



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES & TEAM HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to NightSong Paranormal

We're thrilled to have you with us! Whether you're continuing into a new season or just beginning your journey with NightSong, we're looking forward to fun investigations, new challenges, continued growth, and the excitement of uncovering more evidence through our research. As a volunteer, your contribution is truly invaluable. Your time, effort, and passion for the paranormal are what keep us moving forward. This handbook is designed to provide you with all the information you need to thrive as a member of our team. Your commitment helps us make significant strides and we deeply appreciate the dedication you bring to NightSong Paranormal. Welcome aboard!

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the operational guidelines, policies, and procedures that govern our team's activities. It serves as a reference to ensuring consistency, professionalism, and safety in our endeavors.

About NightSong Paranormal

Founded by Barbie Horsley in 2022, NightSong Paranormal started as a ghost hunting event organization. By April 2023, we had transformed into a full-fledged team, with Barbie and Buffy remaining as the original members. From the beginning, NightSong Paranormal has been a beacon of excellence in the paranormal community. Within our first year, our relentless dedication and innovative approach earned us the prestigious title of 2023 Paranormal Researchers of the Year by the Paranormal Press (American Paranormal Magazine). This award highlights our outstanding contributions and commitment to the field.

We continue to make a significant impact in the paranormal community, building an impressive catalog of research locations and fostering strong relationships with other teams, investigators, and location owners/managers. This allows us unparalleled access and trust, enhancing the depth of our investigations. Our team is unwavering in its commitment to conducting scientific investigations, continually pushing the boundaries of paranormal research to uncover compelling evidence.

MISSION AND VALUES

Our Mission

Investigate, document, and understand paranormal phenomena while upholding the highest standards of professionalism, respect, and integrity. We strive to be a beacon of hope for those in need and stand in solidarity with our fellow paranormal community. Through our dedicated investigations, we aim to provide compelling evidence, and we firmly believe in the principles of para-unity, community, fellowship, education, innovation, and charity.

Core Values

NightSong Paranormal, we uphold the highest standards of integrity by ensuring honesty and transparency in all our investigations and interactions. We treat locations, clients, and team members with the utmost respect, reflecting our commitment to professionalism. Our dedication to our mission is evident in the time and effort we commit to our investigations and continuous learning, ensuring that we always conduct ourselves in a manner that positively reflects on the team.

TEAM STRUCTURE

Founder & Team Lead Investigator

The Founder & Team Lead oversees all aspects of the team's operations and roles with a strategic vision. This position involves developing and implementing policies that guide the team's activities, ensuring consistency and professionalism. The Founder & Team Lead handles all legal matters, obtains necessary permissions for investigations, ensuring regulatory compliance, and protecting the team's intellectual property. They make all final decisions on team activities, including setting investigation priorities, allocating resources, sharing evidence with the public, and resolving any internal conflicts. As the primary spokesperson for NightSong Paranormal, they represent the team in public forums, media engagements, and community events. They foster a positive and collaborative team environment, mentor team members, and promote continuous learning and development. By setting a clear vision and leading by example, the Founder & Team Lead ensures NightSong Paranormal remains at the forefront of paranormal research and investigation, upholding the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and dedication. Ultimately, any shortfalls land on this person to fix, so if someone is falling behind, it is up to them to address the issue and propel the team forward.

Co-Team Lead Investigator

The Co-Team Lead provides support to the Founder & Team Lead in managing team relations and ensuring smooth operations during investigations. This role involves actively participating in the development and implementation of team protocols, ensuring that all procedures are followed accurately to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and scientific rigor. Assists with coordinating team activities, which include organizing investigation schedules, allocating resources, and ensuring that all team members are aware of their roles and responsibilities. During investigations, the Co-Team Lead works closely with the Team Lead to oversee the process, providing guidance and support to team members, and addressing any issues that arise in real time to ensure the investigation's success. In addition to operational duties, the Co-Team Lead fosters a positive and collaborative team environment. They play a key role in team building, encouraging open communication, and resolving conflicts within the team. The Co-Team Lead also mentors newer team members, helping them to develop their skills and integrate into the team. Helps uphold the team's mission.

Tech Manager

The Tech Manager is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the team's technical equipment. This includes managing and logging all team equipment to ensure accurate tracking and availability. The Tech Manager also ensures data integrity by implementing procedures for data handling and storage. Additionally, they supervise

the maintenance and security of all technical equipment, ensuring that everything is in optimal working condition and protected from potential threats or damage. This role is crucial for maintaining the operational efficiency and reliability of the team's investigations.

