



CIPRIS

International Standards for Anomalous Investigations



**Committee for International Paranormal
Research and Investigation Standards**
Commissioned by ParaNexus.org

CIPRIS International Standards for Anomalous Investigations

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to serve as a foundation of ethical and professional standards for ParaNexus members, *Certified ParaNexus Field Investigators* (CPFI), and other anomalous researchers and investigators in conducting professional anomalous investigations. This document primarily addresses the fields of Parapsychology (including hauntings), Ufology, and alien abductions. It also provides a basis to promote the continuity of professional standards and practices used throughout the anomalous research community as a whole.

DEFINITIONS

- “Investigator” denotes an individual involved in anomalous research and investigation. Investigators may or may not be a part of an established research group.
- “Client” means a person who requests investigative help and may or may not be an eye-witness. “Witness” means a person who has personally observed anomalous phenomena and may or may not be the same as the client.
- “Must” indicates a mandatory action on the part of an investigator.
- “Shall” or “should” indicates a strongly recommended but discretionary action by an investigator.
- An “original report” is a case report filed by an investigator which may contain confidential material. A “public report” is a case report cleared for general distribution that does not contain confidential client/witness information.
- “Confidential” means any and all client/witness identifiable data such as name, addresses, email addresses, websites, and phone numbers including secular work related information.
- “Publication” and “publishing” refers to any and all methods of publicly disseminating information including periodicals, newspapers, circulars, TV and radio news media, books, newsletters, magazines, journals, public lectures, and electronic media such as eBooks, email, websites, online blogs, or any other legal method of disseminating information.
- “Paranormal” and “anomalous” refer to events that go beyond humankind’s current level of scientific understanding. These terms are not to be construed to mean events that are beyond humanity’s ultimate ability to understand.

CONTENTS

This document is organized into five sections:

- Section 1: Responsibility to Clients/Witnesses
- Section 3: Responsibility to Team Members
- Section 2: Responsibility to the Research Community
- Section 4: Responsibility to the Public
- Section 5: About CIPRIS and this Document

ENFORCEMENT

ParaNexus requires members to follow the standards and principles contained herein, however, ParaNexus does not actively monitor members’ adherence to these standards. Membership may be revoked if a member is discovered to have egregiously violated these standards.

Certified ParaNexus Field Investigators (CPFI) must follow these standards, which are also a part of the *CPFI Standard Operating Procedures*.

SECTION 1: Responsibility to Clients/Witnesses

1.1 CLIENT/WITNESS INTERACTION AND RELEASE FORMS

- a. Clients/Witnesses must be contacted by telephone or email within 24 hours after an investigation inquiry, request, or contact is received.
- b. Interviews of different witnesses shall be conducted separately and those interviews shall be recorded by audio and/or video.
- c. All clients/witnesses must sign a property access and liability release form as well as an information and evidence release form for an investigation to proceed. The client/witness must receive a copy of all release forms.
- d. Investigators must honor any requests by the client/witness to cancel an investigation either prior to or during the investigation. In this event, an investigation in progress must cease immediately and the investigator(s) must vacate the premises. The option for any further investigations rests solely with the client/witness who shall call the investigator if such is desired. Investigators must use discretion in contacting a client/witness who has cancelled an investigation so as to not give the impression of harassment.
- e. All client/witness information is to be deemed confidential and private unless released in writing by the client/witness. Investigators must not divulge confidential client/witness information to the public (including friends, family, other researchers, and the media) such as client/witness names, addresses, neighborhoods, etc., without the client's/witness' written consent. As a matter of general practice, investigators should avoid releasing full names and addresses to the public even with permission.
- f. To the extent possible, investigations shall be performed by at least two investigators together. In the event that the client/witness is female, one investigator must also be female or the client/witness must have a third party present. In the event that the witness is a minor (check your state/country's age of majority), a parent or legal guardian must give consent and be present for the interview.
- g. Clients/Witnesses are entitled to copies of any investigation case reports once those reports have been completed and filed.
- h. Clients/Witnesses are not entitled to copies of field investigation forms other than the release forms described in 1.1.c above, and 1.5.c below.

