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Business Entity Status Meaning: A Buyer Triage Protocol

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In this article

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Background
3. What Business Entity Status Means
4. State Status Crosswalk and Jurisdictional Effects
5. A Triage Protocol for Origination Lists
6. Reconciling Registry and Operating Evidence
7. Data Analysis and Evidence
8. Case Studies and Real-World Examples
9. Implications and Future Directions
10. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
11. Conclusion

Executive Summary

A **business entity status** is a jurisdiction's statement about a particular registration at a particular time. It can describe whether an entity is on the formation state's records, whether a foreign entity is authorized locally, or whether specified filings and payments are current. It does not by itself establish revenue, solvency, ownership, a functioning workplace, or willingness to sell. Colorado expressly ties **good standing** to statutory filing requirements and says it does not investigate operations; South Carolina says good standing does not mean the business currently operates. (www.sos.state.co.us) (businessfilings.sc.gov) For private equity origination, the correct unit of analysis is a matched legal entity and jurisdiction, not the brand name or a single nationwide active flag.

The same label can cover different tests. California publishes entity status alongside separate Franchise Tax Board, Secretary of State, agent, and victims-fund standing fields. Texas distinguishes its Secretary of State certificate of fact-status from the Comptroller's franchise tax account status. Rhode Island says its certificate of status does not verify tax obligations, while Missouri imposes no annual corporate franchise tax for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2016. (www.sos.ca.gov) (www.sos.state.tx.us) (www.sos.ri.gov) (revisor.mo.gov) A buyer should record the issuing office, entity type, jurisdiction, exact label, as-of date, and the office's own definition before assigning a screening outcome.

A **suspended, forfeited, revoked, inactive, or administratively dissolved** record ordinarily triggers review of filing history and restoration routes, not an inference of insolvency. Florida permits reinstatement of administratively dissolved or revoked entities; Georgia says an administratively dissolved entity continues its corporate existence but is limited to winding up; Washington uses different status language for domestic and foreign registrations. (dos.fl.gov) (sos.ga.gov) (www.sos.wa.gov) A foreign withdrawal is especially easy to misread: New York says the entity remains in existence in its home state after surrendering New York authority. (dos.ny.gov)

The practical protocol is to **pass identity**, **request review**, **exclude under a prewritten mandate rule**, or **retain as unresolved**. First match the entity identifier and formation jurisdiction; then preserve the status screen and filing history; then test current operations with dated, entity-linked evidence. Recheck before

outreach or a consequential decision. A list's **status-review rate** is the count of unique canonical entities with non-clear or conflicting status divided by all unique canonical entities checked. It measures research workload, not distress or acquisition propensity. Docket's published workflow describes identity checking before detailed research and an audit pass over retained evidence; these are first-party descriptions of a research process, not proof about any target.

Introduction and Background

A registry result often enters an acquisition list as a two-word field: **active** or **inactive**. That field is useful only after the analyst knows which legal entity, office, and registration it describes. A formation-state record can answer a different question from a foreign qualification in a sales state. A tax-account result can answer a different question from a Secretary of State certificate. The National Association of Secretaries of State maintains links to state registration pages, a starting point for choosing the actual issuing office rather than relying on a data reseller's normalized label. (www.nass.org)

The interpretation problem becomes visible when an apparently active website or recent hiring post sits beside a registry warning. The website may be current but belong to a parent, a successor, a trade name, or a different entity with a similar name. Conversely, an apparently current registry entry can coexist with no observable operations. South Carolina states this limitation directly, and Colorado says its office does not verify submitted filing information. (businessfilings.sc.gov) (www.sos.state.co.us) Neither source authorizes a conclusion about commercial health from the status field alone.

This report supplies a decision protocol for **private equity origination analysts** and screening-rubric owners. It distinguishes four questions: does the legal entity exist on the relevant registry; may it transact locally under that registration; has it satisfied the standing tests that office applies; and is there dated evidence of current operations by the same legal entity? It then maps common labels to official definitions, assigns review actions, and gives a log format for conflicts. The conclusions are workflow recommendations. Counsel should determine the legal effect of a status for a particular jurisdiction, entity type, transaction, and date.

Timing matters. Colorado says a certificate reflects the record when created, and Florida says its database is updated daily. (www.sos.state.co.us) (dos.fl.gov) A screenshot or certificate acquired for an earlier screen is an observation, not a permanent attribute. The article's definitions were checked on **September 24, 2026**; a fresh registry query and relevant filed documents are necessary at the point of use.