Evidence Manager

The Evidence Manager oversees the collection, logging, and scheduling for evidence review. They ensure all data is securely stored and that investigators upload their data in a timely manner. By maintaining a calendar, they help the team stay on track with evidence review schedules. Additionally, the Evidence Manager provides logs to enable investigators to detail their findings and analyses during reviews, thereby supporting the team's investigative efforts and delivering clear, actionable insights.

Evidence Coordinator

The Evidence Coordinator plays a supportive role within the team, assisting the Evidence Manager with tasks of collecting, logging, and reviewing evidence. Their efforts ensure that all gathered data is accurately recorded and thoroughly analyzed, contributing to the overall integrity and success of the investigations.

Investigators

All members are volunteers. This is not a paid position. All members play an active and essential role in the team, participating in every aspect of our investigations and events. They are involved in the meticulous collection and review of evidence, ensuring that data is accurately gathered and thoroughly analyzed. This attention to detail is crucial for maintaining the integrity of our research. Our team members also actively engage with the public by contributing to our social media posts, raising awareness and sharing our findings with a broader audience. Additionally, they may lead groups in our novice or ghost hunting events, providing guidance and sharing their expertise with newcomers. Investigators make public appearances and participate in podcasts or other media outlets, representing NightSong Paranormal with professionalism and passion. Our investigators uphold the team's high standards of success and professionalism. Their commitment not only advances our research but also fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the paranormal among the public. Furthermore, all members participate in voting on new candidates, helping to govern our team's democratic process.

Provisional Candidates

Provisional candidates are individuals chosen to join NightSong Paranormal on a trial basis. During this period, they gain valuable experience and can demonstrate their skills and dedication. This trial phase allows them to integrate with the team, showing their potential to become full members.

TEAM ETHICS, QUALIFICATIONS, EXPECTATIONS

Membership Qualifications

- Team members must be at least 21 years old.
- Must have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation.
- Must have a clean criminal history with no felony convictions.
- Should not have substance abuse issues related to drugs or alcohol.
- Availability on most weekends for investigations, conventions, or outings as needed.
- Must have a working computer with internet access and basic computer skills.
- Cannot be a member of another paranormal team.

Membership Types

- **Full-Time Member:** Has the privilege to attend as many team investigations as their schedule allows. Their active participation is vital to the team's success. In addition to being present at investigations, Full-Time Members are required to participate in the evidence review process for all investigations, ensuring a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the findings.
- **Part-Time Member:** Provide essential support by filling in when Full-Time Members are unavailable. Their occasional presence enhances the team's flexibility and ensures continued coverage for all investigations. Part-Time Members are required to review evidence for the investigations they attend and, as their schedules permit, contribute to the evidence review for other cases as well. Their role is crucial in maintaining the team's operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Provisional Candidate:** Joins the team on a trial basis, where they gain hands-on experience and can demonstrate their skills and commitment. This period allows them to integrate into the team and showcase their capabilities. Provisional Members actively participate in investigations and are evaluated on their performance and dedication. Successful completion of the provisional period can lead to full membership, recognizing their potential and contributions to the team.

Membership Expectations

- Regular participation/contribution in investigations, meetings, team discussions, evidence review.
- **Pay Membership Dues:** Full-time members: \$25/month | Part-time members: \$13/month. Dues are non-refundable and due by the 15th of the month.
- Online Membership Form & Confidentiality Agreement needs to be reviewed, acknowledged, and signed.

Confidentiality:

To protect the confidential information of NightSong Paranormal and its members, every team member must sign a non-disclosure agreement. This agreement ensures that any proprietary information, investigations, findings, private conversations, forms, methods, etc. remain confidential and are not disclosed to unauthorized parties.

Non-Team Activity Disclosure

Although members of NightSong Paranormal are not permitted to be part of any other paranormal teams, we encourage you to pursue independent investigations, attend events, and collaborate with other teams or organizations. We trust you to uphold our reputation and kindly request that you disclose any non-team activity to the team in advance. Additionally, if you have your own project, such as a podcast, show, or community initiative, that's perfectly fine. We just ask that you inform the team about your involvement in these projects.

Branding/Uniform

Team members must wear a team-branded shirt at all team functions and investigations. This policy ensures a cohesive and professional appearance, reinforcing our identity and unity as a team. To purchase team gear, please notify us and we will assist with selecting the appropriate shirt based on your preferences. The cost varies depending on the style and size. In certain situations, the requirement to wear a team-branded shirt may be waived, and such exceptions will be communicated in advance.

