Director can assign any team member as the Assistant Team Director at his/her discretion. The Assistant Team Director, if assigned, acts in place of the Team Director when necessary, but otherwise exercises only minimal supervision over the team and only when empowered by the Team Director.

3.3 FOUNDER/TEAM DIRECTOR'S RIGHTS

- a. The Team Director reserves the right to choose which members participate in any particular investigation.
- b. The Team Director will choose the team member's position of responsibility within the team in cooperation with the individual. The Team Director reserves the right to change any team member's position of authority with Just Cause and at the Team Director's discretion.
- c. The Team Director reserves the right to dismiss any member who violates this code of Standards and Protocols.
- d. Although *SPIRITSWP* functions as a self-leading team with shared leadership, the Founder/Team Director reserves the right to be the final authority on any decision.

3.4 CASE MANAGER

- a. The Case Manager is the team point person and is responsible for handling all client contact and interviews (initial and onsite) in a prompt and timely fashion.
- b. The Case Manager is also responsible for seeking new potential cases. This involves getting the word out via the media, etc.
- c. The Case Manager is responsible for getting all client forms signed before an investigation is performed. This can be done initially onsite before the investigation.
- d. The Case Manager will also conduct an in-depth onsite client interview while the team sets up equipment. This interview must be at least audio recorded.

3.5 EQUIPMENT MANAGER

- a. The Equipment Manager oversees the setup and operation of equipment, such as cameras, DVRs, recorders, etc.
- b. The Equipment Manager determines the best location of equipment and camera placement. He/She does this in cooperation with the Team Director, and any Sensitive(s) on the investigation.
- c. The Equipment Manager is responsible for the safety and care of any team equipment, including making sure all equipment is accounted for at the end of an investigation.

- d. Another team member may be assigned as Tech Support to assist the Equipment Manager.

3.6 TEAM DOCUMENTARIAN

- a. The Team Documentarian takes candid pictures and video of the team in action, including setting up equipment and doing vigils.
- b. He/She will also participate as an investigator, but will also photo-document reportedly active locations within the investigation location.
- c. This position requires a good knowledge of photography and a keen eye for capturing a “Kodak moment.”
- d. The Documentarian is responsible for coming up with his/her own way to document a case. What does it mean to document a case? It simply means that SPIRITswp has a tactile copy of a case from start to finish.
- e. The Documentarian is responsible for writing a bi-weekly article on the team. This article can include what the team has been doing, what the team is planning or a detailed story of events of an investigation (with client anonymity used). This article is solely on the discretion of the documentarian. The length of the article and the photos used are also dependent up the documentarian.
- f. The documentarian should keep an up-to-date USB-drive of member photos. The documentarian almost serves as another source to promote the team.
- g. The Documentarian is given a template in Microsoft Word for tracking meetings, trainings, and investigations.
- h. The Documentarian is also in charge of keeping up with the positions descriptions & contract dates.
- i. Lastly, the Documentarian is responsible for creating, once a year (but recording all year round) a “SPIRITswp Year In Review” document. This is very simple: the documentarian should keep track of all major announcements, changes, additions, PR, etc.

3.7 HISTORICAL RESEARCHER(S)

- a. The Historical Researcher is responsible for doing historical research on investigation properties.
- b. This can include newspaper, county, and court records, as well as Internet research. In some cases, interviews with eyewitnesses may be necessary.
- c. Another team member may be assigned as the Assistant Historical Researcher if necessary and desired.

3.8 UFO DIVISION LEAD INVESTIGATOR (*SPIRITSWP* does not currently have a UFO Division 04-28-17)

- a. The UFO Division Lead Investigator is primarily responsible for following up on UFO related cases, interviews, and investigation.
- b. He/She is assisted by additional team members assigned to the UFO Division.