What Business Entity Status Means

Four separate propositions

Entity existence asks whether the domestic legal person is on the formation jurisdiction's records and what event, if any, ended or changed it. Pennsylvania's domestic subsistence certificate speaks to existence as a matter of record. (www.pa.gov) It is more precise than a generic "active" field, which Pennsylvania says it does not use for corporations. (www.pa.gov)

Local authority asks whether a foreign entity has registered to transact business in a second jurisdiction. California defines an active foreign record in terms of authorization to transact intrastate business there, and its field definitions warn that the status of a foreign entity applies only to the California registration. (www.sos.ca.gov) Virginia's corporate certificate statute similarly distinguishes a domestic corporation's incorporation from a foreign corporation's authority in the Commonwealth. (law.lis.virginia.gov)

Filing and tax standing asks whether the office's specified conditions are met. Colorado's good standing addresses statutory filing requirements with its office. Rhode Island expressly excludes verification of tax obligations from its Department of State certificate. Texas splits Secretary of State status and Comptroller account status. (www.sos.state.co.us) (www.sos.ri.gov) (www.sos.state.tx.us) A column called "good standing" in an internal spreadsheet therefore needs a source-defined scope, not a universal Boolean.

Current operations asks whether the same enterprise appears to be carrying on activity now. A state record may be necessary for some legal conclusions but cannot prove a staffed office, revenue, licenses, or sale readiness. South Carolina's registry says good standing does not mean current operation; Ohio says licensing is handled by other state agencies. (businessfilings.sc.gov) (www.ohiosos.gov) The analyst should treat operations as a separate evidence question with its own date and entity match.

Why labels cannot be translated mechanically

A label is a value in a jurisdiction's schema. In Colorado, a missed periodic report or registered-agent requirement can move an entity to noncompliant and then delinquent after **sixty days**. (www.sos.state.co.us) In Washington, "inactive" can mean still legally recognized but not in good standing. (www.sos.wa.gov) In Virginia, the displayed categories include Active, Pending Active, Pending Inactive, and Inactive, and the "Reason for Status" field gives the relevant detail. (www.scc.virginia.gov) Ohio's FAQ defines "Active" in its name-availability explanation as exclusive use of the name, a narrower question than operational activity. (www.ohiosos.gov)

The interpretation sequence should be **label, field definition, filing history, governing instrument, then decision**. If the issuing site provides only a name-result list, do not convert that list into status evidence. Delaware explicitly warns that its free name search is not an indication of current status and distinguishes a paid online status result from an official certificate. (icis.corp.delaware.gov) (corp.delaware.gov)

State Status Crosswalk and Jurisdictional Effects

Table 1 is a research crosswalk, not a legal opinion. "Unknown" means the cited office does not establish that proposition in the quoted source. All definitions were verified **September 24, 2026**. The "existence" and "authority" cells describe what the cited field speaks to, not a full transaction opinion.

Label and issuing office	Official meaning in cited source	Taxes included?	Entity existence implied?	Local authority implied?	Reinstatement available?	Source	Verified	Research action
Colorado good standing, Secretary of State	Statutory filing requirements with that office met.	Not established by this definition.	Registry record only.	Check domestic or foreign role.	Check current history.	(www.sos.state.co.us)	2026-09-24	Pass this filing check; assess other questions separately.
California active, Secretary of State	For a foreign entity, registration and intrastate authority in California.	Separate Franchise Tax Board field.	Foreign home existence requires separate check.	Yes, for the California registration, subject to other law.	Not applicable to active status.	(www.sos.ca.gov)	2026-09-24	Verify home state and each standing field.
California suspended or forfeited, Secretary of State / Franchise Tax Board	SOS and tax-related causes have distinct meanings.	Yes if FTB field is the cause; otherwise do not infer.	Not decided by label alone.	Refer to counsel for legal effect.	Revivor route depends on cause.	(www.sos.ca.gov)	2026-09-24	Pull cause, filing history, and revivor requirements.
Delaware free name result, Division of Corporations	Name list is not current status evidence.	No.	No.	No.	Not determined.	(icis.corp.delaware.gov)	2026-09-24	Obtain an actual status result or certificate.
Florida active or administratively dissolved, Division of Corporations	Annual report maintains active record; missed filing can cause administrative dissolution or revocation.	Not established by cited annual-report page.	Review entity type and history.	Review domestic versus foreign record.	Yes, application route described.	(dos.fl.gov)	2026-09-24	Request filing and reinstatement review.
Texas certificate of fact-status, Secretary of State	Official evidence of existence or Texas authority, according to entity role.	Separate Comptroller check.	Yes for domestic certificate scope.	Yes for foreign certificate scope.	Separate analysis.	(www.sos.state.tx.us)	2026-09-24	Order the correct certificate and tax-account check.

