



Paranormal Investigations  
of  
Rockland County

New Investigator Training Manual

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**Sign Off Release**

## 1. Introduction to Pirc

Welcome to the PIRC team. We are a non-profit paranormal team which means that under no circumstance do we ever charge our clients for our services.

Pirc engages in three types of investigations; Paid Events, Residential and Urban.

There is absolutely no alcohol or substance use on any investigation.

*Paid events* are investigations run by Pirc in which a location is secured for a price and investigators must pay to attend the event. Most paid events are on a first come basis especially those with attendance limitations.

The director has the authority to change the terms of the paid events, allow non-member attendance, initiate a non-member fee and to prohibit or remove a member from attending a paid event. Inappropriate behavior will result in immediate removal from a paid event without a refund.

*Residential investigations* are as a result of being contacted by a person or persons who believe they are experiencing a paranormal situation or event in their residence or business. The team for a residential is picked by the Pirc director.

*Urban investigations* are run by Pirc and usually occur in an open environment or public space. These can be graveyards, battlegrounds, parks or unoccupied buildings.<sup>1</sup> Anyone may attend an urban investigation unless size is of concern. In that case several trips may need to be made to a location on different days to accommodate all interested.

PIRC's approach is to use scientific means and tools to collect evidence and explain events. It is important to scrutinize and carefully evaluate all evidence with an analytical eye to ensure the integrity and confidence of any evidence we deem paranormal in nature.

Our approach to each residential investigation is to gather evidence to support or explain any claims or questions our clients have. We must always look first for alternative explanations to what may present itself as a paranormal event.

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<sup>1</sup> Under no circumstances should a Pirc member break into a location in order to investigate. See handbook for more details.

Many events that appear paranormal in nature have logical, scientific explanations.

We must remain skeptical in our approach to maintain a high standard and reassure ourselves and clients that we have exhausted all possible explanations for the events occurring.

Pirc has a strict privacy policy.

We sign waivers with paid event coordinators and residential clients that may restrict use of the evidence we collect.

Only the director has the authority to deem which evidence is used and how that evidence is used and disseminated.

All evidence collected during any Pirc investigation is considered property of Pirc and may not be used, reproduced, edited, transmitted or uploaded to any personal media site, YouTube or any other website without the expressed written permission of the director of Pirc.

Pirc reserves the right to change the terms of any investigation, rules, waivers, code, handbooks or training materials without any prior notice to team members.

We vow to treat our clients, client's home, any entities and each other with respect. We never challenge, provoke or use any aggressive behaviors when conducting our investigations.

All members will conduct themselves with the highest integrity at all times.

## 2. Training Program Description

The Pirc training program is designed to aid new members in acclimating into the Pirc team and its investigative process.

While it is not necessary for candidates to have any paranormal experience, some candidates may come to the Pirc team with previous knowledge of paranormal equipment or the investigative process.

This training program is intended to instruct the candidate on our approach and practices. We ask all new members to comply with Pircs' approach.

All new investigators start on probation. The probationary term allows the Pirc Director to evaluate the investigator candidate to see if they will be a positive addition to the Pirc team.

2.1. The PIRC training program consists of a probationary period lasting not less than six months. Trainees start off in the status category of New Member Probation.<sup>2</sup>

2.2. Trainees will learn how to:

2.2.1. Conduct Evp sessions

2.2.2. Listen for evps (electronic voice phenomena)

2.2.3. Extract identified evps

2.2.4. Perform research for investigations

2.2.5. Review video footage (drv & camcorder)

2.2.6. Operate and main the various PIRC equipment.

2.3. All trainees must undergo the equipment orientation training program and know how to operate all Pirc equipment

2.4. Trainees are expected to perform:

2.4.1. Case research

2.4.2. A minimum of 8 audio reviews and 3 video reviews before attending investigations<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Status descriptions are outlined in the PIRC handbook

Time is of the essence on residential investigations so work efficiently during all reviews and research.

2.5. Trainees must read and sign off<sup>4</sup> where applicable the following Pirc documents:

2.5.1. Pirc Waiver

2.5.2. Pirc Code/Rules

2.5.3. Pirc Handbook

2.5.4. New Investigator Training Manual

2.5.5. Any sign off sheet for Pirc training

2.5.6. The Pirc Awareness training guide (All members should review this guide, however only new investigators will need to sign off on it)

2.6. Trainees cannot meet any of the requirements identified on the *probation* list in the Pirc Handbook. Being put on *probation* for any reason will result in immediate removal from the team.

