

PUGET SOUND GHOST HUNTERS

Protocols and Procedures



Investigation Protocols

PSGH uses standard investigation protocols. These are techniques and guidelines established and used by the majority of ghost hunting groups in the United States. For PSGH purposes, protocols are broken down into three categories: General Protocols, Technical Protocols and Psychic Protocols. PSGH team members abide by these and any other written PSGH protocols to avoid discipline or membership termination.

Each investigator works together to review evidence and to prepare a client report with recommendations. Client follow-up will be performed within 2 weeks of the investigation. *See Client Relations Protocols for further information.*

General Protocols are the basic rules that apply to all investigations and all investigators, regardless of role or function. PSGH will never deviate from these general protocols during a client investigation. All other protocols relate to specific functions and may be altered during an investigation at the discretion of the team leader based on the nature of the case.

Investigators will:

- Show respect for:
 - **Team members.** Members will take direction from the team leader and perform assigned tasks in a professional manner. Team members will act in a courteous manner to other investigators.
 - **Clients.** Members must remember that PSGH has been invited into the client's home or business and are there at the client's discretion. PSGH members will approach the client with respect and courtesy at all times.
 - **Spirits.** Some believe that spirits were once people and as such, the PSGH team will afford them the same respect as given to any live person. Although our aim is to collect evidence of paranormal experiences, if the spirit requests assistance in moving to another plane of existence, with the team leader's approval, any team member familiar with spirit rescue may offer advice or assist in this process. PSGH members will not engage in any taunting, provoking or other activity designed to inflame spirits in an investigation site.
- Honor posted private property and "no trespassing" signs. Team leader will always obtain permission to perform investigation. PSGH will never trespass. Investigators will show reverence and respect for investigation sites at all times.
- Members will never knowingly alter or damage the investigation site, its contents or cause others to do so. Any item that requires moving will only be done with the client's consent.

- Never wander off on your own. All investigation activities must be witnessed by at least one other team member.
- Respect the privacy of persons involved in investigations including client, team members and spirits.
- Always conduct investigations in a professional manner.
- No weapons including, but not limited to, knives, firearms, tasers, and/or pepper spray are allowed at any investigation site.
- No running or horse play at investigation sites.
- No pranks or practical joking during an investigation.
- Be open-minded about all aspects of the investigation.
- No smoking, drinking or illegal drug use during an investigation.
- No littering at investigation sites.
- No obscene, foul or abusive language.
- No taking souvenirs from investigation sites.
- Wear appropriate attire for the location. This includes:
 - Safe, comfortable footwear
 - Comfortable, non-reflective clothing
 - No perfume or cologne. Hygiene products such as soaps, deodorants, and shampoos should be unscented to avoid sensory interference.
 - No revealing, torn or unclean garments.
 - No garments with offensive or obscene logos and/or designs.
- Each team member will keep written notes as well as an audio recording of the investigation including impressions and feelings as well as the actions and reactions of clients and other team members.
- Team members will coordinate as a group to review evidence and prepare a client report. All data must be reviewed prior to providing the client with a report.
- No member will indicate to the client prior to evidence review any belief regarding whether or not their location is haunted or what type of evidence may or may not have been collected. Such determination cannot be made until all evidence has been reviewed, site research has been performed and other alternate sources have been eliminated.

Technical Protocols are the rules that apply to any investigator using electronic devices such as EMF detectors, audio recorders and photographic or video devices.

The most common pieces of equipment will be cameras and audio recorders. Specific protocols for those devices follow:

Photographic Protocols:

- Always take multiple successive shots during an investigation. This is important for verification of anomalies.
- No smoking or breathing when taking photographs. Hold your breath for a brief period while taking a photograph to avoid false anomalies.
- If your camera has a strap, use it. Neck straps are recommended as they enable the investigator to take their hands off their cameras if necessary.
- Avoid shooting into the sun. This may result in lens flare.
- Avoid shooting with flash directly at reflective or shiny surfaces.
- Keep fingers and other objects away from the lens of the camera when taking photos.
- If you have long hair keep it secured.
- Compare anomalous prints with negatives for confirmation.
- When using 35mm camera, use the whole roll of film and ask for all photos to be processed and printed. This is important as most developers will not print photographs that may have blurs or light anomalies.
- Ask permission from the spirits to take their photograph and thank them.
- Flash is only good for 9-12 feet from camera so focus on that range.
- Avoid false orbs
 - Clean lens often. Remove all dust, spots and fingerprints from camera lens. Dust on the lens can be mistaken for spirit orbs.
 - Excessive dust in the air may cause false spirit orbs. Dust will sparkle in your flash, so be aware that this may cause dust orbs to appear in the printed photo.
 - Do not take photos from moving vehicles or while walking on dusty surfaces.
 - Avoid taking investigation photographs in the rain, snow or fog as these can show false orbs, streaks or other light anomalies.

Audio Protocols:

- Use new name-brand audio tapes.
- Open and load all tapes in front witnesses.