Label and issuing office	Official meaning in cited source	Taxes included?	Entity existence implied?	Local authority implied?	Reinstatement available?	Source	Verified	Research action
Pennsylvania subsistence, Department of State	Domestic entity still exists on the office's record.	Tax scope not established by cited subsistence definition.	Yes, as a matter of record.	Check foreign registration separately.	Depends on status and role.	(www.pa.gov)	2026-09-24	Record domestic or foreign certificate type.
Virginia inactive, State Corporation Commission	Search category requires "Reason for Status" detail.	Not established by category.	Not decided by label alone.	Not decided by label alone.	Five-year route may apply.	(www.scc.virginia.gov)	2026-09-24	Read reason and deadline before action.
Washington withdrawn, Secretary of State	Foreign entity voluntarily closed Washington registration.	Not established.	Home-state existence requires separate check.	Washington registration surrendered.	Consult current state route.	(www.sos.wa.gov)	2026-09-24	Check home state; do not code as entity dissolution.
Rhode Island certificate of status, Department of State	Does not verify tax obligations.	No.	Within certificate's stated scope.	Depends on entity role.	Status-specific.	(www.sos.ri.gov)	2026-09-24	Add separate tax inquiry if mandate needs it.
South Carolina good standing, Secretary of State	Entity has not been dissolved on state records; operation is not established.	Not established.	Yes, limited to record.	Not established by quoted wording.	Status-specific.	(businessfilings.sc.gov)	2026-09-24	Keep operations as an independent field.
Missouri corporate good standing, Secretary of State	The SOS says a corporation must have filed annual reports, met franchise tax requirements, and maintained a proper registered agent or office to receive a good-standing certificate.	No annual corporate franchise tax or related report for those tax years.	Within the office's record.	Check registration type.	Status-specific.	(www.sos.mo.gov) (revisor.mo.gov) (dor.mo.gov)	2026-09-24	Do not treat this certificate as proof of payment of a currently imposed corporate franchise tax; review any older obligations separately.

The crosswalk demonstrates why a normalized vendor field should preserve the **original label and source URL**. Two records marked "good standing" may have different tax scope; two "inactive" records may encode different legal events. A defensible screen stores the original value, the analyst's interpretation, and the rule version that converted it into a workflow state.

Domestic, foreign, withdrawal, dissolution, and merger

"Domestic" identifies formation in the jurisdiction; "foreign" identifies formation elsewhere. Washington provides both definitions explicitly. (www.sos.wa.gov) A company can therefore have one formation-state record and several local registrations. A status attached to one registration is not automatically the status of the legal person everywhere.

Withdrawal or surrender ends a local authorization by choice. Washington's withdrawn label describes a foreign entity closing its Washington registration. New York says a surrendered foreign corporation remains in existence in its home state, while its New York authority terminates on filing. (www.sos.wa.gov) (dos.ny.gov) California's surrender definition likewise addresses the right to transact in California. (www.sos.ca.gov) The appropriate research action is to check the home state and any successor local registration, rather than exclude the parent entity as dissolved.

Administrative dissolution generally follows a compliance process defined by state law, while **voluntary dissolution** is an entity-initiated filing. Washington applies "administratively dissolved" to a noncompliant domestic entity; North Carolina distinguishes domestic administrative dissolution from foreign administrative revocation. (www.sos.wa.gov) (www.sosnc.gov) New York contrasts domestic dissolution with foreign surrender. (dos.ny.gov) Restoration is possible in some jurisdictions, but the window and legal effect differ. Washington and Virginia each describe a **five-year** route; North Carolina describes a relation-back effect subject to limits that counsel should evaluate. (www.sos.wa.gov) (www.scc.virginia.gov) (www.sosnc.gov)

Merger or conversion can move activity to a successor without leaving the original record active. Arizona describes a merger as leaving one survivor and dissolving the others, and describes conversion as changing business type. California directs users of a "merged out" record to obtain the survivor's name from the filing or status report. (azcc.gov) (www.sos.ca.gov) Follow that document chain before coding a record as an excluded business.

