



IT Project Management Governance and Oversight

N.C. Department of Information Technology
Enterprise Project Management Office

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Meta Data

Enterprise Project Management Office, Project Management Office, Portfolio Management, Program Management, Project Management, Governance, Oversight.

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DRAFT

Executive Summary

This IT Project Management Governance and Oversight policy represents the North Carolina Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) Enterprise Project Management Office's (EPMO) approach to standardize project, program, and portfolio management. It is designed to mimic generally accepted best practices for standardized and periodically improved requirements for IT project management defined in Article 15 of N.C.G.S. 143B. Applied governance and oversight accomplishes the primary goal of supporting the State Chief Information Officer's (SCIO) mandate through defined and measurable processes, quality objectives, and control measures. Governance and oversight, by design, facilitates increased collaboration, synchronization, and transparency across agencies and throughout the project management lifecycle. The supporting processes focus heavily on business outcomes, quality assurance, project cost, and schedule accountability. Such end-to-end coordination through these areas allows for aligned processes and practices to guide and manage a project from concept to closeout; it is this compilation of documentation, processes, and system that comprise applied EPMO governance and oversight.

The SCIO's commitment to customers provides for a stronger North Carolina that connects citizens, businesses, education, and government. User interaction within government should be as easy and effective as interacting with commercial businesses using common online interfaces. The structure of governance and oversight aligns itself to the [NCDIT Strategic Plan](#), and information technology (IT) project management is accomplished through the application of this policy within the project management system.

1. Introduction

The SCIO has authority and responsibility for all recognized IT projects. SCIO authority and responsibility for IT projects began in 2004 when the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) amended Article 3D of N.C.G.S. 147-33.72A – 147-33.72H to address standards and accountability measures for all IT projects, criteria for project management, review, and approval of IT project managers (PM). In 2005 the EPMO was established and a Project Portfolio Management (PPM) methodology developed to implement and manage the oversight mandate. In 2015 the NCGA passed new legislation, codified as N.C.G.S. 143B Article 15, thus repealing Article 3D of N.C.G.S. 147.

This statutory change resulted in significant modifications to the Executive Organization Act of 1973 and established the NCDIT. The EPMO, on behalf of the SCIO, remains responsible for the governance and oversight of all non-exempt IT Projects. Among the many changes implemented, N.C.G.S. 143B-1340.(a) requires the SCIO to ensure that agency IT project requirements are documented in biennial IT plans with reports provided to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Information Technology and the Fiscal Research Division, to include agency updates to their plan with added projects. Further, the SCIO now has authority over all IT procurement, per N.C.G.S. 143B-1350.(a).

1.1 Purpose and Statutory Responsibility

The purpose of this policy is to provide information on IT project management and governance that the NCDIT EPMO has placed into effect through delegated authority granted by the SCIO and NC statute.

The EPMO is committed to overseeing the SCIO's legislated mandate for all IT projects and programs. This means the development and implementation of standard processes, systems, and accountability measures that enable qualified PMs to deliver results on time, within budget, and as expected. This, and all associated governance and oversight documents, help ensure IT projects are planned, developed, and delivered in a consistent, controlled, and transparent manner throughout the project lifecycle. The EPMO defines the operational project parameters for effectiveness and quality initiatives to ensure continual improvement and customer satisfaction.

The EPMO's focus is:

- Fulfillment of Article 15 of N.C.G.S 143B for IT project management;
- Development and implementation of standards for IT projects and project management;
- Meaningful metrics that improve financial and schedule performance;
- Consultative support for effective planning and cost estimation prior to the commitment of state resources;
- Streamlining decision points;
- Minimizing the need for IT project change requests;
- Independent review, as needed, of large or high-risk IT projects and weekly review of all others;
- The application of lessons learned, feedback, and metrics to continually improve the overall process; and,
- Leveraging existing State assets and tools for effective portfolio, program, and project management.

1.2 Scope

The EPMO takes direction from the SCIO and general statute. The EPMO represents the quality assurance arm for IT project management across agencies, boards, and commissions identified as either participating or separate within Article 15 of N.C.G.S. 143B.

1.3 Out of Scope

Exemptions are limited to the following entities within North Carolina, per N.C.G.S. 143B-1320.(b):

- General Assembly;
- Judicial Department;
- Community Colleges System Office;
- University of North Carolina and its constituent institutions;
- Office of the State Auditor;
- State Board of Elections;
- State Highway Patrol;

- Department of State Treasurer; and,
- Any State entity granted a deviation as specified by the SCIO, per N.C.G.S. 143B-1320.(c).

