

Christopher Newport University

Policy: Spans of Control Policy

Policy Number: 5040

Executive Oversight:	Vice President for Finance and Planning/CFO
Contact Office:	Office of Human Resources
Frequency of Review:	Biennially
Date of Last Review:	August 2023

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a University-wide target span of control and to set a minimum number of direct reports per supervisor to achieve operational efficiencies, enhance University-wide communication, and gain economies of scale with regard to supervisory resources.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

The University maximizes supervisory spans of control to minimize layers of management that impede organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Spans of control are expected to vary by department depending on size, complexity, uniqueness, and/or legislative mandates, but shall follow the standards below:

- The university-wide span of control target is five (5).
- Ordinarily, the minimum number of direct reports per supervisor will be three (3).
- Supervisory position duties must include one or more of the following: i) direct employees work through the delegation of tasks; ii) develop and/or edit employee job descriptions; iii) conduct annual performance evaluations of employees; iv) approve employee requests for leave; v) recruit new employees; vi) reward, promote, and/or discipline employees; and vii) ensure employees comply with University policies.
- Decisions about the creation of supervisory positions and number of employees supervised shall be determined by the needs of the University.
- A supervisory position shall not be established for the sole purpose of recruiting or retaining employees.
- The Director of Human Resources Operations shall conduct a biennial review of departments where spans of control may be too narrow and shall take into account responsibility for indirect supervision.

C. DEFINITIONS

Employee: An individual employed by the University.

Supervisor: An employee who is responsible for one or more of the following: 1) direct employees work through the delegation of tasks, 2) develop and/or edit employee job descriptions, 3) conduct annual performance evaluations of employees, 4) approve employee requests for leave, 5) recruit new employees, 6) reward, promote, and/or discipline employees, and 7) ensure employees comply with University Policies.

Division Head: A supervisor who serves in the role of Chief of Staff, Provost, or Vice President.

Span(s) of Control: The number of employees who directly report to a supervisor.

Span of Control Target: The median number of direct reports per supervisor across the University, inclusive of instructional faculty.

D. PROCEDURES

1. A request for an exception to the minimum number of direct reports should be submitted through the online recruitment system at the time of recruitment or when there is a position change.
 - The request must include the following:
 - Description of the University need
 - Description of the nature, specialty, and complexity of the work being performed
 - Identification of any legislative requirements related to the position
 - The Director of Human Resources Operations or designee will review and approve or deny the request. In the event the Division Head does not agree with the Director's recommendation, the Chief of Staff or Vice President of Finance and Planning/CFO will render the final decision.
2. Periodic review of departments where spans of control may be too narrow or too broad
 - The Director of Human Resources Operations shall prepare a biennial report of the University's spans of control and identify those units that have supervisors with spans of control other than five (5).
 - For those units that have supervisors with spans of control other than five (5), the Director of Human Resources Operations shall examine the business need of the unit, the nature/specialty/complexity of the work being performed, and any legislative requirement(s) that may cause the span of control to be less than the University target. The Director of Human Resources Operations will conduct this examination in collaboration with the Division Head.

- The Director will then make a recommendation to the Division Head to maintain the status quo or propose restructuring the unit to optimize spans of control and increase operational efficiencies. In the event the Division Head does not agree with the Director’s recommendation, the Chief of Staff or Vice President of Finance and Planning/CFO will render the final decision.
3. Submit a biennial report on Spans of Control to the Board of Visitors
- The Vice President of Finance and Planning/CFO and AVP/Chief Human Resources Officer shall present a biennial report on Spans of Control to the appropriate committee of the Board of Visitors that will include the following elements: i) an overview of the University’s organizational structure, ii) the University average and median spans of control, iii) the number of supervisors with five or fewer direct reports, and iv) a copy of the policy governing spans of control at the University.

E. REFERENCES

Chapter 2, 2018 Special Session 1, Acts of Assembly:

<https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/item/2018/2/HB5002/Chapter/4/4-9.04/>

F. APPROVAL AND REVISIONS

Approved By: Policy Committee, February 6, 2019

Revision 1: Policy Committee, September 8, 2021

Revision 2: Policy Committee, August 24, 2023

G. NEXT REVIEW DATE: Fall 2025