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NLRB Election Records for Private Equity Target Screening

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Executive Summary

A National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) record is evidence about a case, a bargaining unit and a site. It is not, by itself, evidence about a company. This report gives private equity origination analysts a method for screening labor-intensive United States targets against public NLRB records, and it sorts every record into one of five statuses: **confirmed bounded representation**, **petition or election pending**, **allegation only**, **identity mismatch**, or **unknown**. It is a research triage aid, not labor-law advice, and every worked example in it is fictional.

The first step is identity, not search. NLRB case search accepts a case number or a case name (www.nlrb.gov), so an analyst who has not resolved the legal employer, its assumed names and its parent will either miss records or attach a stranger's record to the target. Legal names should come from registries: a state filing (www.sos.state.tx.us), a Legal Entity Identifier record (www.gleif.org), or the subsidiary list a public parent must file (www.ecfr.gov).

The second step is reading the stage. Elections are by secret ballot (www.ecfr.gov), but the count is only a tally. Certification follows when no timely objections or determinative challenges are outstanding, or once they have been resolved (www.ecfr.gov), and the NLRB's monthly reports count an election in the month its outcome is certified (www.nlrb.gov). A news report can be accurate about a vote while the record is still open (www.beckershospitalreview.com).

The third step is scope. The statute lets the Board choose an employer, craft, plant or subdivision unit (www.law.cornell.edu), and the majority-chosen representative is exclusive for the employees in that unit (www.law.cornell.edu). One election says nothing about the share of a company that is represented. Count distinct unit-site pairs, never "unionized companies", and never divide one unit's eligible voters by company headcount.

Context numbers keep the screen proportionate. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported a 2025 union membership rate of 10.0 percent (www.bls.gov) and a private-sector rate of 5.9 percent (www.bls.gov). The NLRB received 2,743 representation petitions in FY 2025 (www.nlrb.gov), and 94.4 percent of initial elections were held within 56 days of filing (www.nlrb.gov). In the September 2026 monthly report, 143 elections closed with a 70.6 percent union win rate (www.nlrb.gov).

Unfair labor practice (ULP) charges are a separate record type. A charge may be filed by an employee, an employer, a labor organization or any other person (nlrb.gov), and more than half of all charges are withdrawn or dismissed (www.nlrb.gov). A charge is an allegation until a Board or court process says otherwise. The absence of a case never proves the absence of representation, because recognition can occur without a ballot (www.freightwaves.com). Escalate to labor counsel for legal conclusions, successor questions and any record that cannot be tied to the right entity.

Introduction and Background

Labor-intensive businesses such as logistics, healthcare services, food processing and industrial services raise the same early question for an origination team: does a public record show that part of this workforce is represented by a union, or that an organizing effort is under way? The NLRB publishes the most direct public answer in the United States. It also publishes much that is easy to over-read.

This guide treats the **case number and the bargaining-unit definition** as the unit of evidence. A case number identifies one filing handled by one regional office. A unit definition identifies which employees, at which location, would be or are covered. Only after both are joined to a resolved legal entity and a site can an analyst write a company-level sentence, and even then the sentence should describe the unit, not the company.

The five allowed statuses

Every screen should end in exactly one status for each case-to-employer pairing:

- **Confirmed bounded representation:** a dated NLRB record ties a named union to a defined unit at an identified site of the resolved legal entity.
- **Petition or election pending:** a petition or tally exists, but certification or final disposition has not been recorded.
- **Allegation only:** a ULP charge or complaint exists. It is an allegation, not a finding about the target.
- **Identity mismatch:** the record belongs to a different legal entity, a similarly named business or a different site.
- **Unknown:** the query could not be run, errored or could not be reconciled. An inaccessible NLRB page is recorded as unknown, never as "no record".

The NLRB acts only on cases brought before it (www.nlrb.gov), so the absence of a case reflects what has been filed, not what exists in the workplace. This report does not claim that any real company has or lacks representation, and it does not infer labor risk from a filing alone. Legal implications require counsel and jurisdiction-specific review.