### 3. Evp Collection

**Electronic voice phenomena (EVP)** are electronically generated noises that resemble speech, but are not the result of intentional voice recordings or renderings and are not heard at present time. They are heard only upon playback on electronic equipment.

There are two methods for collecting evps. One is interactive in which an investigator will ask questions and the other is static where we leave a recorder running.

#### **Interactive Procedure**

- During most interactive sessions you will start a 2<sup>nd</sup> recorder to capture the session but there are times when the session is

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<sup>3</sup> Under certain circumstances a new member may attend paid events. See section 7 of handbook

<sup>4</sup> Sign off indicates that you understand and comply or agree to the terms within that specified document

- conducted with the static recorder only. It is advisable to stop and restart a static recorder for an evp session, however it is not mandatory.
- At the beginning of the EVP session, each investigator should state his or her name to provide a sample of their voice for comparison later and to identify their presence for the record.
  - State that you are beginning an evp session and time stamp the beginning.
  - Investigators should be polite and respectful. Remember, spirits are believed to be people who were once living.
  - Always explain to the spirit what you are doing and why you are doing it.
  - All questions should be asked in a normal conversational tone. The questions should be both generic and directly concerning the case or surroundings.
  - There should be a 15 to 30 second pause between questions where all investigators will remain silent. Do not talk over each other.
  - All investigators should contribute to an EVP session. You can never tell who a spirit will reach out to.
  - Always mention sounds that could be heard and misinterpreted as an EVP or paranormal. The act of identifying sounds is called tagging. Tag noises, footsteps, cars, creaks or car lights. Tag everything.
  - When finishing an evp session thank the spirits and time stamp the closure. If using a static recorder end the session and restart.

## **Static Procedure**

- Start the recorder and place the recorder on a stationary object
- Identify the room you are in, investigation site, date and time stamp the beginning of the session
- If the recorder has a hold button, place the recorder on hold to prevent accidental shut off
- Persons entering a room should tag their arrival by a time stamp and their name.
- When in a room with a static recorder always tag the sounds inside and out.

There is another way to run a static evp session. Sometimes a recorder is carried on hold using an external mic. The recorder runs continually as the investigator proceeds through the investigation. This is a common practice with urban ghost hunting.

#### 4. Evp Analysis

There are 3 classes of EVPs.

**Class A:** These are, by far, the best audio evidence. They are loud, heard clearly without the use of headphones and listeners will generally form a consensus about what is being said. “Class A” EVP’s require no additional enhancement or amplification.

**Class B:** The most common type of EVP. This type of EVP is less easily understood, still very audible but most times only by using a headphone. Generally speaking, these often need some amount of enhancement or amplification to be heard distinctly. The voice heard is usually not clear enough to be easily understood. Some may disagree over what it said to the degree that they may question what language it is in.

**Class C:** The lowest quality EVP still considered as viable and will scarcely be heard without the aid of headphones, filtering or extensive enhancement. These generally will still not be heard as any recognizable word/phrase. In many cases, these may be indiscernible and very speculative or unnoticed without drastically speeding up or slowing down the recording. It may often be questionable as to whether there is even a legitimate EVP on the recording in the first place as it could easily be confused with other, natural noises such as shuffling feet or various mechanical sounds.

The room should be quiet before beginning evp review. Find a comfortable location where you can easily record your findings in a book. Avoid interruptions as much as possible.



- 4.1. Evp review requires that an investigator listen to a digital audio recorder file with the use of headphones. We use headphones to ensure that no evp is missed and to give us the best interpretation of the evp.
- 4.2. It is imperative that while reviewing you push past the conversation and listen to the background or underlying sounds.
- 4.3. Reviewers should be familiar with the investigators voices whenever possible and never assume a voice heard is one of the investigators. Not all evps come across as whispers or odd sounding voices.
- 4.4. During the review process it is often necessary to playback a file multiple times to determine if there is an evp or to enlist the help of another investigator to determine if an evp exists.
- 4.5. Always try to debunk the sound. Never jump to conclusions that everything you hear is paranormal in nature. Use file photos of a scene to debunk. If in doubt make a notation that it might be as a result of a non-paranormal nature.
- 4.6. During the evp process there are many times when reviewers do not agree on what is being said. Always write down what you 'think' and later processing may help clarify the evp content.
- 4.7. During the evp process the reviewer will record in a book the name of the investigation, recorder id, location of the recorder, any time/date stamp and evp file location with a brief description.
- 4.8. Evps identified will have their file location recorded in this specific manner:
  - 4.8.1. hr:min:sec description (ex. 01:02:43 hello)
    - 4.8.1.1. You can expand your description of what is happening after the file identifier in your pad/book.
    - 4.8.1.2. Many times investigators will record specific events or times in the book to give a point of cross-reference for other evidence. This may be done even though there is no evp.