- An external microphone is required for analog recording devices. An external microphone is not required for digital recorders but the use of one will greatly aid in recording.
- Pop tabs on all cassettes after recording to eliminate the chance of accidental over-recording.
- Only record on one side of the tape to prevent bleed-through and never over-record on tapes.
- Obtain a sample voice print of team members and clients at the beginning of recording.
- Record the date, time and location on the cassette label, as well as verbalize it at the beginning of recording.
- No distorting your voice during recording. This includes whispering which may be confused for EVP during playback.
- No whistling, deliberate rustling of papers or clothing or creating any noises that might be confused for EVP during playback. Clearly and vocally identify any accidental noises to eliminate them as possible EVP during playback.
- EVP's will often be recorded during normal team conversation, so no shouting, abusive language, or inflammatory topics are allowed. Keep non-investigation related chit-chat to a minimum.
- Vocalize to identify any background noises, including the conversations of other team members.
- For Analog recorders, make a copy of each cassette and store the original in a safe climate controlled place. Copies may be used for repeated playback.
- For digital recorders, transfer your recordings to your computer. This will allow you to make copies as needed or to isolate certain portions.
- Ask permission of the spirits to record their voices and encourage them to speak into the microphone.
- Each time you move to a new location, verbalize the time, change of location and the names of persons present in the location.
- For EVP recordings, allow a quiet time of 15-20 seconds between each question to allow the spirit to answer. Record for 4 to 5 minutes before playback. Playback is essential for spirit interaction.

Other technical devices will include EMF Meter and temperature monitoring devices.

An **EMF meter** is one that measures the electric-magnetic fields in the environment. These fields occur naturally, however fluctuations are also believed to be associated with spirit phenomena. Extreme deviations in EMF may indicate the presence of a spirit. Prolonged exposure to extremely high EMF may also result in psychological and

physical reactions that simulate the perception of haunting phenomena in people who have a predisposed sensitivity. For this reason, PSGH will endeavor to determine if reports of phenomena are the result of high EMF exposure.

- Walk the entire investigation location recording baseline or normal EMF.
- Document the location of any electrical appliances or devices that might create deviations in the baseline EMF.
- Document any deviations from normal or baseline EMF. Include the time and location of all EMF extremes and any possible source or cause.
- Coordinate with other team members or witnesses to determine if any other paranormal activity was present at the time of the EMF deviation.

Temperature monitoring devices are used because quite frequently changes in the atmosphere are reported in connection with paranormal activity. Most ghost hunting groups use two different temperature devices.

Infrared temperature devices will record surface temperature. These are usually a hand held gun with a laser sight. While great for obtaining a baseline or average temperature of a location, they will not record the temperature of the air within the location.

A thermocouple temperature device will measure the temperature of the air within the location. They usually come with a probe that will measure the air temperature surrounding it. These are ideal to record and validate when a cold spot is felt within the investigation site.

- Walk the entire investigation location recording baseline or normal temperature.
- Document any deviations from normal or baseline temperature. Include the time and location of all temperature extremes and any possible source or cause.
- Coordinate with other team members or witnesses to determine if any other paranormal activity was present at the time of the temperature deviation.

Psychic Protocols are the rules that apply to any investigator using their psychic abilities during an investigation.

- Psychics participating in a PSGH investigation will have no prior knowledge of the case. This includes location, client information, or phenomena reported.
- Psychics should never verbalize their impressions during an investigation. Handwritten notes should be taken and all impressions, thoughts and feelings should be recorded for later validation.
- Psychics may approach the investigation as warrants based on their impression of the investigation site, skill level and abilities.
- Psychics should coordinate with other team members to allow for the freedom from distraction he/she may need to obtain the maximum amount of information.
- Psychics may, at his/her discretion use any approved psychic tools during any investigation. These tools include dowsing rods, pendulums, crystals, spirit

communication devices, etc. We do not recommend use of Ouija Boards but other communication techniques may be used. Client's sensibilities will be respected when choosing psychic tools.

- Psychics may, upon request of the client, provide information regarding spirit removal and or perform any ceremonies necessary for such. No one, including psychics should perform spirit removal without the training necessary to ensure the safety of those present. PSGH as a group does not endorse any spirit removal or rescue techniques and will not be held liable for the efficacy of any advice or services provided to the client regarding spirit removal.

Client Relations Protocols are the rules that apply to any investigator dealing with clients before, during or after an investigation. The goal of PSGH is to assist clients in dealing with paranormal events.

- All requests for information, investigations or assistance from clients will be treated in a professional manner.
- Each phone call or email regarding investigation will be responded to immediately.
- An initial interview should be performed over the phone to determine if further information gathering is necessary.
- If PSGH determines that an investigation is necessary, a preliminary meeting is setup with the client for a formal interview, baseline readings, site mapping and initial property research.
- All clients requesting an investigation will be required to sign a client agreement/release waiver before the investigation can begin. This will usually be done at the preliminary meeting.
- Under normal circumstances, clients will not receive any information regarding investigation results until all evidence is reviewed and a report is prepared.
- Within 2 weeks of the investigation, team leader, or other authorized member, will contact the client to present evidence and make recommendations. A written report will be presented along with copies of any anomalies or evidence.
- PSGH will maintain an ongoing relationship with clients to ensure that they are comfortable with the investigation, results, evidence, reports and recommendations. If a client is unable to perform any recommendations, PSGH will endeavor to make additional recommendations or provide referrals so that the client feels safe.

PSGH makes every effort to ensure that each case is investigated in a professional manner.