📘 APS Field Manual: Data Collection Protocols

Version: 3.1 | **Division:** Field Research | Cascadia

1. The Golden Rule: Timestamp Synchronization

Your clipboard form is analog. The subject's form is digital. **YOU are the bridge.**

- **The Critical Moment:** As soon as the subject taps "Submit" on the tablet, check your watch/phone.
- **The Action:** Write that exact time (e.g., 14:02) in the **Time of Submission** field on your clipboard.
- **Why:** The Registry uses this minute-by-minute match to merge your notes with their story. If the times don't match, the data is orphaned.

2. Coding Guide: Section B (Environment)

Use these definitions to ensure consistent coding across all teams.

Weather Conditions

- **CLEAR / OVERCAST / RAIN:** Self-explanatory.
- **STORM:** Active thunder/lightning or high wind.
- **OZ (The Oz Factor):** A sudden, localized silence. Birds stop singing, wind stops, background hum vanishes. The world feels "paused." This is a critical indicator of High Strangeness.

Ambient Noise

- **SILENT:** Near-zero decibels.

- **HUM:** The low-frequency buzz of electricity, ventilation, or "The Hum."

- **LOUD:** Chaos that might explain the subject's stress (e.g., construction noise).

Technical Interference

- **DRAIN:** Battery drops significantly (e.g., 80% to 20% in minutes) without cause.

- **GLITCH:** Screen artifacts, audio distortion, or apps crashing repeatedly.

3. Coding Guide: Section C (Subject Observation)

How to interpret the subject's behavior without diagnosing them.

Demeanor

- **CALM:** Subject is detached. They are reporting a fact, not an emotional event.

- **AGITATED:** Subject is physically restless, looking around, or jumpy.

- **INTENSE:** The "True Believer." They are trying very hard to convince you.

- **CONFUSED:** They seem unable to process what happened (Ontological Shock).

- **SKEPTICAL:** They don't want to believe what they saw ("It was probably just a drone, but...").

Narrative Delivery

- **FLUID:** The story flows naturally with pauses for thought. (High credibility).

- **REHEARSED:** They speak fast, without pauses, using specific buzzwords. It sounds like a Reddit post they memorized. (Potential Cultural Priming).

- **FRAGMENTED:** They jump around in time or struggle to find words. (Common in traumatic recall).

4. Safety & Ethics (The "No Debunking" Rule)

Your job is **Methodological Agnosticism**.

- **Do Not Validate:** Do not say, *"Wow, that sounds exactly like a Skinwalker."* (This biases their memory).

- **Do Not Debunk:** Do not say, *"That was probably just sleep paralysis."* (This shuts them down).

- **The Correct Response:** *"Thank you for sharing that. I am documenting exactly what you experienced."*

5. Deployment Checklist

Before you leave the office/base, ensure you have:

- [ ] 1x Tablet (fully charged) with index.html loaded.

- [ ] 1x Clipboard with 10x printed *Data Collection Instruments*.

- [ ] 5x *APS Resource Cards* (The quarter-sheet handout).

- [ ] 2x Pens (Ink can freeze or fail in the field; bring backup).

- [ ] 1x Analog Watch (In case of digital failure).
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6. The "Elevator Pitch" (How to get the flyer up)

When asking a business owner (the "Gatekeeper") to post a flyer, the goal is to appear **academic, historical, and harmless**. You want to avoid sounding like a "conspiracy theorist."

Here are three scripts based on the "Vibe" of the location:

🗣️ The "Gatekeeper" Scripts (Solo Director Edition)

Option A: The "Archivist" Approach

- **Best For:** Independent Bookstores, Libraries, Historical Societies.*
- **The Vibe:** Intellectual, preservationist, respectful of history.

"Hi there. I'm a local researcher managing a project called the American Periphenomenal Survey. I'm currently building a digital archive of Pacific Northwest folklore and 'high strangeness' accounts—essentially preserving local stories that usually go undocumented.

I was hoping to post a small card on your community board to let people know where they can submit their own experiences to the archive. It's purely for historical preservation."

Option B: The "Sociologist" Approach

- **Best For:** Community Centers, Grocery Stores, Post Offices, "Normie" Hubs.*
- **The Vibe:** Neutral, academic, data-driven, harmless.