## 5. Evp Extraction

Evp extraction requires the use of specialized audio editing software such as Audacity<sup>5</sup> or Cool Edit Pro.

The process involves:

- 5.1. Loading the main file into the editing software

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<sup>5</sup> Audacity is a free program available for download off the internet

- 5.2. Queuing up the appropriate evp location based on the evp review team
- 5.3. Highlighting the evp in question – care should be made whenever possible to include enough of the file before and after so that the evp context is clear
- 5.4. Choose the ‘export selection’ (Audacity) or ‘save selection’ (Cool Edit) to save the file.
- 5.5. Save the file as a separate name. Never do a ‘save’ or ‘save as’ under the original file name as this will then destroy or attempt to overwrite the file you are reviewing.
- 5.6. Files should be saved as a mp3 using the following specific format:
  - 5.6.1. DR# hr:mm:ss description<sup>6</sup>.mp3 (ex. DR7 01:03:22 are you there.mp3)
- 5.7. If a file needs to be enhanced a separate copy of the file will be saved and identified with its enhancement. (ex. DR7 01:03:22 are you there amp.mp3)  
*Always maintain a copy of the original, non-modified evp file.* You may choose to try several types of enhancements to produce the clearest and understandable evp. Additional files will be saved using unique identifiers for all renditions of the file. (ex. DR7 01:03:22 are you there norm.mp3 which is different than the amp file example shown above)
- 5.8. There should be separate folders set up for each digital recorder and files associated with that recorder should be saved in its appropriate folder. The folder should be identified in the following manner: Client Location DR#<sup>7</sup>. (ex. Denville Kitchen DR4) The client identifier is something unique that enables us to know what investigation the review is for. It can be a name or city. If more than one exists for that identifier an additional identifier will be added such as Denville2 Kitchen DR4.
- 5.9. All evp files extracted will be reviewed by a senior member for clarity, context, potential, classification and relevance before being included in the evidence for any investigation.

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<sup>6</sup> # = the id number of the digital recorder – example DR5

<sup>7</sup> Client is a client identifier, Location = where the recorder was and the # = the digital recorder id

5.9.1. Our rule of thumb in regards to evps is if we have a doubt about its nature don't include it in evidence.

5.9.2. The lead investigator may choose to bring a file not on the evidence disk to a reveal since there are times when something that we were unable to determine its origin or that sounded non-paranormal meant something to the client.

## 6. Video Review

Video review is a tedious review operation. Many times the file is of a static location such as an empty room, closet door or hallway that does not appear to change for hours at a time. It is because of this that a video reviewer must take care to stay focused and engaged. It may be necessary to take several breaks during video review.

Camcorder review can take place by looking at the small review screen or by exporting the video to a monitor. The audio is reviewed via cables to a headset.

DVR review is done looking at the monitor generally with two reviewers splitting the screens to be reviewed by location in order to provide the best coverage.

Full Spectrum review is performed on a pc after the file has been transferred to the pc from the SD card.

When reviewing a video file you should:

6.1. Look for the slightest change in items. Chairs, tables, doors, lamps etc. can move even the slightest bit during an investigation.

6.2. Make points of reference on objects. For example: how close the chair leg is to the design on a rug or floor

6.3. Look for the slightest shadow movement.

6.3.1. When a shadow is detected it is important to carefully review the footage and look for the possibility of another investigator being responsible.