A Triage Protocol for Origination Lists

The workflow begins with a precommitted mandate rule: what exact conditions justify exclusion, which call for review, and which can remain open? An analyst should not change the exclusion rule because a compelling company happens to have an inconvenient status. Docket's public description places entity and website matching before detailed research and preserves duplicate history, a relevant example of a research workflow rather than a claim about a particular target.

Table 2 turns the source distinctions into a decision tree. Each branch is a research action; none substitutes for legal advice about local authority.

Question in order	Evidence to retain	Decision state	Next action
Does the registry ID, jurisdiction, entity type, and name match the target?	Registry detail, filed formation or foreign-registration image, website legal name.	**Unresolved** if identity conflicts.	Resolve the entity first; do not apply status to a lookalike.

Question in order	Evidence to retain	Decision state	Next action
Is the result merely a name hit, with no status field?	Search page and query timestamp.	**Unresolved.**	Obtain the actual status; Delaware warns its name list is not current status evidence. (icis.corp.delaware.gov)
Is the matched record clear under the office's own test?	Current registry view, definition, certificate date if used.	**Pass identity check.**	Keep operational and financial checks separate. (www.sos.state.co.us)
Is it delinquent, suspended, forfeited, revoked, or administratively dissolved?	Cause field, notices or filing history, restoration instructions.	**Request review.**	Determine domestic or foreign role and route. (www.scc.virginia.gov) (dos.fl.gov)
Is it voluntarily dissolved, withdrawn, merged, or converted?	Termination, withdrawal, merger, or conversion filing and successor ID.	**Request review** or **exclude under prewritten rule**.	Follow the filing chain and home jurisdiction first. (dos.ny.gov) (azcc.gov)
Does a clear prewritten mandate rule apply after identity and history are resolved?	Rule version, evidence packet, reviewer and date.	**Exclude under mandate rule.**	Preserve reversible reason code; seek counsel if legal effect drives decision.
Does current evidence still conflict?	Contradiction log with dates and entity links.	**Retain as unresolved.**	Recheck sources on a defined date and before outreach.

This sequence separates a **research disposition** from a legal conclusion. For example, an administrative dissolution may be a valid reason for a mandate-specific exclusion, but the analyst first needs the correct entity, the cause, and the applicable rule. Georgia says its administratively dissolved entities continue to exist with activity limited to winding up; Arizona describes a similar limitation. (sos.ga.gov) (azcc.gov) Those statements are materially different from saying the business has no assets, customers, or possible restoration.

A compact operational checklist can be applied to each flagged row:

- **Identity:** capture legal name, state entity number, formation jurisdiction, entity type, and any former name.
- **Status:** capture exact original text, issuing office, query URL, retrieval time, and certificate date if any.
- **Cause:** inspect status reason, annual reports, agent changes, tax field when shown, and filed images.
- **Topology:** distinguish domestic record, foreign registration, branch, predecessor, survivor, and trade name.
- **Restoration:** record stated reinstatement or requalification route and deadline without assuming acceptance.
- **Operations:** collect dated, independent signals tied to the same legal entity, with contrary signals preserved.
- **Decision:** apply the approved mandate rule and record pass, review, exclude, or unresolved.
- **Refresh:** set an event trigger and a scheduled review date; recheck before consequential use.

Escalation and exclusions

A clerical-looking lapse still needs a source. Colorado's noncompliant-to-delinquent sequence is tied to the periodic report or registered-agent requirement, while Florida connects active status to annual reports and describes reinstatement. (www.sos.state.co.us) (dos.fl.gov) The analyst may route such cases to a filing review queue, but should not label them "just paperwork" without reading the history.

A suspension can have several causes. California distinguishes Secretary of State filing suspension from Franchise Tax Board tax suspension; if both apply, its FAQ says both sets of revivor requirements must be met. (www.sos.ca.gov) This is a legal-review trigger where a mandate depends on authority to transact. A voluntary dissolution, merger, or foreign surrender triggers document-chain review. A mismatched entity ID triggers identity review even if every visible status field is green. A status that remains unexplained after these steps stays **unresolved**, an acceptable and auditable outcome.