Basic Investigation Kit

Maintaining a fundamental paranormal investigation kit is essential. Although our team provides shared equipment, each member should also have their own basic kit. A basic kit should include a flashlight, camera, digital voice recorder, EMF or environmental meter, extra batteries/chargers, notepad, and pen.

Respect

We are dedicated to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all team members. We believe in honoring each other's rights and dignity, even when our ideas or opinions differ. While arguments and disagreements may occur, disrespect, yelling, or physical altercations are unacceptable. Unwelcome advances or behavior that creates a hostile or uncomfortable atmosphere will not be tolerated. We do not tolerate any form of hate, discrimination, or harassment based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic.

Disputes and Mediation

Members must handle disputes privately and professionally, refraining from public arguments or confrontations. This includes social media. If issues arise, they should be discussed respectfully between the parties involved or mediated by a lead investigator if necessary.

Disciplinary Policy

Although we are all volunteers, we must operate like a business and maintain fair procedures to protect our standards, policies, members, clients, reputation, and more. If behavior or performance does not align with our values, standards, or guidelines, the team lead has the authority to make decisions, including suspension from their position on the team or immediate removal. For less serious issues, the team lead will have an informal conversation to address the matter, providing constructive feedback and support to help improve the situation. If the behavior or performance issue continues despite previous steps, removal from the team will occur. This decision is not made lightly and is based on the member's inability to meet the team's standards and expectations after ample opportunities for correction. This policy ensures all team members have a fair chance to improve while maintaining the integrity and positive environment of NightSong Paranormal.

TEAM OPERATIONS & INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Pre-Investigation Planning

Research is performed on the location to understand its history and any previous reports of paranormal activity. Our team lead and/or co-lead secures necessary permissions and access to the investigation site, ensuring all legal and logistical requirements are met. A pre-investigation report is presented to brief the team on the location, objectives, and specific roles and responsibilities of each team member.

On-Site Setup:

The team starts by setting up all necessary equipment, including DVR/night vision cameras, digital voice recorders, thermal imaging devices, trigger objects, and environmental sensors. Initial baseline readings are taken of the environment to establish a control for later comparison. Finally, the team conducts a sweep to ensure all members are aware of any potential hazards at the site.

Investigation Execution:

An initial walkthrough of the location is performed to familiarize the team with the layout and identify key areas of interest. Structured investigation sessions and controlled experiments are performed. The team maintains detailed logs of their observations, personal experiences, and unusual occurrences.

Evidence Collection:

The site is monitored and recorded using DVR systems or other static cameras and equipment throughout the investigation. Focus on specific areas identified during the initial walkthrough or based on historical research and previous reports. Ensure open and constant communication among team members to coordinate efforts and share real-time observations, allowing for a cohesive and thorough investigation process.

Post-Investigation Review:

Collect and securely store all recorded evidence, including video footage, audio recordings, and environmental data. Conduct a preliminary review of the evidence to identify any immediate anomalies or noteworthy findings. Provide a post-investigation diary of personal experiences, impressions, and observations to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the investigation and its findings.

Analysis and Reporting:

Team members thoroughly review and analyze the collected evidence, using specialized software and techniques to identify potential paranormal phenomena. Cross-reference the evidence with baseline readings, historical research, and team observations to rule out natural explanations and validate findings.

Follow-Up and Presentation:

Team members (usually our team lead and co-lead) present the findings to the client (if applicable), providing a detailed explanation of the investigation process and evidence collected. Share significant findings with the public (if applicable) through NightSong Paranormal's official channels, ensuring transparency and community engagement. Gather feedback from the client and team members to continuously improve investigation procedures and methodologies, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and excellence within the team.

TEAM EXIT PROCESS

When a member leaves the team, we ask that they cease any affiliation with NightSong Paranormal. This means they should not claim NightSong or use their time with us to further their personal agenda. Former members may not use their prior association to gain access to locations or leverage the team's reputation for personal benefit. Additionally, we expect that former members will not disparage the team or its members, nor share any conversations, discoveries, documentation, data (including video or audio), finding or conclusions without the express written permission of NightSong Paranormal. All operational structures, rules, bylaws, and all information discussed in private team chats are considered confidential and must remain undisclosed, as per the non-disclosure agreement. Any civil suits will be handled in accordance with Tennessee State Laws, except for trademark issues, which will be handled by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.