- 6.3.2. Sometimes there is an IR that could be the cause either by creating a cross fire of infrared light or could it catches an investigator in the IR light and then casts the shadow. Never jump to a conclusion.
- 6.4. When reviewing DVR footage it is important to have at least 2 reviewers looking at the split screen since it is practically impossible to catch all screens in your view. If it is not possible to have another reviewer then you should allow your peripheral vision to take over on one side or the outside screens and concentrate on a close group of screens shifting your eyes frequently to look for changes.
  - 6.4.1. During DVR review you want to look for the slightest movement or shadow changes. Sometimes what you see is the absence of a previous shadow. Make mental notes of all the shadows and the position of drawers or doors and whether they are cracked open. This review is true of all video footage.
  - 6.4.2. DVR footage will usually have many dust orbs floating about. Even the cleanest of homes will have dust orbs present under an IR light.
  - 6.4.3. Know the difference between dust orbs, insects caught on IR or mist as exhaled during cold weather. Orbs that are self illuminated and travel with purpose or make decided movement changes would be of interest and should be noted. Sometimes bugs can appear to be of interest but upon careful examination you can usually tell the difference.
- 6.5. Full Spectrum review follows the same logic as camcorder & dvr review but with some exception.
  - 6.5.1. You should look for distinctive color changes, shadows that appear quickly or grow from door frames.
  - 6.5.2. Look for changes from frame to frame or photo to photo for clarification.
  - 6.5.3. Take the time to study all areas of the frame since things not normally caught in visible light may be present under the full spectrum photography.
  - 6.5.4. Study beyond the obvious point of interest and look for blue or purple shapes not attributable to recognizable objects or people.
  - 6.5.5. Look for shapes that don't fit in with the scene.
- 6.6. Flir photos – Our Flir does not produce video footage. This covers review of the photos.

- 6.6.1. Flir photos can be taken in 3 possible modes. Rainbow, Iron and black and white. Each has its own merit and is covered in the equipment training.
- 6.6.2. When reviewing Flir photos it is important to take plenty of time to examine each photo. The important thing is to look for heat signature changes or shadows.
- 6.6.3. People generate a hot signature which is generally yellow or red in rainbow, yellow, orange, purple or dark in iron and as a white or grey in black and white mode. Settings will affect the sensitivity of the hot signature. Spirits may produce a hot signature and leave a hot imprint behind as residual interaction. Question all hot signatures and find the source if at the investigation and when reviewing follow up with the investigative lead.
- 6.6.4. Cool or Cold signatures will come across as blue or green in rainbow, dark purple or black in iron and dark grey or black in black or white. Spirits can produce cooler signatures also so it is important to examine photos and look for distinctive changes in the temperature of the photo and from photo to photo. The important thing with Flir photos is to look for shapes or things that do not fit with the photo. Always question anything that resembles a person.

## **7. Research**

Research is conducted under the purview of the research managers. As a rule research is only performed on residential investigations.

Upon receipt of a case from the director the research managers will initiate the research procedures. The director will provide some initial information based on the preliminary phone call from the client.

It is the intention of research to cover multiple sources, some which may produce similar if not the exact same results. This is intentional in order to provide the most comprehensive research coverage. The research managers will make the decision on which sources to proceed with. Research is essential to the case and in writing the

report. Exhaust as many possibilities or leads as possible within the time allotted for research. Time is of the essence so work efficiently.

Research<sup>8</sup> may be conducted using the following:

- 7.1. Zillow – is used to confirm or determine the year the house was built. Sometimes Zillow will provide other pertinent information that is helpful during additional research.
- 7.2. Google, Yahoo, Bing or other similar search engines are used to find links or research points of interest. These are used as beginning points.
- 7.3. County Clerk is used to trace the history of the home or property including previous owners.
  - 7.3.1. Different municipalities online resources cover a wide range of trace possibilities. They also behave differently or have quirks. Some have to be refreshed after each search and do not allow for trace on an address. Some have a limited search by year. Ex. They only go back to the 1990's. Researchers will need to adapt to each counties online resource.
  - 7.3.2. When using the county clerk always start with the current owner and trace backward.
  - 7.3.3. Whenever possible get the block and lot# s for the property in question. If a book reference is listed write that down as well. Sometimes a book is referred to as *Libre* so look for that as a identifier. Some county searches will allow you to retrieve the maps using that information. Using references that apply to the property and will help you go back in the history of said property.
  - 7.3.4. If the county clerk is local you may have better opportunities go to records office since they will have books that are not yet online.
- 7.4. Ancestry.com can be used to trace family history. This might be used for one of the previous home owners or a name that comes up during the investigation. Tracing a family's history may provide pertinent information to the case.

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<sup>8</sup> The research team is not limited to the sources listed.

- 7.5. You can also find older maps online that will show the names of property owners, farms, railroads and a look at the property prior to the current building.
- 7.6. Wikipedia is a great resource for the history of the property and area.
- 7.7. Geology sites will give you the breakdown of the geological make up of the area. It will show you by era how the soil composition was formed. This is helpful since ground composition may be attributed to residual haunting.

