



# Span of Control Study

Department of County Management

# Budget note highlights

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- Best practices for span generally suggest 1:5 to 1:10, with each manager leading approximately 5-10 direct reports, however ideal ratio can vary based on nature of the work, the experience of employees and managers, and the level of interaction between them.
- Objectives:
  - Evaluate current span of control
  - Tighter adherence to maximizing frontline staff
  - Policy compliance by January 2026 via:
    - Written report to the Board on achieving an average management-to-staff ratio of 1:7 or greater
    - Organizational charts
    - Implementation strategy



# Considerations beyond the numbers

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- Many supervisors/managers are working managers
- External responsibilities for staff or functions that cannot be seen on an org chart
- Budgetary authority/responsibility
- Specialties that commonly have small spans (project managers, administrative, practicing medical directors, etc.)



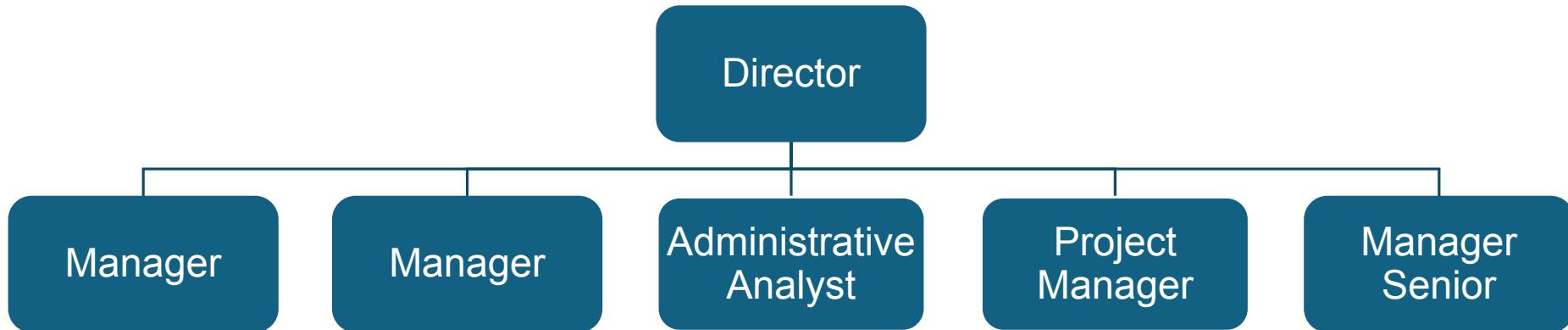
# Considerations beyond the numbers

		Narrow Span	Wide Span	
Complex	<b>Nature of the work</b>		Not Complex	
Different	<b>Similarity of activities performed</b>		Similar	
Unclear	<b>Clarity of organizational objectives</b>		Clear	
Vague	<b>Degree of task certainty</b>		Definite Rules	
High	<b>Degree of risk in the work for the organization</b>		Low	
High	<b>Degree of public scrutiny</b>		Low	
Heavy	<b>Burden of non-supervisory duties</b>		Light	
High	<b>Degree of coordination required</b>		Low	
None	<b>Availability of staff assistance</b>		Abundant	
Dispersed	<b>Geographic location of reporting staff</b>		Together	
		More Supervisors	Fewer Supervisors	