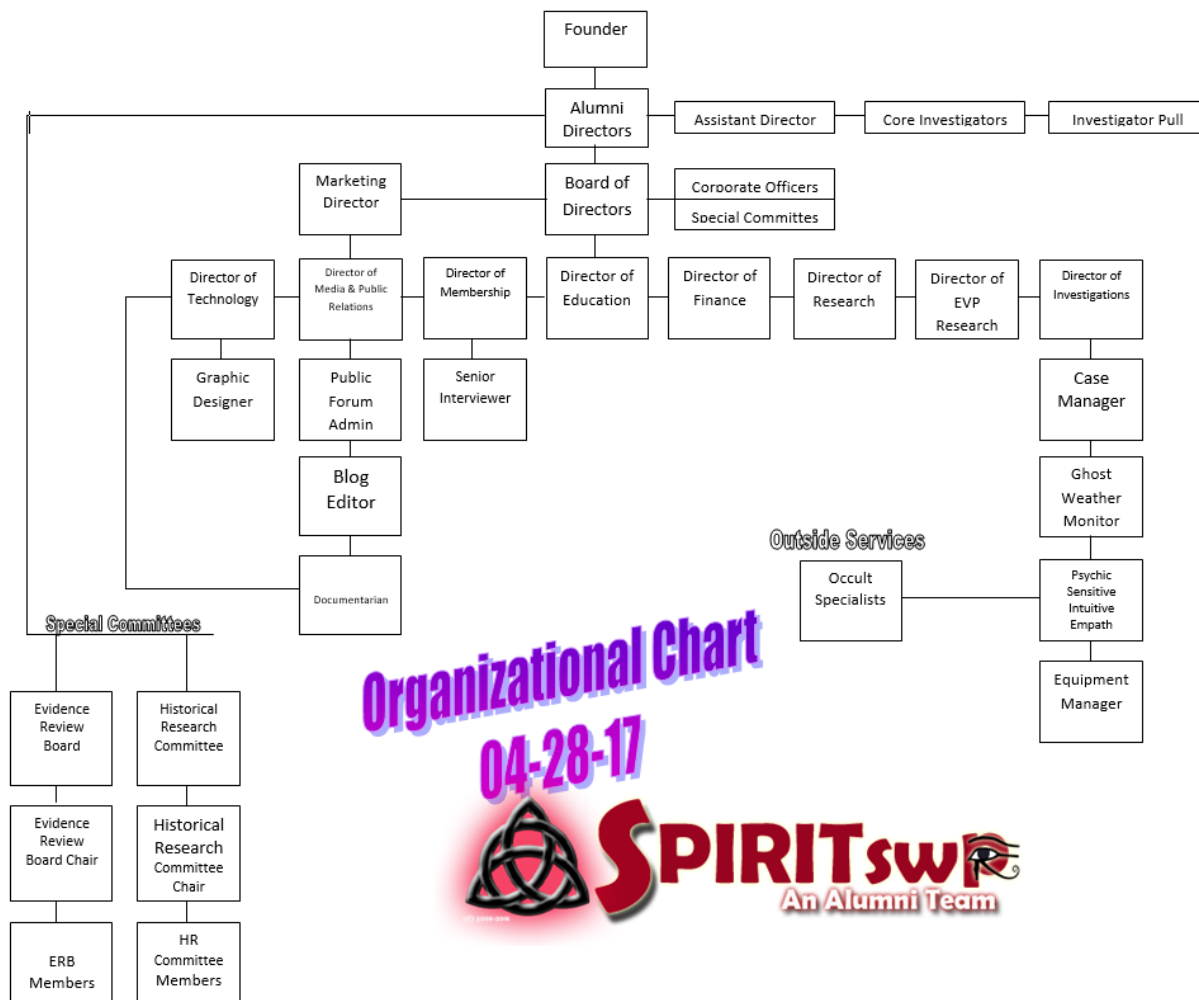
3.9 PSYCHICS, MEDIUMS, SENSITIVES, INTUITIVES

- a. Sensitives are an essential element of *SPIRITSWP* and are used whenever possible.
- b. Sensitives are not given any details prior to an investigation.
- c. Sensitives may title themselves according to their own feelings and approach.

3.10 OTHER POSITIONS

- a. Other positions can include Tech Support Assistants, and Interviewers. Other positions may be created by the Team Director as the need arises.

3.11 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



PART 4: MEMBER RELATIONS, DISCIPLINE, DISMISSAL, AND RESIGNATION

4.1 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

- a. **Sexual Harassment Policy Statement.** *SPIRITSWP's* position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the team relationship. All team members have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment.
- b. **Definition of Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, verbal or visual sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other sexually oriented conduct which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient, including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Derogatory, suggestive, and/or offensive comments, epithets, slurs, gestures, and/or propositions.
 - 2) Touching and any other bodily contact such as scratching or patting a co-member's back, grabbing a member around the waist, or interfering with a member's ability to move.
 - 3) Repeated requests for dates that are turned down or unwanted flirting.
 - 4) Transmitting or posting emails or pictures of a sexual or other harassment-related nature.
 - 5) Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, drawings, or posters.
- c. **Conditions of Sexual Harassment.** Determining what constitutes sexual harassment depends upon the specific facts and the context in which the conduct occurs. Sexual harassment may take many forms—subtle and indirect, or blatant and overt. For example:
 - 1) It may be conduct toward a member of the opposite sex or the same sex.
 - 2) It may occur between peers or between members in a hierarchical relationship.
 - 3) It may be aimed at coercing a member to participate in an unwanted sexual relationship.
 - 4) It may have the effect of causing a member to change behavior or performance.
 - 5) It may consist of repeated actions or may even arise from a single incident if sufficiently egregious.
- d. Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
 - 1) Submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of continued membership (e.g., promotion).