"Good morning. I manage a data project regarding 'Anomalous Experiences' here in the Cascadia region. I'm conducting a passive survey on how people interpret unusual events—like unexplained lights or strange wildlife encounters.

I'm looking for a spot to place a recruitment flyer. It's strictly for data collection—no soliciting or selling anything. Would you have space on your public board?"

Option C: The "Field Investigator" Approach

- **Best For:** Indie Coffee Shops, Dive Bars, Music Venues, Comic Shops.*
- **The Vibe:** Direct, slightly conspiratorial (in a fun way), "local mystery."

"Hey, quick question for you. I run a site called the American Periphenomenal Survey. Basically, I catalog reports of UFOs, cryptids, and high strangeness right here in North Seattle.

I have a feeling your regulars probably see and hear some interesting things. Is it cool if I pin up a flyer with a QR code? It's just a secure drop-box for them to share their stories anonymously."

🛡️ Handling Objections (The "FAQ")

Even with a perfect script, people might ask follow-up questions. Here is how to answer them without breaking character:

Q: "Is this for a movie or a game?"

A: "No, it's an actual data registry. But I admit the branding is a little stylized—it helps people feel comfortable sharing stories they might otherwise feel silly talking about."

Q: "Are you going to bother our customers?"

A: "Never. It's completely passive. I just put up the flyer, and if someone is interested, they scan the code on their own time. I won't hang around."

Q: "Is this a cult?"

A: (Smile/Laugh) "Definitely not. Just a data nerd trying to organize ghost stories."

Q: "What do you do with the stories?"

A: "First, I strip out all names and personal details to ensure absolute privacy. Once the report is anonymized, it gets added to our public registry online. The goal is to build a searchable, open-access history of these events so the community can finally see what's happening in their own neighborhoods."

💡 Pro Tip: The "Prop" Strategy

When you approach the counter, hold the flyer or business card in your hand visible to them.

Don't reach into your bag after asking. Showing the high-quality, professional design of the card immediately answers the question "Is this guy crazy?" with a visual "No, he is professional."

📖 APS Field Manual: Appendices

APPENDIX A: THE TAXONOMY OF ANOMALIES

(The "What" — Defining the Mission Categories)

This section provides the field definitions for the 4 Mission Categories used in your Bibliography and Database. A Researcher uses this to quickly categorize a report in the field.

- **Type A (Liminal / Spatial):** Events involving distorted architecture, "The Backrooms," impossible geographies, or specific locations that feel "wrong."

- **Type C (Corporeal / Physiological):** Events where the primary evidence is on the body. Missing time, paralysis, "The Oz Factor" (silence), nausea, or scratches.

- **Type D (Biological / Cryptid):** Encounters with unrecognized biological entities. Sasquatch, Dogman, or anomalous fauna.

- **Type E (Energetic / Aerial):** UAP (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena), lights, orbs, or "glitches" in the sky.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

(The "How" — Rules of Engagement)

This section holds the safety scripts we previously identified as standalone files. Merging them here keeps the manual consolidated.

- **B.1 - The "Clean Slate" Rule:** Never tell a subject about other reports in their area *before* they give their testimony. It contaminates the data.

- **B.2 - The "De-Escalation" Script:** (Reference to `APS_Debriefing_Protocol.pdf`). What to say if a subject becomes emotionally distressed.

- **B.3 - Emergency Contacts:** (Reference to `APS_Resource_Card_Cascadia.pdf`). The Suicide Prevention Lifeline and local Crisis numbers.

APPENDIX C: THE "TWO-TIER" INTAKE STRATEGY

1. The Digital Sieve (The Website) The public-facing intake form (index.html) is designed for **Minimal Friction**. It sacrifices depth for volume. It asks only enough to establish:

- *Is this a verified location?*

- *Is the narrative coherent?*

- *Does the contact info work?*

2. The Analog Anchor (The Questionnaire) The `APS_Experience_Questionnaire` is a **Forensic Instrument**. It is NOT to be given to the subject to fill out alone. It is a script for *you*, the Researcher, to administer.

Operational Protocol: When a compelling report arrives via the Website (Tier 1), the Researcher contacts the subject to schedule a Tier 2 interview using the full Field Kit. This allows us to document physiological effects (The "Oz Factor," Nausea, Ozone smells) that the public often omits from written narratives.