# Considerations beyond the numbers

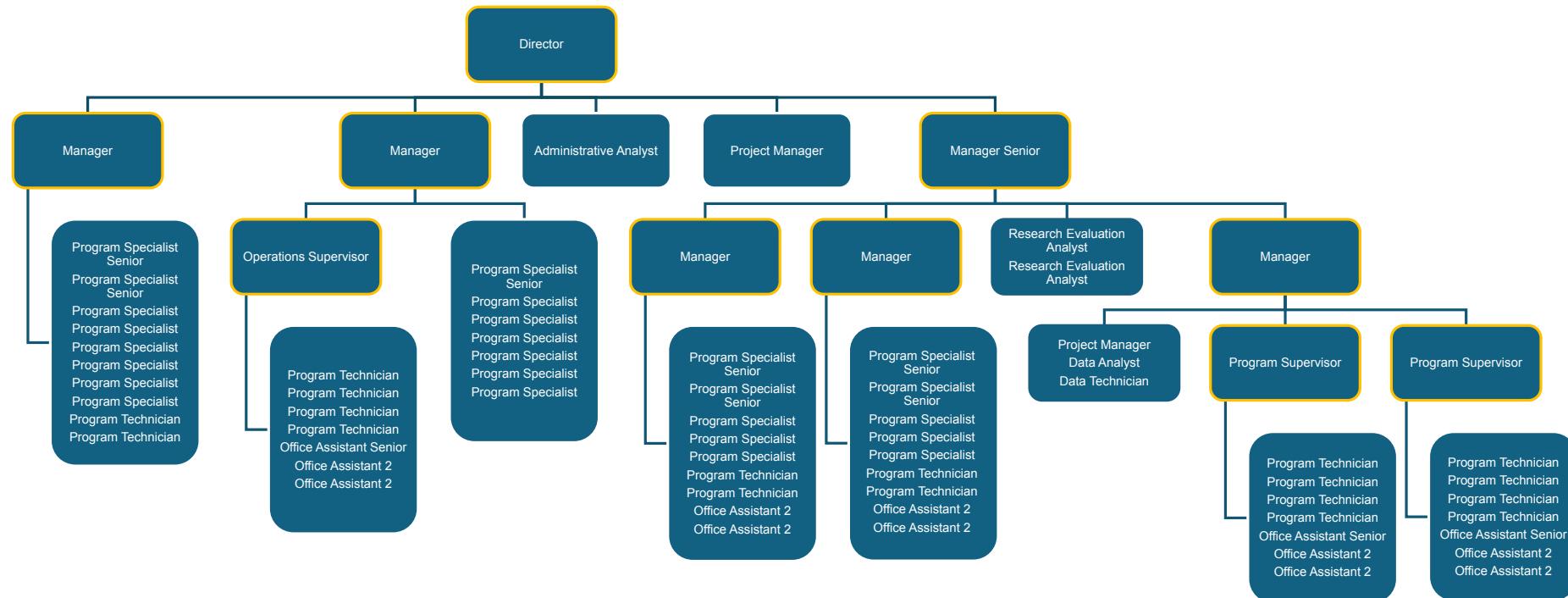
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*This hypothetical director has a direct span of control of 5, falling below the desired countywide standard of 7. What does their full span look like?*



# Considerations beyond the numbers



# Supervisory job structure

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**Department Directors & Deputy Department Directors** - *top level over a department*

- *Has reporting directors & managers*
  - ◆ *Ex: DCA Department & Deputy Director*

**Division Directors** - *top level over a division within a department*

- *Has reporting managers*
  - ◆ *Ex: DCA Facilities Division Director*

**Managers** - *top level over programs/functions*

- *May have reporting supervisors/managers, or has budget, FTE, and responsibility at the manager level*
  - ◆ *Ex: DCA Facilities Senior Manager (Property Management, Dispatch, Compliance, Technology Services)*

**Supervisors** - *frontline supervisor over programs/functions*

- *Has reporting non-supervisory staff*
  - ◆ *Ex: DCA Facilities Building Safety & Compliance Supervisor*



# Methodology

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- **Positions included as supervisory:** positions in non-represented job profiles that *require* supervision of staff
- **Positions included as non-supervisory:** positions in all other job profiles, including some that *may* supervise staff, but do not require it

## Employee types included

- Regular status, limited duration, temporary, on-call, interns
  - Supervisory work exists for all position types
  - Secondary analysis was performed on regular & limited duration only
- Excluded: contractors and volunteers