1.2 PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- a. All investigators must represent the anomalous research field professionally, courteously, ethically, and honorably.
- b. Investigators have a primary responsibility to empower the client/witness, regardless of the severity of the case, through education and coaching so that the client/witness is better equipped to objectively and appropriately view any anomalous activity. This may include referring the client/witness to competent counseling professionals.
- c. Investigators must practice the motto "Do No Harm" regarding their investigative philosophy and approach, to wit, investigators must never make statements or assertions to clients/witnesses that promote fear or are fear-based, e.g., "You have a demon problem and need an exorcism" or "Aliens have targeted you to assist in their hybridization project and there's nothing you can really do about it." Investigators must always use discretion when interacting with clients/witnesses.
- d. Investigators must use thoughtfulness, good judgment, courtesy, and discretion as to words and conduct—especially when around clients/witnesses.
- e. Investigators must leave investigation locations in the same or better condition in which they were found, i.e., not leaving trash, cigarette butts, messes, etc. Any physical items moved during the investigation must be returned to their original places.

- f. Investigators must have permission to enter private property from the property owner, resident, or authorized agent. Trespassing is prohibited.
- g. Any smoking must be done away from all areas of an active investigation and not done while actively investigating.
- h. No alcohol or drugs (legal or illegal) are allowed four hours before an investigation. This includes any heavy prescription or non-prescription medication that might influence an investigator's judgment.
- i. Investigators are personally responsible for any damage (accidental or otherwise) to a client's/witness' property or possessions during investigations.
- j. Investigators assume full personal responsibility for their actions regarding investigations. Furthermore, investigators indemnify and hold harmless the client/witness and/or any other individual, group, or agency for any personal injury to the person or property of the investigator while involved in an investigation.

1.3 DRESS AND IDENTIFICATION

- a. Investigators must wear an official investigator identification badge or have an official investigator ID card on their person during all investigations. Investigators must also possess a valid driver's license or official government ID during investigations. Such identification must be presented upon request by the authorities or the client/witness.
- b. Investigators must maintain a professional and appropriate appearance when conducting investigations, i.e., no dirty, sloppy, suggestive, or wrinkled clothing.

1.4 ACCEPTABLE CASES

- a. Investigators must not begin or continue an investigation if the client's/witness' mental and/or emotional stability is in question.
- b. Investigators must decline cases in which the client/witness is simply seeking publicity, monetary gain, or a setup for skeptics to debunk.
- c. Investigators who observe signs of child abuse, neglect, elder abuse, and/or animal abuse must report their observations to their team or regional leader immediately (if applicable). Investigators must use extreme discretion and have solid evidential grounds before contacting any state or government agency for abuse/neglect issues.

1.5 USE OF HYPNOSIS

- a. The use of hypnotic regressions for investigating abduction phenomena is controversial, unproven, and open to interpretation. Investigators may use hypnosis at their discretion provided they abide by the provisions in this section.
- b. Investigators who use hypnosis must be duly trained, qualified, and certified hypnotists. Certification must come from a reputable training organization and certification credentials must be presented upon request.
- c. Witnesses who agree to hypnosis must sign a hypnosis release form in which the witness assumes all risk.
- d. Investigators must not use hypnosis with witnesses whose mental state is in question, who are epileptic, who have bi-polar disease, schizophrenia, any other mental disease, or who are on psychoactive medication for mood and behavioral modification.
- e. Investigators must always use good judgment when deciding to hypnotize a witness for memory enhancement and retrieval. If any uncertainty or doubt exists, the investigator shall require the written consent of a medical doctor before any hypnosis is performed. Such written consent must become a part of the witness' permanent case file.

- f. Investigators using hypnosis must not ask leading questions nor provide information to the subject during hypnosis sessions that the subject has not previously divulged during that session.
- g. All hypnosis sessions must be audio or video recorded.
- h. A witness participating as a hypnosis subject must have a personally known and trusted third party present during the session.
- i. Investigators using hypnosis shall have another investigator present during the session.