Reconciling Registry and Operating Evidence

A contradiction is a pair of observations about the same apparent target that would lead to different screen decisions if taken alone. The resolution starts by testing whether both observations actually concern the same legal person. A website footer, license number, procurement record, award, phone number, or job posting may refer to a trade name, a parent, a subsidiary, a predecessor, or a franchisee. The analyst should record the name and identifier printed on each source, then map it to the registry record. Ohio and California both separate business licensing from Secretary of State registration functions. (www.ohiosos.gov) (www.sos.ca.gov)

Source priority is question-specific. The issuing registry controls the meaning of its own status field. A licensing agency controls the status of its license. A company website is evidence of what the company publishes, not a state certification. A current phone answer can support a contact hypothesis but does not repair a filing record. A dated filing can explain a successor chain but may have been superseded. The UK Companies House site also warns that it does not check filed information for accuracy; that warning illustrates a general evidence limitation, not a claim that UK and U.S. status labels have the same legal effect. (find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk)

Table 3 is a contradiction log template with **fictional entries**. It forces the reviewer to preserve both sides and to say what would resolve the discrepancy.

Fictional target and observation	Registry observation	Other dated observation	Identity test	Provisional state and next evidence
Alder Components, fictional, website lists current openings	Formation-state record says delinquent.	Careers page dated this month names Alder Components as employer.	Does footer or posting name the same corporation and ID?	**Request review**; inspect missed report and agent history, then verify current operating entity.
Bay Lantern Software, fictional, local office address persists	Foreign registration says withdrawn.	Website lists a local office and a current phone number.	Is local office a successor or affiliate?	**Unresolved**; check home-state status and current local authority.

Fictional target and observation	Registry observation	Other dated observation	Identity test	Provisional state and next evidence
Cedar Grove Devices, fictional, award refers to old name	Registry says merged out.	Industry award cites the predecessor name.	Does the merger filing identify a survivor?	**Request review**; map the successor before applying mandate rule.
Delta Waterworks, fictional, certificate looks clean	Good-standing certificate is several months old.	Recent license directory lists a different legal name.	Are certificate and license held by the same person?	**Unresolved**; refresh status and obtain license-holder evidence.

The log is deliberately reversible. If a later filing or certificate changes the interpretation, the earlier observation remains visible with its retrieval date. Docket describes an audit pass that reviews conflicting sources and leaves unresolved questions visible; that first-party description aligns with the evidence-retention pattern here. It does not establish the truth of any fictional case.

The analyst should keep a **snapshot packet**: source URL, full page or filing image, displayed field, exact quotation, retrieval time and timezone, query terms, entity ID, reviewer, rule version, and decision. For a certificate, store the certificate itself and its creation date. Colorado says its certificate reflects the status at creation; Rhode Island provides a way to check whether its department issued a certificate. (www.sos.state.co.us) (www.sos.ri.gov) Retaining a screenshot without the source date or entity identifier leaves too much ambiguity for later review.

Data Analysis and Evidence

There is no defensible public statistic here for the share of acquisition targets that are distressed merely because a registry field is non-clear. A screening team can, however, measure its **own review workload**. Define one canonical entity as a matched formation-jurisdiction and registry-ID pair. Count that entity once even if it has several foreign registrations or appears under multiple trade names. The proposed metric is:

Status-review rate = unique canonical entities with a non-clear or conflicting relevant status / unique canonical entities checked.

For a hypothetical batch of **240 unique entities**, suppose **36** have a non-clear registry field or an unresolved conflict. The review rate is **36 / 240 = 15%**. If the source list contains **12** duplicate registrations, resolve them before calculating either count. This is a workload calculation, not a population estimate, a distress rate, or a measure of acquisition propensity. Keep the denominator, entity-matching rule, source set, and retrieval period with the result.

Official source figures demonstrate why a refresh and routing policy has to be local. Colorado says a noncompliant entity becomes delinquent after **sixty days** if the condition persists. Virginia describes a **five-year** reinstatement period for an inactive entity; Arizona says an administratively dissolved business may apply within **six years**; Georgia says domestic corporations and limited liability companies may apply within **five years**. (www.sos.state.co.us) (www.scc.virginia.gov) (azcc.gov) (sos.ga.gov) These numbers are legal-process windows, not evidence of how often any company lapses or restores status.

Pennsylvania's new annual-report requirement began **January 1, 2025**, and its site says administrative dissolution, termination, or cancellation for missed annual reports begins with reports due in **2027**. (www.pa.gov) A 2026 analyst who treats a missing Pennsylvania report as if it already triggered that future consequence would misclassify the entity. This is a concrete reason to store both the field's date and the rule's effective date.