1.4 Authorization and Duty

EPMO's governance and oversight are the foundation for IT project management in North Carolina. It establishes the statewide IT project management standards required by Article 15 of N.C.G.S. 143B which authorizes the SCIO to develop standards and accountability measures for IT projects and criteria for project management. The duty to develop the standards, processes, and systems to realize this and manage its ongoing purpose have been delegated to the EPMO. In doing so, the EPMO maximizes the functionality, security, and interoperability of the State's project management practice, including, but not limited to its application with portfolios, programs, projects, information and data awareness, and project management resources. These standards apply to all Participating or Separate agencies subject to Article 15 of N.C.G.S. 143B.

1.5 Definitions

- Agency – Agency, board, or commission, whether Participating or Separate, are synonymously referred to as agency.
- Customer – The Governor and State of North Carolina executive leaders; the SCIO as the governor's executive for IT, general statutes, and the citizens, businesses, and government agencies of North Carolina.
- Decision Point – A defined EPMO process, activity, or event assigned to a project, program, or portfolio timeline to govern and oversee approvals and quality.
- Governance – The framework of decision-making authority, controls, and guiding principles that ensure a project is carried out in a consistent, accountable, and strategically aligned manner.
- Oversight – The ongoing monitoring of an IT project's activities, progress, and compliance with established expectations and standards.
- Project – A temporary effort that delivers a unique IT product, service, application, or capability.
- Project Manager – The person assigned by the agency to lead the team that is responsible for achieving IT project objectives.
- Project Portfolio Management – The centralized management of one or more portfolios to achieve strategic objectives.
- Program – Related projects, subsidiary programs, and program activities that are managed in a coordinated manner to obtain benefits not available from managing them individually.
- Portfolio – Projects, programs, subsidiary portfolios, and operations managed as a group to achieve strategic objectives.
- Stakeholder – Any individual, group or organization who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of an IT project.

2. IT Project Management Governance and Oversight

The EPMO has developed, implemented, and will continually manage and improve applied governance and oversight by reviewing, monitoring, and assisting agencies with delivery of IT Projects. Applied governance and oversight incorporates methodologies, decision points (DP), cost, schedule, and scope variances, and other supporting processes, to measure IT project delivery and customer satisfaction. The stated policy and objectives support the establishment of mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers by defining the customer's expected performance standards, measures of effectiveness, and roles and responsibilities of those accountable. In turn, the EPMO will communicate accurately, consistently, and responsively to stakeholder-provided work product based on defined DP timelines.

The EPMO shall:

- Identify and define processes necessary to ensure governance and oversight drive improvement.
- Make project-delivered improvements to customers understandable to the broader community.
- Determine the interrelationships of processes.
- Determine the criteria and methods necessary to correct deficiencies through:
 - Root cause analysis;
 - Corrective action;
 - Risk assessment and management;
 - Management review; and,
 - Increased informational transparency.
- Identify the resources required to ensure availability of technology, information, personnel, and infrastructure needed to support provided services.
- Determine the appropriate metrics for governance and oversight to enable successful monitoring.
- Proactively identify vulnerabilities to ensure positive influences on project outcomes.

2.1 Policy and Objectives

The policy and objectives focus EPMO efforts on qualitative goals amenable to all IT project efforts, provides a framework for establishing and reviewing applied governance and oversight, and can be easily communicated throughout the State to achieve full understanding. The EPMO recognizes that successful IT projects leverage highly qualified people, effective processes, and appropriate technology to continually increase its value.

2.1.1 Policy

It is the policy of the NCDIT EPMO to:

- Employ expert staff to pursue evidence-based decision making in support of the SCIO's IT project governance and oversight mandate for strategic planning processes;

- Assesses IT projects for compliance with all executive, statutory, regulatory requirements, goals, and objectives;
- Works closely with stakeholders to determine the necessary level of awareness, tools, training, and guidelines to effectively deliver projects, programs and portfolios within planned cost and schedule;
- Responds to stakeholder requests and DPs with clarity and transparency based on defined timelines;
- Investigate when quality objectives are not met to determine why and initiate corrective action when necessary; and,
- Continually look for opportunities to improve effectiveness.

2.1.2 Objectives

IT Projects are planned and executed to deliver expected IT solutions within a defined cost and schedule, and according to DPs that meet process defined timelines. These metrics translate into the following quality objectives:

- Deliver IT projects following an approved schedule;
- Deliver IT projects within an approved budget;
- Facilitate statewide reviews and DPs based on timelines associated with defined processes and forward recommendations or return decision packages for corrective action in accordance with processes as required; and,
- Achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction through effective, measurable, and continually improving IT project oversight and delivery.

2.2 EPMO Documentation

The EPMO's documentation includes this IT Project Management Governance and Oversight policy, process documents, instructions, and Phoenix Project Management System screen aids. As additional items are identified, they will be added.

The EPMO has structured its documentation scheme following these four categories.