SECTION 2: Responsibility to the Team

2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION, STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS

- a. Investigative groups must establish and adopt mission and vision statements, shared values, and standards and protocols.
- b. All investigators within a research group must have ready access to the group's standards and protocols.

2.2 LEADERSHIP, TEAM ATTITUDE, AND SHARED VALUES

- a. Investigators must practice self-respect, self-responsibility, and respect for free will. Furthermore, investigators must show respect, honor, and dignity toward fellow investigators. Competition and infighting among investigators or between research groups is absolutely prohibited. Cooperation and collaboration are the rule.
- b. Investigators must maintain a positive, dedicated, and open-minded attitude; negativity and hard-core combative skepticism are unacceptable.
- c. Effective and consistent communication must be maintained between team members at all times to ensure cohesion and focus. This includes prompt follow up and/or response to telephone and email messages.
- d. Investigators must be dependable and reliable regarding investigations as well as following through on promises.
- e. Team members shall make meaningful contributions to the team by carrying their own weight and assisting with various team functions and duties.
- f. In parapsychological/haunting cases, to the extent possible, any historical case research shall be performed after the onsite investigation is completed to ensure investigator objectivity. If historical research is performed before the investigation, it shall be done by one member who shall not reveal findings to members at large prior to the investigation.
- g. In parapsychological/haunting cases, to the extent possible, only one investigator (such as the case manager) should be informed of the client's claims of paranormal activity to ensure investigator objectivity.
- h. In parapsychological/haunting cases, case details must not be revealed to psychics, mediums, sensitives, or intuitives who are participating in the case prior to the investigation.
- i. Investigators must remain rational, objective, levelheaded, and professional in all situations. Competent and professional investigators do not run away from paranormal events due to irrational fears.

2.3 REPUTATION & CREDIBILITY

- a. An investigator's greatest asset is his/her reputation and credibility as a professional and unbiased researcher. Therefore, investigators always strive to maintain and uphold their good reputations by using good judgment, integrity, and discretion before, during, and after investigations.

- b. All team members must represent the team and the field in a professional, ethical, and courteous manner.
- c. In the anomalous research field, the validity of any photographic, video, audio, or psychic evidence stands solely on the credibility of the person(s) who gathered that evidence. Therefore, investigators must not classify or release evidence as anomalous or paranormal in nature that has not been thoroughly examined to eliminate natural and manmade occurrences.
- d. Investigators must examine, analyze, and present evidential data truthfully, honestly, and without bias. Investigators must never fabricate, falsify, embellish, or hoax any anomalous data.

2.4 EVIDENCE & CASE REPORTS

- a. All photographic, audio, and video evidence shall be reviewed promptly after the conclusion of an investigation, but in no circumstance, longer than thirty (30) days after.
- b. Case reports must be completed as soon as reasonably possible after the conclusion of an investigation, but in no circumstance, longer than thirty (30) days after.
- c. All physical trace evidence must be handled responsibly and preserved in suitable and appropriate containers to avoid contamination. The chain of custody must be documented and signed at all stages of handling.
- d. Any and all evidence collected will become the property of the investigator, organization, or team which sanctioned the investigation.
- e. Original case reports must include client/witness contact information and must not be released, published, or distributed to the public without written permission from the client/witness.
- f. Public case reports must not include confidential client/witness information, or any information that may allow the public to locate and identify the client/witness.

2.5 CONTINUING EDUCATION

- a. Investigators are strongly encouraged to continue a program of self-education regarding the anomalous research field.
- b. The team Director/Founder or a person designated by him/her shall engage in the regular training of team members.
- c. Investigators are strongly encouraged to attend conferences and other educational events.

2.6 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

- a. **Sexual Harassment Policy Statement.** Our position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the team, a colleague, and/or a client relationship. All team members, colleagues, and clients 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 person's back, grabbing a person around the waist, or interfering with a person'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 person to participate in an unwanted sexual relationship.
 - 4) It may have the effect of causing a person 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 team membership, continued collaboration, or continued service to a client (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 and/or working 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 person's effectiveness.
- f. **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 Team Director. Then, document the incident thoroughly and submit it to the Team Director within 24 hours.
- g. If the Team Director is the source of the harassing conduct, report it immediately to the Assistant Director or if not applicable, another person of authority within the team.
- h. Once a report is filed, an inquiry will be performed by the Team Director and Assistant Director to establish the veracity of the claim(s) within seven (7) days.
- i. **Consequences and Penalties.** Any member, research collaborator, or client found to have engaged in harassing conduct will be subject to discipline which can range from a warning to dismissal to ceasing the working relationship.