Why a source-first method

Trade-press examples show the same discipline this guide formalizes. One report cited a ballot count and noted that results are not final until certified (www.beckershospitalreview.com). That example is not a standard of accuracy, but it reads the record at the level of the stage. A screen should likewise match any site-level union claim to an NLRB case number before relying on it.

Resolving the Legal Employer Before Searching NLRB Records

The most common error in a labor-records screen is a search that succeeds against the wrong name. A target's public brand, its legal entity and its parent may all differ, and NLRB search keys on the case number or name.

Build the alias list from registries

Start with the exact legal name and record where it came from. Different sources contribute different facts:

- **State registries:** The Delaware entity search returns both active and inactive entities (icis.corp.delaware.gov), reflects the database as of the search date (icis.corp.delaware.gov), and its free results are limited to basics such as name, file number and formation date (icis.corp.delaware.gov).
- **Assumed names:** Texas requires an assumed name certificate filed with the Secretary of State (www.sos.state.tx.us) that states the legal name from the formation document (www.sos.state.tx.us). One entity may use several assumed names (www.sos.state.tx.us), and a certificate lasts for a term not to exceed ten years (www.sos.state.tx.us). Florida treats fictitious names as filed for public notice only (dos.fl.gov), registrations last five years (efile.sunbiz.org), and names are not screened against other recorded information (efile.sunbiz.org). In California, fictitious business names are filed with the county, not the state (www.sos.ca.gov), so a state search alone will not show DBAs, and California checks a proposed entity name only against like entity types (www.sos.ca.gov).
- **SEC EDGAR:** Full-text search covers filings since 2001 (www.sec.gov) and supports no natural-language queries (www.sec.gov). Names may be listed differently than expected (www.sec.gov), and not every company that offers stock must file electronically (www.sec.gov). A public parent's Form 10-K exhibit lists subsidiaries with the names under which they do business (www.ecfr.gov), although minor subsidiaries may be grouped as one (www.ecfr.gov).
- **LEI records:** Every Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) is unique to one entity (www.gleif.org) and carries the official name from official registers (www.gleif.org), and the data pool is free to search (www.gleif.org). Parent links appear only where the parent has itself obtained an LEI (www.gleif.org).
- **Tax and federal identifiers:** A new Employer Identification Number (EIN) is generally needed when ownership or structure changes (www.irs.gov), so an EIN is more stable than a name but can change in a deal. SAM.gov registrations must be renewed every 365 days (sam.gov) and exist mainly for federal-award participants.

Site versus company

Public statistics draw the same line the screen must. The Census Bureau defines an establishment as a single physical location where business is conducted (www.census.gov) and says it is not necessarily equivalent to a company or enterprise, which may consist of several establishments (www.census.gov). BLS counts a conglomerate with multiple EINs as a number of individual firms (www.bls.gov), and its enterprise concept covers the entire economic unit under common ownership or control (www.bls.gov).

NLRB election data are naturally establishment-level. A research team that assembled the election universe found the records carry establishment name, address and industry plus the union's name (arxiv.org) and no establishment identifier, so the authors had to construct one from address or standardized name (arxiv.org). An analyst joining a case to a site faces the same construction problem.

Same-name risk

Names recur across states, and registries are state-specific. Treat a name match as a candidate and require a second key before accepting it: matching street address, city and state for the unit location, registered agent or an identifier. The participant block on a case page lists roles and addresses, which is where to compare against the registry result. Record each registry result with its search date. If no candidate can be tied to the target by two independent keys, the status for any case found under that name is **identity mismatch** or **unknown**, which is a valid and useful result.

Case Numbers, Case Types and Search Filters

Reading a case number

NLRB case numbers combine a region, a case-type code and a sequence number. The two broad families are letter-coded: unfair labor practice charges are "C" cases, and petitions for certification or decertification are "R" cases (www.nlrb.gov).

- **RC:** a petition filed by employees or a union acting for them (www.nlrb.gov). Statutorily, employees may petition when a substantial number want representation and the employer declines to recognize a union (www.law.cornell.edu).
- **RM:** an employer petition, available when a union has presented a claim to be recognized (www.law.cornell.edu). The rules require evidence of a demand for recognition or of the employer's good-faith uncertainty about majority support (www.ecfr.gov).
- **RD:** a decertification petition, filed by employees or on their behalf to remove a recognized union.
- **UC and AC:** unit clarification and amendment of certification petitions, which only a union or an employer may file (www.ecfr.gov).
- **CA and CB:** charges against an employer and against a labor organization. The code-to-form mapping is an inference from form names, so confirm it on the case page.