- **Category 1 – Policy:** The guideline to provide overall guidance and direction for defined and controlled IT project governance and oversight processes.
- **Category 2 – Process:** Basic procedural guidance for following project management processes within EPMO's influence.
- **Category 3 – Instructions:** The methods required for stepping through an ordered set of actions to accomplish a required area of project management effort.
- **Category 4 – Phoenix Project Management System Screens:** Describe the field level data interactions within the various Phoenix system screens.

3. Management Responsibility and Commitment

The SCIO is committed to adopting this IT Project Management Governance and Oversight policy and maintaining a continually improved project management system that provides the citizens of North Carolina with an effectively structured method for all aspects of project administration. The includes a governance and oversight policy, measurable quality objectives, and clear criteria for IT project management pursuant to statute. In accordance with executive and legislative authority, the SCIO directs the EPMO towards its commitment to providing the necessary resources to implement, manage, and continually improve the value it offers to the state's project management community.

The SCIO, supported by state executive leadership, general statute, and legislative intent steers the governance and oversight. Roles, responsibilities, and authorities are defined to ensure all stakeholders and affected personnel clearly understand their involvement. NCDIT leadership, from the SCIO to the individual PMs, drive excellence through their commitment to deliver IT projects within planned cost and schedule. The EPMO Director is tasked with regularly communicating the importance of governance and oversight, and all related requirements, by ensuring that personnel are trained in policy, process, instructions, and system requirements to achieve these quality objectives.

3.1 Customer Satisfaction

EPMO's applied governance and oversight drives customer and stakeholder satisfaction by helping deliver IT projects that meet business expectations within planned cost and schedule. EPMO policies, processes, instructions, and systems are designed to achieve this end.

The EPMO solicits regular feedback through a persistent survey form that collects response to four main areas: Phoenix Project Management System, the EPMO in general, EPMO documentation, and EPMO support. This feedback is used to improve all aspects of EPMO operation and increase value to the state.

3.2 Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities

The EPMO consists of a Director, Project Management Advisors (PMA), and a Support Analyst; the entire staff is committed to effective governance and oversight of IT projects. The organization takes direction from the SCIO and general statute. The EPMO is the representation of quality assurance across agencies through applied governance and oversight of IT projects. All employees are empowered to identify and facilitate continual improvement.

3.3 Management Reviews and Sustainment

Management review of EPMO's governance and oversight are conducted regularly. When issues are identified, the EPMO initiates corrective action and ensures improvement. Issues are addressed through preventive and corrective action, or as identified by risk and risk mitigation planning.

4. Resource Management

EPMO services rely on Business Owners, PMs, and peer organizations, e.g., procurement, technical architecture, information security, etc.. PMs perform a primary role in IT project success, and EPMO processes focus on the qualitative aspect of their knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve desired business outcomes. Agency processes and controls maintain records of their PMs competencies, experiences, and educational background based on their interview assessment and past performance with that state organizations. When deficiencies are identified the EPMO provides personnel recommendations, coaching, mentoring, consulting, training, and corrective action.

5. Product or Service Realization

The EPMO's principal product is governance and oversight for delivery of IT projects within planned cost and schedule. The EPMO works to ensure PMs plan, execute, and deliver IT projects based on an approved scope. When appropriate, the EPMO may provide design and development requirements as guidelines for stakeholders to follow. The EPMO has segmented product and service realization into multiple methods of delivery, each of which may be employed based on agency capability or IT project context and complexity. Methods available to use include:

- **Predictive** – generally referred to as a waterfall technique, this typically involves business concept, initiation, plan and procure, build and implement, and closeout phases.
- **Iterative** – generally associated with an array of applied Agile methodologies.
- **Hybrid** – a combination of predictive and iterative methods.

5.1 Risk Identification, Mitigation, and Management

The EPMO reviews and monitors each project, program and portfolio throughout its lifecycle based on scope, cost, schedule, and risk. An assessment is completed for all IT projects with each risk item and its corresponding mitigation plan reviewed and reassessed as the project matures through to product realization, and as warranted by designated DPs. EPMO processes enable IT projects to stay on course by taking into consideration that each project is unique and applying corrective actions only when projects deviate from plan. Lessons learned are captured and incorporated as appropriate into future efforts to prevent recurrence.

The EPMO provides guidance, expertise, and review throughout the product realization process as noted above and as defined within process. Stakeholders are required to incorporate the proper inputs, account for the requisite resources, and effectively manage cost and schedule while achieving the required expectations and benefits. Based on staff knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and lessons learned, the EPMO works to mitigate the risk of not meeting quality objectives.

Process records and project specific deliverables within the scope of this policy are managed and maintained within the Phoenix Project Management System. Each IT project resides independently within the system and subsequently represents its own quality plan with unique project requirements and work instructions assigned as required.