SECTION 3: Responsibility to the Research Field

3.1 TRUE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

- a. Investigators must adhere to the *True Scientific Method* which is defined as, "The open-minded search to discover and explain reality, whatever that means and wherever that takes us."
- b. Investigators must never allow preconceived religious or scientific notions/beliefs interfere with investigations and the discovery of truth regarding anomalous events.

3.2 SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND SHARING

- a. Investigators must be open to working with other investigators and research groups in a spirit of mutual cooperation and tolerance.

- b. Investigators shall share investigation findings and data with other researchers freely insofar as the confidentiality of the client/witness is not violated. However, investigators are not obligated to share data with other investigators who are unwilling to reciprocate. Cooperation, by definition, must be win-win.
- c. Investigators must not compete with other investigators or research groups by unnecessarily withholding information or seeking to one-up others. Furthermore, investigators must not promote or get caught up in petty rivalries with other investigators or research groups.

3.3 ATTITUDE TOWARD SKEPTICS AND DEBUNKERS

- a. Investigators refuse to become distracted with hard-core skeptics and individuals simply bent on ridicule and faultfinding. Therefore, investigators do not acknowledge nor answer any attacks made on them by said individuals or unreasonable people (there is nothing to be gained by doing so). Explanations rarely explain.
- b. Investigators are open to reasonable and rational discussion when they perceive that discussion to be mutually beneficial to discovery and better understanding of anomalous phenomena.

3.4 INVESTIGATOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ANOMALOUS RESEARCH FIELD

- a. Investigators are encouraged to be visible in and make meaningful contributions to the anomalous research field. This can be accomplished in any number of ways such as:
 - 1) Writing and publishing articles to express a different perspective on an anomalous issue.
 - 2) Appearing on radio/TV talk shows.
 - 3) Seeking media mentions, such as newspaper interviews, etc.
 - 4) Speaking at public or anomalous field events.

SECTION 4: Responsibility to the Public

4.1 RESPONSIBLE MEDIA RELATIONS

- a. Investigators must not disclose confidential client/witness information to the media without written permission.
- b. Investigators shall cooperate with the media insofar as that cooperation results in a positive outcome. Investigators are not required to cooperate with the media if the investigator is suspicious of injurious media intent.
- c. Investigators must be responsible when issuing statements or interviews to the media bearing in mind that they are representing the entire anomalous research field. Investigators must not issue unsupported statements and theories as fact.
- d. Investigators must not impugn the credibility of a client/witness or colleague in public unless community interests demand disclosure. Investigators doing so must be prepared to substantiate any accusations to the public and anomalous research community.

4.2 PUBLISHING, ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING, AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- a. Investigators shall seek to publish with honesty and integrity any investigative data, findings, hypotheses, and theories that promote the knowledge and understanding of anomalous research and events.

- b. Investigators shall contribute meaningful investigative data to research databases such as the *ParaNexus Registry of Anomalous Events* or other reputable databases. “Meaningful” is defined for this document as “Any data that has not been scientifically disproven to a reasonable degree.” In virtually all cases, “orb phenomena” is not considered meaningful.
- c. Investigators must practice the motto “Do No Harm” regarding data and information posted on their websites or published in any other public medium. Investigators must not publish data as factual that has been scientifically disproven to a reasonable degree, or data that promotes fear or fear-based concepts and/or theories that are not founded on sound and reasonable scientific data. This prohibition does not include publishing data that exposes false, mythological, and/or fear-based theories and/or concepts. Furthermore, any theoretical or mythological data published on an investigator’s website must carry a separate or embodied disclaimer that clearly states such data is theoretical, mythological, or false.
- d. Investigators must provide appropriate attribution when quoting from another author’s books, articles, website, newsletter, and/or audio/video material. All quotations must meet *Fair Use* guidelines. Plagiarizing another person’s intellectual property is strictly prohibited. If an author wishes to remain anonymous, then attribution must still be included stating “Author has requested anonymity” or similar.
- e. Investigators shall add their by-line to all written and published works including web pages for verification of authorship. Investigator anonymity with published works is strongly discouraged. Investigator anonymity regarding original and public case reports is prohibited.
- f. Investigators must not engage in the practice of email spamming. “Spamming” is defined for this document as “Sending more than two uninvited emails to unknown persons or organizations within a six-month period.” Furthermore, when emailing multiple acquaintances who may not know each other, investigators must not make these multiple email addresses public by including such addresses in the “cc” (carbon copy) email field. The “bcc” (blind carbon copy) email field must be used instead. Any electronic newsletters sent by email must not reveal the email addresses to the subscriber base.