What the search and case pages show

The case-search page lists results by case number, date filed, status, location and region, and each result can be opened for detail. A case page adds a docket and participants. The docket is incomplete by the page's own statement (www.nlrb.gov). Capture for each case:

- **Case number and type**, copied exactly.
- **Date filed** and the **open or closed** status on the retrieval date.
- **Region and location** as shown.
- **Source URL and access date**, with a dated archive copy.

Election results and data downloads

The Recent Election Results interface carries a unit location field (www.nlrb.gov) next to voting-unit text, ballot counts and status. The NLRB's FOIA E-Library says representation cases in its case-file search include the number of employees in the bargaining unit and the unit description (www.nlrb.gov). Independent researchers warn that NLRB election data can be spotty with occasionally missing information (unionelections.org) and that private-sector scope excludes public-employee elections (unionelections.org).

Searching by employer, step by step

1. Run the resolved legal name and each alias in the case search. Record each query string and date.
2. Sort by date filed and read all candidates, not only the newest.
3. Open each candidate and compare participants, address and unit location to the registry keys.
4. Classify each case as representation or ULP by its type code before reading anything else.
5. Record any failed or timed-out query as **unknown** and rerun it another day.

Reading Representation Cases: Petition, Tally, Objections and Certification

Each representation stage supports a different claim.

Petition

A petition starts the case. The petitioner's evidence of employee support is filed with the petition (www.ecfr.gov) and, in practice, is not served on other parties, which is why public records show a petition but not the support behind it. A regional director needs reasonable cause to believe a question of representation exists before noticing a hearing (www.ecfr.gov). The Act also bars a new election in a unit that held a valid election in the preceding twelve months (www.law.cornell.edu). A petition tells the analyst that someone asked for an election in a defined unit. It does not say an election occurred or how it ended.

Scheduling and procedure

The pre-election hearing is generally set eight days after service of the notice, and the election is scheduled for the earliest practicable date (www.ecfr.gov). The employer must supply a voter list within two business days after an election agreement is approved (www.ecfr.gov); the list carries names, work locations, shifts, job

classifications and contact information (www.ecfr.gov). The 2023 procedural rule substantially rescinded the Board's 2019 amendments (www.federalregister.gov). A 2024 rule on blocking charges and the voluntary-recognition bar rescinded and replaced the April 2020 amendments (www.federalregister.gov). Under the blocking provision, a regional director holds a petition in abeyance, absent special circumstances, when an offer of proof qualifies (www.ecfr.gov). A petition with no tally may therefore be paused rather than abandoned, so record it as **pending**.

Tally, challenges and objections

After the vote, ballots are counted and a tally is prepared and made immediately available (www.ecfr.gov). Any party may challenge a voter's eligibility for good cause (www.ecfr.gov), and challenged ballots are impounded (www.ecfr.gov). If challenges are determinative, ballots are opened and a revised tally issues (www.ecfr.gov), and a hearing on objections or determinative challenges is set for 15 business days after the tally (www.ecfr.gov). Only one runoff is held under the rule (www.ecfr.gov). A tally is a count at a point in time.

Objections are due within five business days after the tally is prepared (www.ecfr.gov), while the NLRB's Conduct Elections page describes the window as seven days of the vote count (www.nlrb.gov). The wording differs, so record the dates the docket shows instead of computing a deadline.

Certification

If there are no timely objections and challenged ballots are insufficient to affect the result, the Regional Director issues a certification of the results (www.ecfr.gov), including a certification of representative where appropriate (www.ecfr.gov). A certification of results is therefore issued whichever way the vote goes, and the certification of representative follows only a union win. The Federal Register summary of the 2023 rule describes certification of the results as the fourth and last step in resolving a question of representation (www.federalregister.gov). Regional Director decisions on objections are final unless Board review is granted, and the case reaches final disposition when the petition is dismissed or results are certified (www.ecfr.gov).