# Calculations

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## Two calculations

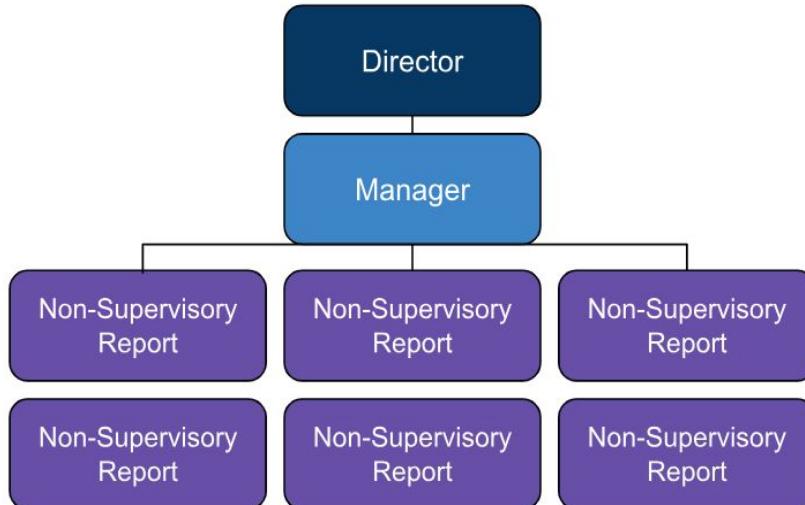
- **Average span of control:** number of direct reports to each supervisory position, averaged out
- **Non-supervisor to supervisor ratio:** non-supervisor position count divided by supervisor position count

*Primary analysis included all position types (except contractors & volunteers), secondary analysis for regular and limited duration only*



# Calculation example

*Hypothetical organizational chart*



*This org chart has two supervisory positions and six non-supervisory positions.*

1. **Span of Control**
  - a. Director's Span = 1
  - b. Manager's Span = 6
  - c. Average Span:  $(1 + 6) / 2 = \underline{\underline{3.5}}$
2. **Non-Supervisor to Supervisor Ratio:**  $6 / 2 = \underline{\underline{3}}$



# Span at a glance

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## Countywide Average Span (All employee types)

**11**

*The average of direct reports to each supervisory position at the county (positions in job profiles which require supervision of staff)*

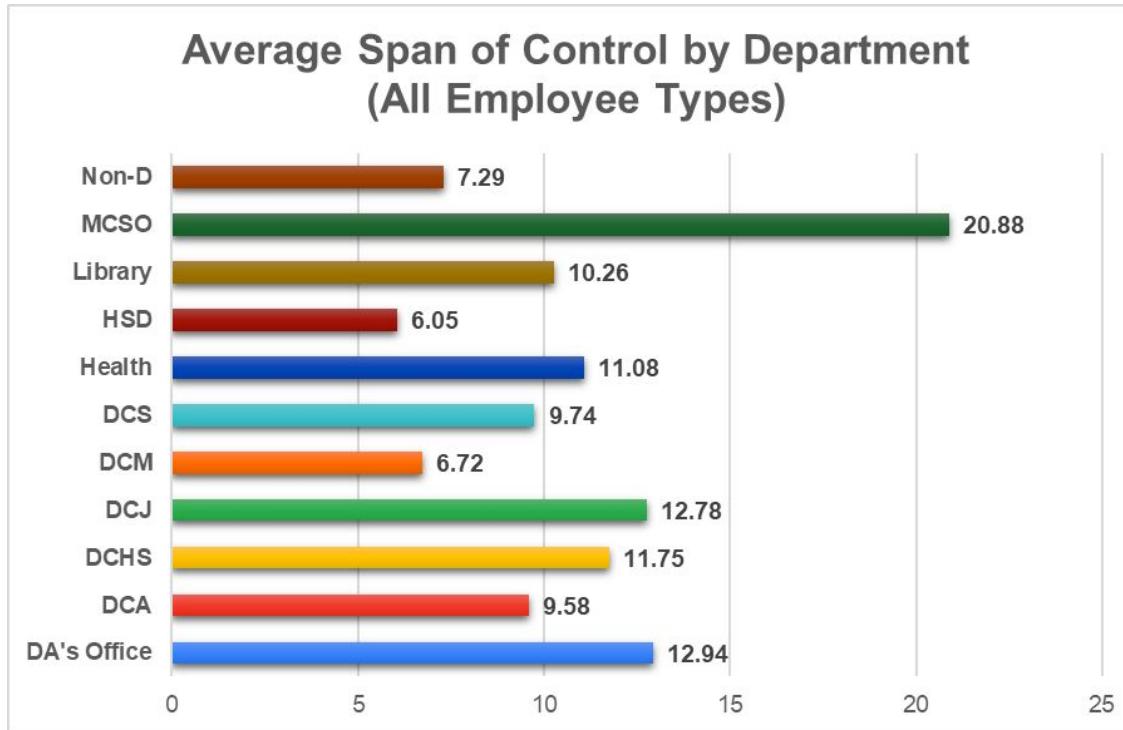
## Countywide Average Span (LDA, Reg only)