- 2) Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for inviting or recommending members or promising membership or recommendation of membership.
 - 3) The conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive team environment
- e. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that violates a person's boundaries, is not welcome, is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that interferes with a member's effectiveness.
 - f. **Team Member Reporting.** If you feel that you have been the recipient of sexually harassing behavior, or you have witnessed an incident of sexually harassing behavior as a third party, report it immediately to the Founder/Team Director. Then, document the incident thoroughly and submit it to the Founder/Team Director within 24 hours.
 - g. If the Founder/Team Director is the source of the harassing conduct, report it immediately to the Assistant Director.
 - h. Once a report is filed, an inquiry will be performed by the Founder/Team Director and Assistant Director to establish the veracity of the claim(s) within seven (7) days.
 - i. **Consequences and Penalties.** Any members found to have engaged in harassing conduct will be subject to discipline which can range from a warning to dismissal.

4.2 PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

- a. Any decision to discipline a member is never taken lightly by the Founder/Team Director.
- b. Our group uses a "3-Strike" system of progressive discipline. Members who violate this list of Standards and Protocols will be given two opportunities verbally by the Founder/Team Director to correct the unacceptable behavior. Training and coaching will be provided as necessary. All third violations will result in dismissal from the team. The 3-Strike system can be overruled by the Founder/Director if the decision is in the best interest of the team.
- c. The following list of infractions will result in progressive discipline and could lead to dismissal:
 - 1) Failing to follow the team's Standards and Protocols.
 - 2) Failing to meet expectations as outlined in the Position Description.
 - 3) Poor and infrequent communication with the Team Director.
 - 4) Failing to respond/reply to emails or phone calls from the Team Director in a timely manner on a consistent basis (inaccessibility).
 - 5) Being a formal or official full-member of another paranormal research group (this has nothing to do with competition, rather, it has to do with the member's time and attention being divided to the point that the member cannot meet expectations.

Members serving in a consultant capacity for other groups is not an issue provided the member can meet performance expectations).

- 6) Not contributing to the team in a meaningful way or failing to carry their own weight (consistently taking more than they give).
 - 7) Not being a team player, i.e., complaining, criticizing things or others, making team decisions without authority, being negative, competitive, combative, high maintenance, etc.
 - 8) Lack of dependability/reliability, e.g., needing reminders to show up, missing team meetings without communication, etc.
 - 9) Any other reason deemed appropriate by the Team Director.
- d. Once a member has been dismissed, he/she will no longer claim to be affiliated with *SPIRITSWP* and will no longer have access to member privileges.

4.3 IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL

- a. Any decision to dismiss a member is never taken lightly by the Founder/Team Director.
- b. The following list of infractions will result in immediate dismissal from the team:
 - 1) Criminal activity.
 - 2) Alcohol or drug abuse, on or off duty.
 - 3) Threatening another member or client.
 - 4) Sexual or any kind of harassment.
 - 5) Falsifying evidence or lying about anything.
 - 6) Sharing or divulging confidential client information with non-members.
 - 7) Disappearing, being inaccessible, and/or ceasing contact with the Founder/Team Director.
 - 8) Misrepresenting the team, e.g., poor public conduct with notoriety (such as in the media).
 - 9) Not following up with client contact if assigned as the case manager (dropping the ball).
 - 10) Sharing or divulging proprietary team information such as member's website login usernames and passwords.
- c. Once a member has been dismissed, he/she will no longer claim to be affiliated with *SPIRITSWP* and will no longer have access to member privileges.

4.4 RESIGNATION

- a. Membership is "At Will," which means that any member can resign at any time for any reason.

- b. If a team member goes 30 days without contact or communication with the Founder/Team Director (and no prior notice was given), it will be assumed that the person is no longer interested in being a member and he/she will be dismissed without advance notice. Regular communication is absolutely paramount.
- c. Once a member has been dismissed, he/she will no longer claim to be affiliated with *SPIRITSWP* and will no longer have access to member privileges.