What certification means, and what it does not

A certified union is entitled to be recognized as the exclusive bargaining agent (www.nlrb.gov), and the exclusivity attaches to the employees "in such unit" (www.law.cornell.edu). The Board decides the unit to assure employees the fullest freedom in exercising their rights (www.law.cornell.edu), and the extent of organizing is not controlling (www.law.cornell.edu). The presumption of majority status can run through a collective bargaining agreement for up to three years (www.nlrb.gov), so every conclusion needs a date. The Act's own definition of employee excludes independent contractors (www.law.cornell.edu) and agricultural laborers (www.law.cornell.edu), so some workforces fall outside NLRB records altogether.

Recognition without a ballot

Voluntary recognition is another route. A voluntary-recognition bar stops processing of election petitions for a reasonable period (www.ecfr.gov), lasting no more than one year after the first bargaining session (www.ecfr.gov). The NLRB election-results page also does not record successful authorization card drives (www.freightwaves.com). The screen must therefore say "no NLRB election record found", not "no union".

Reading Unfair Labor Practice Records Without Over-Reading Them

Allegation is not finding

The Act protects employees' rights to organize and bargain collectively (www.law.cornell.edu), and an employer's refusal to bargain with employee representatives is an unfair labor practice (www.law.cornell.edu). The duty to bargain means meeting at reasonable times and conferring in good faith (www.law.cornell.edu), but it does not compel agreement to a proposal (www.law.cornell.edu). A charge is how someone asks the NLRB to examine a matter, and it need not come from the employee directly affected. The six-month limit bars complaints based on events more than six months before the charge (www.law.cornell.edu).

The NLRB receives about 20,000 to 30,000 charges per year (www.nlrb.gov). Charges are settled by the parties, withdrawn by the charging party or dismissed by the Regional Director (www.nlrb.gov).

The ladder of stages

- **Charge:** an allegation. No finding exists.
- **Complaint:** if no settlement is reached in a meritorious case, the agency issues a complaint (www.nlrb.gov), which leads to a hearing before an administrative law judge (ALJ) unless there is a settlement.
- **ALJ decision:** an initial decision; parties may appeal by filing exceptions (www.nlrb.gov).
- **Board decision:** reviewable in a U.S. Court of Appeals and ultimately the Supreme Court. The Board petitions a court of appeals to enforce its orders (www.law.cornell.edu).
- **Settlement:** more than 90 percent of meritorious cases settle at some point (www.nlrb.gov). A settlement is a resolution, not a finding.
- **Dismissal or withdrawal:** the matter closed without a Board finding.

The statute marks where an allegation becomes a finding: the Board must be of the opinion, upon the preponderance of the testimony taken, that the conduct occurred (www.law.cornell.edu); otherwise it dismisses the complaint (www.law.cornell.edu). Remedies include cease-and-desist orders (www.law.cornell.edu).

How a screener should use ULP records

A ULP charge is a pointer to a topic for labor counsel, not a risk score. Record case number, filing date, stage and status. Do not write that a company "has labor problems" from a charge or complaint. If a record shows a Board decision or court enforcement, quote the stage exactly and route it to counsel.

Implementation Considerations and Process Changes

From company lists to a case-to-employer worksheet

The core change is replacing a yes or no "unionized" column with one worksheet row per case. *Table 1* below is the proposed one-page reconciliation worksheet, shown with a fictional row.

Field	What to record	Fictional row (Hypothetical Example)
Searched aliases	Every name queried, with date	"Target A LLC", "A Cold Chain", "Holdco A"; searched 2026-10-27
Entity ID	Registry file number, LEI or EIN, with source	State file number; LEI if any
Site	Address and the source for it	Site 1, distribution facility, named city
NLRB case number and type	Exact number and prefix	An RC case in a named region
Unit language	Included and excluded titles, verbatim	"All full-time and regular part-time drivers"
Stage	Petition, tally, objections, certified, closed	Certification of representative
Source date	Date on the record and retrieval date	Certified 2026-03; retrieved 2026-10-27
Outcome	As shown, no paraphrase	Union certified for the unit
Confidence	High, medium or low, with reason	High: two identity keys match
Reviewer	Initials and date	Second reviewer confirms
Next check	Specific follow-up	Request the bargaining agreement in diligence

The worksheet works because each row is falsifiable: another analyst can open the case number and see the same facts. Its limits matter too. A fictional row cannot show how messy real unit language is, and the confidence column is a judgment, not a measurement. Where multiple units appear, count **distinct unit-site pairs**, not unionized companies, and do not compute a company-wide unionization percentage from a single election.