**9**

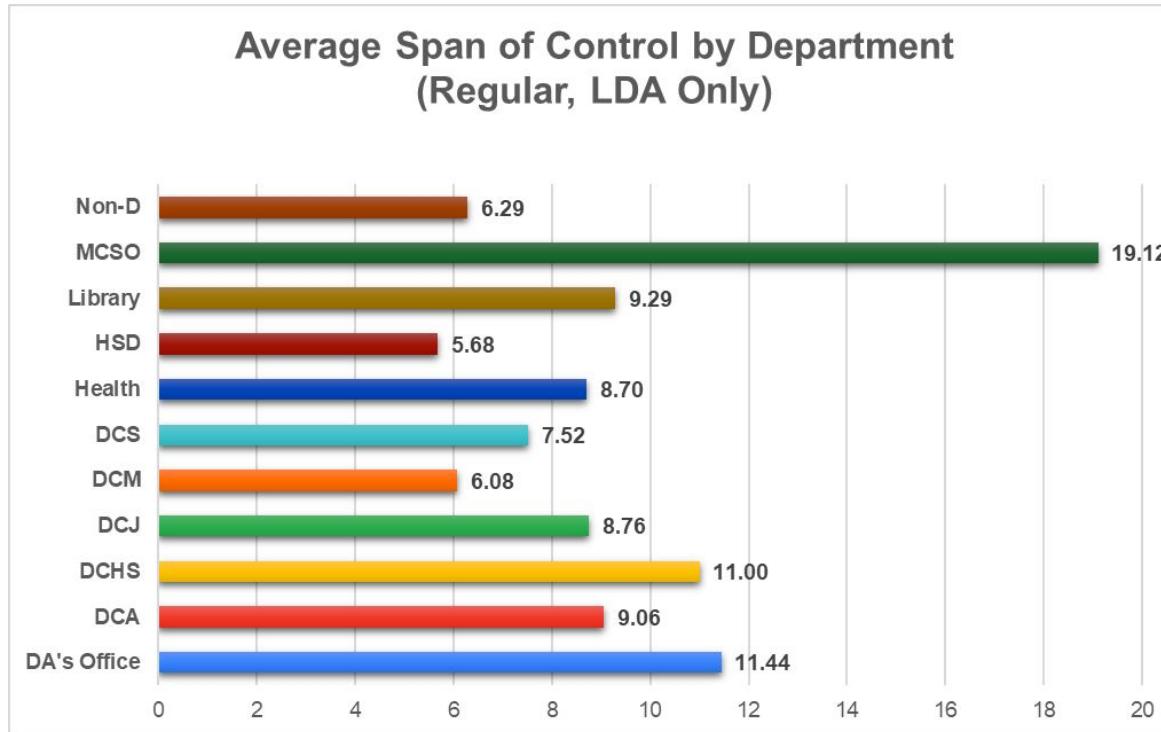
*The average of direct reports to each supervisory position at the county (positions in job profiles which require supervision of staff)*



# Spans by department (all employee types)



# Spans by department (*reg, LDA employees*)



# Supervisory ratio at a glance

## Countywide Ratio Calculation

(All employee types)