Certificate scope also affects the data model. Rhode Island says its Department of State certificate does **not** verify tax satisfaction, while Missouri imposes no annual corporate franchise tax for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2016. (www.sos.ri.gov) (revisor.mo.gov) Texas separates its Secretary of State and Comptroller products. (www.sos.state.tx.us) The dataset should therefore have distinct fields for registry status, tax account status when available, license status when relevant, and observed activity. Combining them into a single "healthy" score would conceal the source difference.

Refresh cadence should respond to **decision risk and source volatility**, not a universal fixed number of days. Record the last checked date; recheck immediately after an entity event, a conflicting signal, or before outreach and a go/no-go review. Florida says its registry database updates daily, and New York's status-history dataset includes filing dates and the status after each indicated filing. (dos.fl.gov) (catalog.data.gov) Those properties make repeated observations possible; they do not guarantee a particular posting lag or that an unobserved business event did not occur.

Case Studies and Real-World Examples

Hypothetical Example: an active website and a delinquent domestic record

A fictional manufacturer, **Harborline Fabrication, Inc.**, has a current-looking website and two recent job advertisements. Its matched formation-state record says "delinquent." The analyst captures the registry ID and the page date, verifies that the website legal footer names the same corporation, and reads the filing history. The website and hiring signals suggest possible activity, but neither changes the registry label. Colorado's published sequence shows how a missed periodic report or agent requirement can lead from noncompliant to delinquent; the actual cause for this fictional record remains to be determined. (www.sos.state.co.us) The appropriate outcome is **request review**, with the cause and any cure route documented, rather than a claim about solvency.

Hypothetical Example: a foreign withdrawal with continued home-state existence

Maple Quay Analytics, LLC is fictional. A local-state search says "withdrawn," while its home-state registry still appears current. The analyst confirms that the two records share the same legal name and organizational details, then checks the withdrawal filing and any new local registration. New York's official explanation makes clear that a foreign corporation may surrender local authority while remaining in existence in its home state; Washington defines withdrawn as voluntarily closing a foreign registration. (dos.ny.gov) (www.sos.wa.gov) The proper state is **unresolved local authority** until the relevant jurisdictions are checked. It is not automatically an excluded dissolved entity.

Hypothetical Example: a predecessor after merger

Orchard Relay Systems, Inc. is fictional. A search returns "merged out" for the old record, yet a trade publication reports a recent product launch under the same brand. The analyst retrieves the merger filing, identifies the survivor, and moves the operating evidence to the survivor's canonical record if the identifiers support it. California directs researchers to the merger filing or status report for the survivor's name; Arizona explains that a merger leaves one surviving company. (www.sos.ca.gov) (azcc.gov) The original record is retained as a predecessor link, and the screen is rerun on the surviving entity. No conclusion about its acquisition suitability follows from the predecessor label alone.

Implications and Future Directions

The immediate implication is a **schema change** for origination lists. A single status column should become a group of fields: jurisdiction, entity ID, domestic or foreign role, exact source label, official definition URL, retrieval timestamp, certificate timestamp, reason code, relevant filing image, tax field if separately verified, license field if relevant, and decision state. The office-specific crosswalk should be versioned because definitions and reporting obligations can change. Pennsylvania's staged annual-report rule illustrates why a 2026 screen needs an effective-date field. (www.pa.gov)

A second implication is **rule governance**. The mandate owner should approve exclusion rules before reviewing individual targets. Examples might include excluding a confirmed dissolved domestic entity with no documented successor under a mandate that requires an existing operating company, or routing all foreign withdrawals to local-authority review. The rule should name the evidence required, the reviewer role, and an exception path. An analyst who cannot verify the entity identity or status cause should record "unresolved" instead of silently changing the rule.

A third implication is a **refresh policy** tied to events. Registry data may update daily in some states, as Florida reports, but a certificate still speaks only to its creation time, as Colorado says. (dos.fl.gov) (www.sos.state.co.us) Requery after a new filing, after a contradiction is discovered, and before a consequential screening or contact decision. Preserve prior snapshots so an auditor can reconstruct what the team knew at the time. The cadence is an internal control, not a claim that any government source updates in real time.