Mapping stage to claim

Table 2 below turns each stage into a rule: what the source stage permits an analyst to write, and what it forbids.

Source stage	Permissible claim	Forbidden inference
No case found	"No NLRB case found under the searched aliases on this date"	"No union" or "no organizing"
Petition (RC, RM, RD)	"A petition was filed on this date for this unit"	That an election happened or that employees are represented
Tally of ballots	"A tally issued on this date with these counts; status as shown"	That the result is final or certified
Challenged ballots outstanding	"Challenges are recorded; outcome open"	That the count is the final result

Source stage	Permissible claim	Forbidden inference
Certification of representative	"A union was certified for this unit at this site"	That the whole company or other sites are represented
Certification of results, no union	"The recorded outcome for this unit was no union"	That the company has no union anywhere
ULP charge	"A charge was filed on this date and has this status"	That any wrongdoing occurred
Complaint, ALJ or Board decision	"The record is at this stage; refer to counsel"	A conclusion about liability or the present workplace
Settlement or withdrawal	"The matter closed by this route"	A finding in either direction
Query failed or page unavailable	"Unknown; rerun on another day"	"No record"

The right-hand column is the control. Most screening errors are not wrong facts but facts promoted one stage too far. Reviewers should read the forbidden-inference column during second review, because "the company is unionized" passes a casual read while failing this test.

Cross-checks outside the NLRB

Other public sources can corroborate or contradict a record without replacing it. The Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) maintains a public disclosure room where reports filed by unions, officers, employers and others can be searched (www.dol.gov). Union annual financial reports are due within 90 days of fiscal year-end (www.dol.gov), and the room links a bulk download of union financial information (www.dol.gov). A Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service notice of intent to open a bargaining agreement (www.fmcs.gov) signals a bargaining timeline, not an NLRB election. For a public parent, the annual report must describe human capital resources, including the number of persons employed (www.ecfr.gov), which can sanity-check a unit's size against company headcount.

Reconciling conflicting statements

When a company statement, a union statement and an NLRB record disagree, the record governs only for what it states. Follow this sequence:

1. **Archive** the NLRB page with date and URL.
2. **Match** each statement to a case number, unit and site.
3. **Check scope:** a union claim may refer to a site while a company statement refers to the whole firm.
4. **Check route:** recognition without an election leaves no election record (www.freightwaves.com).
5. **Preserve** the conflict in the worksheet with both sources instead of choosing one.

When to escalate to labor counsel

Escalate when a certification is identified at a site and the team needs to understand bargaining obligations, when a complaint or Board decision exists, when documents are redacted or missing, or when deal structure raises successor questions. The NLRB describes a successor's duty to bargain as arising when it acquires a business from a predecessor whose employees are represented, among other conditions (www.nlrb.gov). Those points are doctrine, not conclusions about any target.

Data Analysis and Evidence

Union density context

Union density sets the prior. BLS reported a 2025 union membership rate of 10.0 percent (www.bls.gov), with 14.7 million wage and salary members (www.bls.gov), and a private-sector rate of 5.9 percent (www.bls.gov). BLS also reports workers represented by unions, which adds non-members whose jobs are covered by a union contract (www.bls.gov): 16.5 million in 2025 (www.bls.gov), a rate of 11.2 percent (www.bls.gov). The 2024 membership rate was 9.9 percent (www.bls.gov). BLS cautions that 2025 estimates use 11-month averages that exclude October (www.bls.gov), so year-over-year comparisons need care.