$$6508 \div 666 = 10$$

*Non-supervisors ÷ supervisors in jobs  
that REQUIRE supervision = Ratio*

## Countywide Ratio Calculation (LDA, Reg only)

$$5108 \div 664 = 8$$

*Non-supervisors ÷ supervisors in jobs  
that REQUIRE supervision = Ratio*



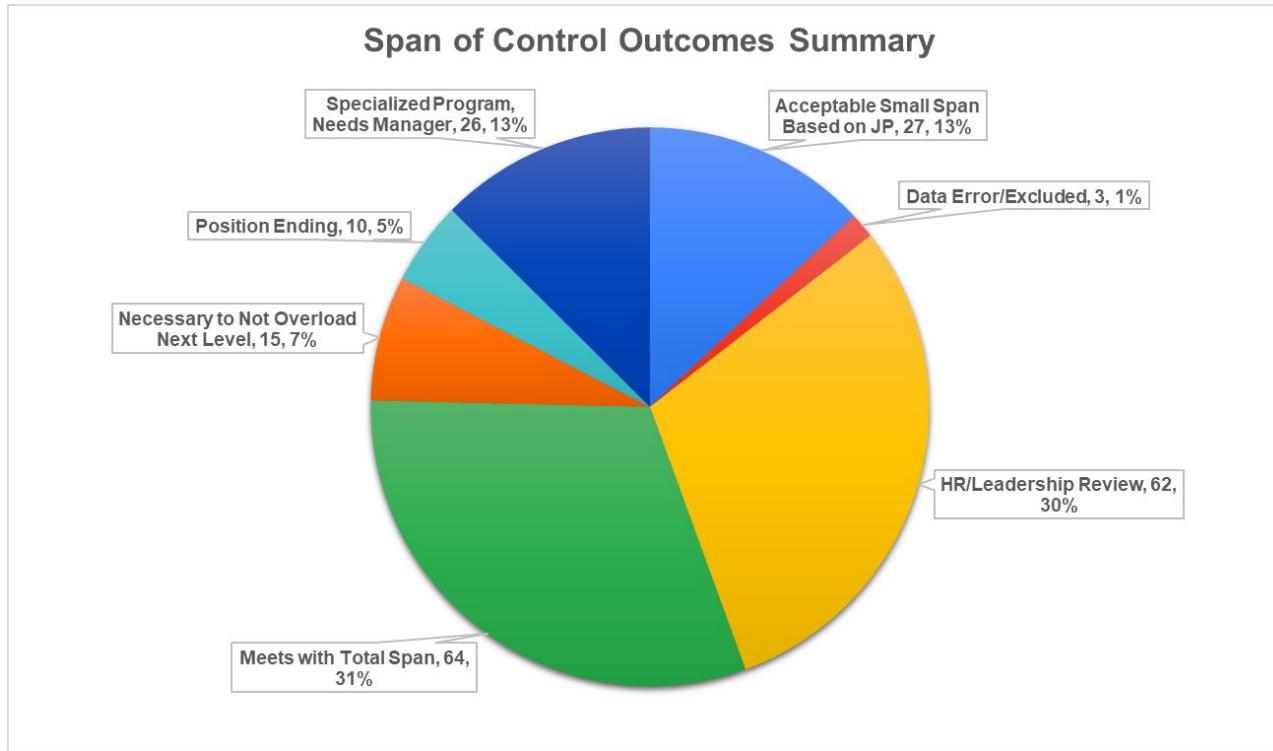
# Class comp/HR reviews

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Overview of Supervisory Positions				
Data Effective Date	Managers Reviewed	At or Above 1:7	Below 1:7	Below 1:5
September	667	67%	33%	23%
December	663	68%	31%	22%



# Positions below 1:7 findings



# Best practices

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- Reliable research is not easily found
- No one-size-fits-all
- Responses to survey of local jurisdictions:
  - Three have no minimum spans
  - Four have minimum spans from 2-5
    - All recognize that needs vary by position



# Best practices: State of Oregon

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- ORS 291.227 sets the baseline ratio at 1:11
- Agencies establishes their own maximum depending on a number of factors
- An agency may be exempted from the limitations if an additional supervisory position is reasonably necessary
- Quarterly report shows different ratio standards by agency (examples below):
  - Department of Public Safety Standards and Training: 1:18
  - Department of Transportation 1:11
  - Oregon Housing and Community Services: 1:07
  - Public Utility Commission: 1:06
- Overall ratio by agency tracking (not a manager by manager review) indicates that there is flexibility within State agencies, so long as the *average* is at the agency's established standards



# Moving forward

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- Countywide average exceeds budget note
- Division-level analyses by department with FY27 projection tools being utilized now
  - Ongoing annual tool to inform budget planning
- Bi-annual report-out from Central HR (HR & exec leaders)
  - **August** for view of post-budget adoption impacts
  - **January** for planning of upcoming budget
- Establish guidelines that set 1:7 as the departmental and countywide benchmark
  - Criteria for CHRO to review if exceptions are requested





**Questions?**