4.3 COOPERATION WITH AUTHORITIES AND SAFETY ISSUES

- a. Investigators must cooperate fully with any state, local, and/or federal authorities if such circumstances arise.
- b. Investigators must contact the authorities immediately if investigation circumstances involve a danger to persons, animals, or property, and take reasonable steps to protect same.
- c. Investigators must maintain a safety-oriented attitude during investigations.
- d. Investigators must utilize necessary and appropriate equipment to ensure a safe investigation.
- e. Investigators must immediately withdraw from investigating locations deemed to be unsafe.

4.4 NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

- a. Investigators must not advocate or express hatred or discrimination towards other people or classes, regardless of, but not limited to, race, religion, background, national origin, personal beliefs, gender, or sexual orientation.

SECTION 5: About CIPRIS and this Document

CIPRIS MISSION

To provide a recommended set of ethical standards, guidelines, and procedures as a model to enhance professional behavior, scientific practices, and better continuity within the evolving field of the paranormal sciences.

CIPRIS' APPROACH TO ESTABLISHING STANDARDS

CIPRIS (pronounced "Cyprus") Committee members gathered and objectively reviewed a collection of best practices from reputable research organizations and blended these with CIPRIS members' own best practices. The result serves as an approved list of standards that others can use as a basis for developing their own Standards and Protocols, or as an overlay in the case that such Standards and Protocols already exist.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The CIPRIS Committee is comprised of the ParaNexus Board of Directors. Please visit www.ParaNexus.org for specific individuals.

ATTRIBUTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The contents of this document were largely based on the standards and protocols developed by the participating Committee members. The structure of this document as well as some definitions and items were inspired by *The Code of Practice for UFO Investigators* developed by a consortium of British UFO research organizations in the 1980's and freely available with an online search.

AMENDMENTS

The CIPRIS Committee shall meet once each quarter contingent upon necessity to review this document. As a result, this document may be amended, altered, or repealed by the CIPRIS Committee at any time. Notice will be published on www.ParaNexus.org if and when such amendments occur. ParaNexus members may make suggestions for inclusions or other amendments by sending an email to admin@paranexus.org.

COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE

This document is Copyright © 2009-2010 by ParaNexus.org. Permission is granted for this document to be distributed or copied provided that its inherent content and structure is not modified, altered, or changed in any way. All sections of this document constitute the entirety and must be included in any distribution or publication.

Permission is also granted to investigative and research organizations and individuals for use in the development and/or construction of proprietary standards and protocols. Appropriate attribution is requested and expected by adding the following statement:

“Portions of this document, in whole or in part, were based upon the *International Standards for Anomalous Investigations* developed by the *Committee for International Paranormal Research and Investigation Standards* (CIPRIS) and commissioned by ParaNexus. More information is available at www.ParaNexus.org.”

Amendments Log

3-25-10: **1.2.b added:** Empowering the client/witness.

3-25-10: **2.2.c added:** Effective and consistent communication.

3-25-10: **2.4.c amended:** Chain of custody.

7-29-09: **2.6 added:** Sexual Harassment Policy.

7-29-09: **4.4 amended:** changed title to "NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY".

3-26-09: Corrected typo; added some minor clarifying dialogue.