The members-versus-represented distinction mirrors the screening problem: coverage can exceed membership, just as a unit's coverage can differ from a company's headcount. In BLS Table 3 (www.bls.gov), the 2025 membership rates were 13.6 percent in transportation and warehousing, 11.1 percent in construction, 7.7 percent in manufacturing and 6.8 percent in health care and social assistance. These are national industry rates, not predictions for any company.

Representation caseload and timing

In FY 2025 the NLRB received 2,743 representation petitions, including 2,633 petitions for secret-ballot elections (www.nlrb.gov). The FY 2024 release counted 3,286 union election petitions (www.nlrb.gov). The bases are not stated identically across releases, so if they are comparable, FY 2025's 2,633 would be roughly a fifth below FY 2024; the sources do not confirm comparability.

Timing matters to a screen's shelf life. In FY 2025, 94.4 percent of initial elections were held within 56 days of filing (www.nlrb.gov). Before the 2014 procedures, medians in contested cases were 66, 59 and 59 days (www.federalregister.gov); in FY 2016 to 2018 they were 35, 36 and 41 (www.federalregister.gov), and in cases with an election agreement 23, 22 and 23 (www.federalregister.gov). A petition can become a tally in about a month, so a screen only weeks old may already be stale.

Monthly election outcomes

Table 3 below summarizes the monthly "cases closed" election reports. The counts are as printed, and the final column is the analyst's arithmetic on those printed counts (valid votes for plus against, divided by eligible employees).

Report (cases closed)	Elections	Union win rate	Eligible employees	Valid votes for / against	Valid votes as share of eligible
September 2026, all types (www.nlrb.gov)	143	70.6%	6,993	3,577 / 2,170	82.2%
September 2026, RC only	123	73.2%	6,242	3,197 / 1,937	82.2%
August 2026, all types (www.nlrb.gov)	122	77.7%	10,039	3,702 / 3,632	73.1%

The September report also shows 13 decertification elections with a 46.2 percent union win rate and 7 employer-petition elections at 71.4 percent. Three cautions apply. Monthly counts are keyed to the case-closed date, not the vote date. The win rate covers elections held, not organizing attempts, since petitions can be withdrawn before a vote. And units are small: 6,993 eligible employees across 143 elections is about 49 per election in September 2026, while August's larger total reflects a few large units. Academic work from 1999 finds unions less likely to win in large units than in small ones (www.nber.org), and the share of the private-sector nonunion workforce voting in elections fell from 0.9 percent in 1973 to 0.2 percent in 1997 (www.nber.org), which shows elections covered only a small slice of the workforce in those years; this older research may not reflect current election patterns. A distribution of unit sizes, not an average, is the right basis for company-level reasoning.

Charge outcomes

On the ULP side, the NLRB reported 19,754 charges filed in FY 2025, of which 32.8 percent were found to have merit (www.nlrb.gov). These aggregates show why a charge is a weak signal for any single target: most charges do not end in a complaint.

Private equity and worker outcomes

Direct evidence on union status after buyouts is thin. A 2026 academic review chapter summarizes that the impact of buyouts on workers is not uniform (ifn.se). A 2010 European survey found that managers report private equity investment does not result in changes to union recognition (openaccess.city.ac.uk); it reflects manager perceptions and not US administrative data. No source located for this guide measured US post-buyout union status from NLRB records.

Case Studies and Real-World Examples

This section is a **(Hypothetical Example)**: anonymized and fictional, describing no real company, union or case.

Setup. An analyst screens "Target A", a regional cold-chain logistics business with five sites. Registry searches show a legal entity, "Target A, LLC", one assumed name and a holding-company parent. The analyst searches all three names in NLRB case search on 27 October 2026.

Findings.

- **Case 1 (RC), Site 1.** Docket shows a petition, tally and certification of representative for "all full-time and regular part-time drivers". Closed. The participant address matches the registry.
- **Case 2 (RC), Site 3.** Tally shows fewer votes for the union than against, then a certification of results for a warehouse unit. Closed.
- **Case 3 (CA), Site 2.** A charge against the employer, filed two months ago. Open, with no complaint on the docket.
- **Case 4 (RC), similar name, another state.** The address matches no registry address for Target A.
- **Sites 4 and 5.** No case under any alias.