PART 5: MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

5.1 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- a. All members are required to follow the Standards & Protocols contained herein.
- b. Individuals must be at least 18 years old to become a Team member (subject to the discretion of the Founder/ Team Director) unless accompanied by a parent who is also a Team member (also subject to the discretion of the Founder/Team Director).
- c. All individuals will be considered for membership provided they are serious about paranormal investigations, are dependable, and contribute to the growth and development of *SPIRITSWP* and the paranormal field. We look for potential members who would do this anyway on their own without team membership.
- d. All new members will serve a trial membership for at least 2 investigations. Also known as the “Probationary Period” a 90 Day period in which the new member will be given the designation SPIRITswp “*Investigator In Training*” and must complete certain criteria (refer to the Alumni Info Center). At that time, they will meet with the Team Director to discuss a permanent membership. This requirement is not meant to be of worry or concern. It simply allows the new member an opportunity to check out the team and the Team Director an opportunity to confirm that they are a good fit.
- e. Individuals must identify with the team’s approach and philosophy, i.e., using the *true scientific method* to discover the truth by way of explaining paranormal phenomena scientifically vs. trying to prove the existence of ghosts, extraterrestrials, etc. In other words, endeavoring to prove the existence of paranormal events by proving they don't exist.
- f. Interested individuals must agree to and sign the *Membership Agreement and Release of Liability* form as well as provide personal and emergency contact information to become a team member.
- g. Team members are personally responsible for any damage (accidental or otherwise) to client’s property or possessions, as well as other team member’s equipment during investigations.
- h. All members will register for the Alumni Team Members Area/Forum. Members must not share or divulge their username or password to anyone else.
- i. All members will submit a one or two paragraph Bio and photo to be used on *SPIRITSWP*’s website within seven (7) days of membership acceptance.

- j. All members must have the ability to think for themselves, and must possess an open-minded and approach investigations with no pre-conceived notions.
- k. All members must maintain a professional, positive, and team-oriented attitude in which you contribute toward the growth, development, and success of the team.
- l. All members must have the ability to enjoy investigations and to have fun in the process.
- m. All members must have the ability to participate in occasional investigations usually on weekends.
- n. All members must pay their own transportation and incidental expenses (everyone pays their own way).
- o. All members must own a computer with Internet access and be reasonably computer literate; in other words, you need to be able to view pictures, videos, and Adobe Acrobat PDF files, or learn how.
- p. All members must have a valid driver's license, and a reasonably clean driving record. Under no circumstances will an individual with a DUI in the past 10 years be accepted as a member.
- q. No one who has been convicted of a crime within the past 10 years may join *SPIRITSWP*.
- r. Rudimentary background checks are performed on all potential members.
- s. All members must have a stable life (which in most cases includes having a job, unless you are independently wealthy).
- t. All members must have a cell phone (a shared cell phone doesn't count).
- u. All members must have a car.
- v. All members must be dependable and reliable, including *regular* communication.
- w. All members must contribute to team discussions and attend team meetings.
- x. Spouses, partners, couples, significant others, and relatives CAN join the team at the discretion of the Team Director. However, any potential relationship fallout that affects the team will result in one or both members being dismissed. Choose wisely.

PART 6: ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

6.1 OFFICIAL NAME & LOGO

- a. The official name of the organization is the "Society for Paranormal Investigation's, Research Ideas, and Theory Southwest Pennsylvania," or "*SPIRITswp*" for short.
- b. The *SPIRITswp* name shall be written as "*SPIRITswp*," and not "SPIRIT," "Spirit," or any other variation. The name shall be represented as such in all correspondence, emails, newsletters, posts in the SPIRITswp Members Area, and/or anywhere else. "SPIRITSWP" may be used due to restrictions on some software programs.

c. The official motto of this organization shall be, “AS OF 04/28/17 UNDECIDED”

d. Only authorized logos are permitted to be used on any item, printing, apparel, website, article, or anything else. Any variation in the logo must be approved, including layout, size, font color, background color, or any other aspect of the name and logo.



Above Approved as of 04/28/17

e. Use of the official logo is prohibited on any item or website without authorization from the Founder. Members may use the logo and name on incidental items provided the name/logo's integrity is maintained, and provided the item is not objectionable to a reasonable person. When in doubt, get permission. Only *SPIRITSWP* approved business cards and letterhead is permitted. Members are not allowed to design business cards without approval from the Founders.

6.2 MEMBERS & INQUIRING MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION

- a. “**Members of the Organization**” are defined as those Alumni Members or individuals who have completed all entrance courses and requirements, who attend team meetings, trainings, and functions on a regular basis, who have completed all requirements to be promoted from an IIT, and who follow the Standard's & Protocols respectively.
- b. “**Inquiring Members of the Organization**” are defined as those individuals who have never been previous members of SPIRITswp before the creation of the Alumni Team.

6.3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERSHIP

- a. To be considered for membership on SPIRITswp's Board of Directors, an individual had to have be an active SPIRITswp Member for at least Six (6) months. Periods of “On Break” and leaves of absences do not count. This must have been continuous membership.
- b. Must display superior team leadership skills.
- c. Must be capable of making sound decisions.
- d. Membership is by invitation only. SPIRITswp Operations Staff pays close attention to its members and will invite new board members as needed. There is not always a need for new board members. The BOD is trying to keep the vote to a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote, meaning that the BOD membership has to be an uneven number.
- e. Must make meaningful contributions to the team and the paranormal field.