

COMPANIES OWNED BY PE AND VC FIRMS IN LIMBO OVER PPP LOANS

Many companies owned by private-equity firms and venture-capital firms are in jeopardy of being ineligible to apply for Paycheck Protection Program loans unless Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin grants a late reprieve from the Small Business Administration's affiliation rules.

Democratic and Republican lawmakers urged Mnuchin on Thursday to waive the affiliation rule and seemed hopeful that Mnuchin would provide the waiver. See [here](#) and [here](#). However, the additional guidance provided by the SBA late Thursday, on the eve of the PPP loan application date, made no mention of the waiver.

Under the SBA's affiliation rules, the employees of portfolio companies controlled by a PE or VC firm are combined for purposes of determining whether each company has no more than 500 employees. Companies with more than 500 employees are ineligible for PPP loans, with some limited exceptions.

For example, if a PE firm controls five portfolio companies, and each portfolio company has 200 employees, none of the portfolio companies or the PE firm would be eligible for a PPP loan. They would all be deemed to have 1000 employees for purposes of a PPP loan.

Under the SBA's affiliation rules, a PE or VC firm may exert control over a company in several ways, including: (i) owning more than 50% of the stock or other equity interest of the company, (ii) controlling a majority of the board of directors or managers, or (iii) having veto rights or other protective rights allowing the PE or VC firm to block action by the board or owners of the company.

The SBA affiliation rules are often viewed in the context of PE and VC firms, but the affiliation rules apply to all affiliated companies (e.g., subsidiaries), not just those owned by PE and VC firms, unless the late waiver is granted.

O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong & Laing remains open and ready to help you. For questions or further information relating to the Paycheck Protection Program, please speak to your regular OCHDL contact, or the author of this article, attorney [Pete Faust](#).