Finally, counsel should review the jurisdictional language used in the decision rubric. Georgia and Arizona both describe limits on activity after administrative dissolution, and North Carolina describes reinstatement with a relation-back effect. (sos.ga.gov) (azcc.gov) (www.sosnc.gov) Those provisions can matter to authority, contracts, and timing, but the article does not determine their effect for a particular target. The research team can supply a clear evidence packet and a precise question for counsel, reducing ambiguity without substituting its own legal conclusion.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is active the same as good standing?

No universal equivalence exists. "Active" is a field defined by the issuing office; good standing can be a distinct certificate test. California exposes status and several standing fields separately. Washington says an inactive entity can remain legally recognized without current good standing. (www.sos.ca.gov) (www.sos.wa.gov) A screen should store both fields when both are provided.

What does suspended business entity status mean?

It means the issuing jurisdiction has applied its suspension or forfeiture category, but the cause must be read from that jurisdiction's record. California distinguishes Secretary of State filing failures from Franchise Tax Board tax failures. (www.sos.ca.gov) The practical action is a cause-specific review and, when transaction authority matters, counsel review.

What does dissolved business entity status mean, and can a suspended entity operate?

"Dissolved" needs the cause and entity role: voluntary dissolution, administrative dissolution, and a predecessor dissolved by merger are different paths. Georgia says an administratively dissolved entity continues its corporate existence but may conduct only winding-up business; Arizona describes a similar limitation. (sos.ga.gov) (azcc.gov) No cross-state yes-or-no answer about a suspended entity's ability to operate is responsible without jurisdiction, entity type, date, and statutory cause.

How can a team verify good standing?

Search the issuing registry, confirm the legal identifier, read its definition and history, and obtain the correct current certificate when the decision needs official documentation. Delaware warns its free name list does not state current status. Texas distinguishes a Secretary of State fact-status certificate from Comptroller account status, and Rhode Island says its certificate does not verify tax obligations. (icis.corp.delaware.gov) (www.sos.state.tx.us) (www.sos.ri.gov) Verify the certificate's date and keep its copy.

Is administrative dissolution the same as voluntary dissolution?

No. Administrative dissolution follows a jurisdiction's compliance process; voluntary dissolution follows the entity's own filing decision. Washington links domestic administrative dissolution to failure to remain compliant. New York contrasts domestic dissolution with foreign surrender, which also shows why a local withdrawal is not a domestic dissolution. (www.sos.wa.gov) (dos.ny.gov) Inspect the filed document and reason code before applying a mandate rule.

Conclusion

Business entity status is useful when treated as a dated, jurisdiction-specific statement about a matched registration. It can answer whether a record exists, whether local authority appears on that record, or whether specified filing and tax conditions are met. It cannot alone establish current operations, solvency, ownership, or

sale readiness. The crosswalk and examples show that the same English label can have different scope across offices, while different labels can describe a similar research problem.

For a private equity screening team, the defensible sequence is to match the entity; retain the exact status and issuing definition; read filing history and the domestic or foreign role; check current, entity-linked operating signals; and then apply a rule chosen before seeing the case. Clear records can pass an identity check. Curable or unclear records can enter review. A confirmed, rule-covered condition can be excluded with a reversible reason code. Conflicting evidence can remain unresolved without being forced into a false binary.

The **status-review rate** should report the workload created by non-clear or conflicting records among unique entities checked, with its numerator and denominator documented. It should never be presented as a distress rate or a signal of acquisition propensity. Because both records and rules can change, the last step is to refresh the evidence at the moment it matters and send jurisdiction-specific legal questions to counsel.

Source links

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

1. https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/business/FAQs/certGoodStanding.html
2. https://businessfilings.sc.gov/BusinessFilingInhouse
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About Docket

Docket provides deal-origination research software and managed research for private equity firms. We help investment teams investigate acquisition targets using structured screening criteria, retained sources and reviewable company evidence. Teams can work through a self-serve platform or use managed research, depending on how they want research delivered.

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.

Triage, Scout and Audit

Docket's three named research agents perform complementary tasks. Triage resolves company identity and screens fit. Scout collects sourced answers against the mandate. Audit checks retained evidence, addresses contradictions and leaves unsupported answers visibly unresolved. This structure helps reviewers distinguish established findings from missing information and questions requiring further investigation.

Evidence that supports investment-team judgment

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.

Public examples are illustrative unless explicitly identified otherwise. Research preparation and authorized outreach are separate activities; confidential target lists and customer outcomes should never be inferred from an educational example.

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