5.2 IT Procurement

Procurement processes are controlled external to EPMO. They are legislatively driven and managed through Statewide IT Procurement. The EPMO's role in this process is to evaluate procurement actions and determine if an IT project is needed to realize the implementation of the acquisition. Records are maintained according to Statewide IT Procurement policy.

6. Monitoring, Measuring, and Improving

EPMO processes are designed with consideration towards measuring appropriate effectiveness. Targets and goals are established and executed upon to produce and record suitable metrics. Metrics are designed to manage conformity to defined requirements based on governance and oversight demands, the customer, statute, or regulation. Process effectiveness is measured to control and meet quality objectives.

Customer satisfaction is primarily monitored and measured through surveys. The EPMO additionally collects and manages customer feedback through formal meetings and informal communication. All information is used to continually improve processes, reduce rework, and drive training initiatives.

The EPMO regularly reviews and monitors project, product, or service conformity within IT projects subject to established governance and oversight processes.

6.1 Control of Nonconforming Product or Service

The EPMO "product" is governance and oversight of IT Projects, as defined within statute and where the SCIO retains the authority to stop or suspend an IT project at any time. Control of non-conforming projects is achieved through measured oversight of quality objectives and a proactive approach to potential project management practice deficiencies. Non-conformance is addressed through root cause analysis followed by prescribed corrective action. In most cases, IT projects are not stopped due to an identified defect but are monitored for applied correction.

6.2 Corrective Action

The Corrective Action process encourages Business Owners and PMs to perform up-front planning and due diligence. It also provides a mechanism to insert "course correction" in IT projects that deviate too far from plan.

6.3 Data Analysis

The EPMO governance and oversight processes, and the Phoenix Project Management System, are designed with quality assurance and quality control measures to support the collection of data required to determine specific areas for improvement. This data includes internal and external customer feedback, corrective action, risk, reporting, DPs, and other tools and methods employed by EPMO. The EPMO uses these capabilities to capture metrics, conduct analysis, and implement process improvement or corrective action as required.

7.

7. References

The following references outline public information and laws concerning information technology project management and should be used to demonstrate NCDIT EPMO responsibilities associated with the organization, management, and implementation thereof.

7.1 NCDIT References

- [State IT Policies](#)
- [State IT Standards](#)
- [Statewide Information Security Policies](#)
- [IT Procurement Policies & Procedures](#)

7.2 North Carolina General Statutes

- N.C.G.S. 143B, [Article 15 – Department of Information Technology](#)
- Part 1 (1320-1329) – General Provisions.
 - 143B-1320.(a).(14) and (16) – Definitions; scope; exemptions.
 - 143B-1321.(a).(7), (8), (17), and (22) – Powers and duties of the Department; cost-sharing with exempt entities.
 - 143B-1322.(c).(14), (15), and (18) – State CIO duties; Departmental personnel and administration.
 - 143B-1325.(a).(5) and (c) – State information technology consolidated under Department of Information Technology.
- Part 2 (1330-1339) – Information Technology Planning, Funding, and Reporting.
 - 143B-1330.(b).(2) and (4) – Planning and financing State information technology resources.
 - 143B-1332 – Information Technology Fund.
 - 143B-1335 – Financial reporting and accountability for information technology investments and expenditures.
- Part 3 (1340-1349) – Information Technology Projects and Management.
 - 143B-1340 – Project Management.
 - 143B-1341 – Project management standards.
 - 143B-1342 – Dispute resolution.
- Part 4 (1350-1359) – Information Technology Procurement.
 - 143B-1350.(h) – Procurement of information technology.
 - 143B-1351.(a) – Restriction on State agency contractual authority with regard to information technology.
- Part 5 (1365-69) – Data Centers.
 - 143B-1365.(b) – Data Centers.
- Part 8 (1385-1389) – Government Data Analytics Center.

- 143B-1385.(b).(5) – [Government Data Analytics Center](#).

7.3 Additional Federal Governances

The following may apply:

- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST):
 - Special Publication (SP) 800-53.
 - [Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations](#).
- General Services Administration
 - [Accessibility Conformance Report](#).
 - [Revised 508 Standards](#).
 - [Voluntary Product Accessibility Template](#).
- World Wide Web Consortium
 - [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#).
- Internal Revenue Service:
 - [Publication 1075: Tax Information Security Guidelines for Federal, State, and Local Agencies](#):
- Social Security Administration:
 - [Social Security Administration](#).
- Department of Education:
 - [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).
- Department of Health and Human Services:
 - [Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#).
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS):
 - [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#).
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA):
 - [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#).
- PCI Security Standards Council:
 - [Payment Card Information \(PCI-DSS\)](#).

Document History

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Document Approval

This document represents the culmination of best practices of NCDIT EPMO for the State of North Carolina. Completion of the signature blocks signifies the approvers have read, understand, and agree with the content of this document.

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