Classification.

- **Case 1, Site 1 drivers:** confirmed bounded representation. Allowed statement: "A union was certified for the Site 1 driver unit."
- **Case 2, Site 3 warehouse:** closed with no union in that unit. Allowed statement: "The recorded outcome for the Site 3 warehouse unit was no union."
- **Case 3, Site 2 charge:** allegation only. Allowed statement: "A charge is open; no complaint is shown."
- **Case 4:** identity mismatch. No statement is allowed, and the record is excluded.
- **Sites 4 and 5:** unknown. Allowed statement: "No NLRB case found under searched aliases on this date."

Counting. The screen has two distinct unit-site pairs with RC outcomes: one with certified representation and one without. The analyst does not report "one in five sites unionized" or divide the Site 1 unit's eligible voters by company headcount, because other sites may have other units, recognition without election may exist, and the unit may be a small part of the workforce. The handoff lists open questions: the Site 1 bargaining agreement and its expiry, whether Sites 4 and 5 have recognized units, the status of the Case 3 charge, and whether an alias was missed.

Implications and Future Directions

For screening practice. "Unionization risk" is better treated as a set of dated, bounded facts than as a score. Records that look alarming, such as an open charge, often carry the least information, since most charges are withdrawn or dismissed (www.nlrb.gov). Records that look benign, such as a lost election, may sit beside recognized units elsewhere in the company.

For deal structure. Whether a buyer inherits employment relationships depends on structure. In a stock deal there is no change in the legal employer (www.axley.com); in an asset deal the buyer typically may selectively hire employees (www.axley.com), though it may still be held liable for employment liabilities as a successor (openbooks.library.northwestern.edu). Rights such as seniority, benefits and collective bargaining agreements may require recognition (www.axley.com), and diligence request lists commonly ask for the presence of trade unions and other employee representative groups (openbooks.library.northwestern.edu). The NLRB screen is an input to those requests, not a substitute.

For data quality. The public record has structural gaps: dockets are incomplete, some documents require a FOIA request (www.nlrb.gov), and election pages do not capture recognition outside the election process (www.freightwaves.com). Procedural rules also change by filing date, so a team should note which rule regime governed a case. The ground rules can shift again, which is why this guide asks for source dates rather than conclusions.

Open questions. Unmeasured: how often public NLRB records can be matched to the legal entity a PE screen resolves, how long a record stays current, and whether a record-based screen predicts later labor outcomes. The honest status for each is unknown, and any claim of predictive value would need an independent study.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How do I search NLRB election results by employer?

Search by case name or number, try the legal name and each alias, and open every candidate. Use the election-results interface for tallies and unit location. Confirm the participant address against a registry before accepting a match.

How do I read NLRB election results by worksite and bargaining unit?

Read each tally at the level of the unit and its location: the unit location field (www.nlrb.gov) and the voting-unit text identify which employees at which site were covered. Because the Act lets the Board choose employer, craft, plant or subdivision units (www.law.cornell.edu), record one worksheet row per unit-site pair and never aggregate to the company.

What does NLRB union election data tell me in due diligence?

It tells you what the record says about one unit at one location on one date. Researchers who assembled the election universe note that records carry establishment name, address and industry plus the union's name (arxiv.org), which is why the screen joins them to a resolved entity before drawing company-level conclusions.

What does an RC case lookup tell me?

An RC case is a petition for an election in a defined unit (www.ecfr.gov). The case page shows filing, status and region and, if a vote was held, the tally and unit text. It supports statements about one unit at one location.

Can an NLRB election tally prove a site is unionized?

No. The tally is a count (www.ecfr.gov), and certification issues once any timely objections and determinative challenges are resolved, or if there are none. Wait for the certification entry.

Does a union election petition mean the whole company is organizing?

No. A petition concerns a defined unit, which is a group of employees sharing a community of interest (www.law.cornell.edu).

Does an unfair labor practice charge show labor-relations risk?

It shows an allegation was filed. Any person may file, and more than half of charges are withdrawn or dismissed. Record the stage and refer questions to counsel.

How does labor relations risk in a private equity acquisition depend on deal structure?