## 8. Equipment

Pirc equipment usage will be covered during the equipment training orientation. At that time new members will have the opportunity to have hands on operation. Due to the cost some of the specialized equipment, an investigator will require permission to operate it at an investigation. Below are equipment lists.

### 8.1. Limited use equipment list:<sup>9</sup>

8.1.1. DVR software setup and use

8.1.2. Flir

8.1.3. Spirit box

8.1.4. Ovulus

8.1.5. Tri-field meter

8.1.6. Multi-use Mel meter

### 8.2. Equipment list by category

8.2.1. Emf detectors

8.2.2. Geophones

8.2.3. Digital recorders

8.2.4. Camcorders

8.2.5. Sound geophone

8.2.6. Rem pod

8.2.7. Laser Pen

8.2.8. Walkie Talkie

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<sup>9</sup> This may not be a comprehensive list of the limited use equipment

8.2.9. Full Spectrum Camera

8.2.10. IR & IR/UV lights

## 9. Protection

It is important that investigators take the proper precautions to protect themselves from paranormal attack and attachment. It is recommended that each investigator do some type of protection prior to an investigations start. As a group we do perform protection prayers at the start and end of each investigation.

If a new member has some opposition to a particular religious affiliation that should be brought to the attention of the investigative team lead. We have several types of protection prayers available and we can switch if necessary.

If you choose not to participate in any type of group protection you may put the team in danger so please make that known to the investigative lead prior to going on an investigation.

For the purpose of this training please identify to the trainer that you choose not to participate in group protection.

It is not so much what it is you say but your intention. It is acceptable to protect yourself in your own way. We are not trying to sell religion but we want to keep people safe. Prior to leaving an investigation location it is important to make it known to the entities that they do not have permission to follow you home.

Sometimes interaction with the paranormal can have a physical effect on us. You should always remove yourself from a location if you feel something odd or uncomfortable. Many times simply removing yourself temporarily will clear the feeling.

It is important to tell the investigation lead immediately if you feel any of the following:

- nausea



- headaches
- feelings of lightheadedness
- paranoia
- tingling or numbness of a limb
- feelings of being disconnected
- hear voices
- pain of any kind
- scratches or burning sensation
- tightness in the chest
- trouble breathing
- feelings of being choked

We want you to be safe and it is better to be proactive.

We expect all members to act with respect and do nothing that puts the team in danger. Below is a list of unacceptable actions:<sup>10</sup>

- 9.1. Provoking, challenging or aggressive behavior
- 9.2. Never ask or give permission for an entity to touch a fellow investigator. If you want to give permission for yourself that is fine but never put another investigator in harm's way.
- 9.3. Never remove an object from a location whether it be residential or a paid event. Items may have paranormal attachments and you may put all in danger when you remove an item without permission.
- 9.4. Under no circumstance ever accept money or gratuities in exchange for our services. It is acceptable to accept coffee or snacks while on location at a residential investigation.
- 9.5. Never call or follow up with a client without permission.
- 9.6. Never solicit a client for anything personal.
- 9.7. Never attempt to make money from any investigation or event run by Pirc.

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<sup>10</sup> There is a detailed list of actions that will put you on probation in the Pirc handbook

9.8. Never attempt to sell items, tee shirts, stories or experiences connected to Pirc or any Pirc investigation.

9.9. Evidence collected<sup>11</sup> may not be transmitted, edited, reproduced or shared with any person, on any social media site, YouTube or any website without the expressed written permission of the Pirc director.

## 10. Close

We want you to enjoy your experiences with the Pirc team. Each member brings something to the team and we want members to continually grow in their experiences and the investigative process.

Understand that we are a mix of personalities, experiences, religious affiliations, political views and belief systems. Respect the differences and try to avoid conflicts with other team members.

If you have problems with another member try to discuss it with them or simply go out with a different team member. Do not confront a member on an investigation. Confrontation will bring negative energy into the investigation.

If you think a team member is exhibiting erratic or dangerous behavior bring it to the attention of the investigation lead immediately. Do not try to handle it yourself.

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<sup>11</sup> This includes evidence collected on personal recorders regardless of where collected

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**Pirc New Investigator Training Manual Sign Off:**

I have read all the elements contained within and received the training outlined in the Pirc training manual.

I understand what is expected of me and agree to terms and conditions.

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Investigator Name

Date

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Barbara P Oehl, Pirc Director

Date