It depends on whether employment continues with the same legal employer; see the stock and asset discussion above (openbooks.library.northwestern.edu). Consult counsel on successor obligations.

What if no NLRB case is found?

Record "no NLRB case found under the searched aliases on this date". It does not show an absence of representation, because recognition can occur without an election (www.freightwaves.com).

How should I screen acquisition targets for unionization risk at scale?

Resolve entities first, search each alias, classify each case by stage and count unit-site pairs. Use the claim rules in Table 2 and escalate per the criteria above. Density figures such as the BLS private-sector rate of 5.9 percent (www.bls.gov) are context, not target-level evidence.

Conclusion

NLRB records are strong evidence when read at the level they were written: a case number, a unit definition, a site and a stage. They are weak evidence when promoted to company-level statements. The method asks an analyst to resolve the legal employer first, record every alias and query date, classify each case into one of five statuses, apply the claim rules in Table 2, count unit-site pairs rather than unionized companies, and preserve conflicts instead of resolving them by assertion.

Three habits carry most of the value. Treat a tally as a count and wait for certification. Treat a charge as an allegation and route it to counsel. Treat a failed or missing search as unknown, not as zero. The worksheet lets a reviewer reproduce each statement from its dated source, and the open-questions handoff makes uncertainty visible to the deal team.

This guide is a research triage aid. It is not legal advice, does not describe any actual acquisition target, and does not replace review by labor counsel in the relevant jurisdiction.

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

1. https://www.nlrb.gov/search/case
2. https://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/instructions/503.shtml
3. https://www.gleif.org/en/lei-data/access-and-use-lei-data/level-1-data-who-is-who
4. https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-17/chapter-II/part-229/subpart-229.600/section-229.601
5. https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-29/subtitle-B/chapter-I/part-102/subpart-C/section-102.69
6. https://www.nlrb.gov/reports/agency-performance/election-reports

7. https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hr/stanford-physicians-form-union
8. https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/29/159
9. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm
10. https://www.nlrb.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/pages/node-130/nlrb-fy2025-par.pdf
11. https://www.nlrb.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/pages/node-9980/cases-closed-september-2026.pdf
12. https://nlrb.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/pages/node-184/basicguide.pdf
13. https://www.nlrb.gov/reports/nlrb-case-activity-reports/unfair-labor-practice-cases/intake/unfair-labor-practice-charges
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16. https://dos.fl.gov/sunbiz/start-business/efile/fl-fictitious-name-registration
17. https://efile.sunbiz.org/ficfaq.html
18. https://www.sos.ca.gov/business-programs/business-entities/name-availability
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21. https://www.gleif.org/en/about-lei/introducing-the-legal-entity-identifier-lei
22. https://www.gleif.org/en/lei-data/access-and-use-lei-data/level-2-data-who-owns-whom
23. https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/employer-id-numbers
24. https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration
25. https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/susb/technical-documentation/methodology.html
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27. https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2016/article/pdf/establishment-firm-or-enterprise.pdf
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30. https://www.nlrb.gov/reports/nlrb-case-activity-reports/representation-cases/intake/representation-petitions-rc
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35. https://www.nlrb.gov/guidance/freedom-of-information-act-foia/foia-e-library
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40. https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/08/25/2023-18129/representation-case-procedures
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63. https://www.nber.org/papers/w7229
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65. https://ifn.se/en/publications/book-chapters/2026/2026-from-wall-street-to-work-floor-how-private-equity-buyouts-affect-workers
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Research against a defined mandate

A useful target list needs more than company names. Docket focuses on the questions that determine whether a company fits an investment mandate, including the evidence needed to support or qualify each answer. Our research approach makes the connection between screening criteria, source material and conclusions visible to the team reviewing the work.

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Our research library covers market mapping, screening criteria, private-company data, succession and ownership, source evaluation and evidence standards. These resources explain the methods and limitations behind origination research. Findings support a team's judgment; they do not establish that a company is for sale or guarantee a transaction or investment outcome.

Work with Docket

Visit Docket to explore the platform, managed research and the current contact path. Read about screening criteria, evidence standards, AI research agents and market mapping.

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