



Labor & Employment Issues Client Alert

Pitta LLP
For Clients
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**“We believe in the ideas of family, mutuality,
the sharing of benefits and burdens
for the good of all, feeling one another’s pain,
sharing one another’s blessing
recognizing that at the heart of the matter
we are bound to each other.”**

-Mario M. Cuomo-

INSPECTORS GENERAL ASK CONGRESS FOR HELP TO MONITOR COVID-19 RELIEF PAYMENTS

Federal inspectors general tasked with monitoring more than \$1 trillion in COVID-19 relief programs from the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act sent a letter to several House and Senate committees last week requesting assistance in monitoring CARES funds.

The letter stated that an ambiguity in the text of the CARES Act permitted the Trump administration to limit how much of the CARES Act spending requirements the inspectors general have to collect and report. The inspectors general warned that the Trump administration’s narrow interpretation of their oversight powers will impede their ability to account for funds for the most expensive CARES Act programs which includes the \$670 billion Paycheck Protection Program and the \$454 billion Treasury program which provides assistance to heavily COVID-19 impacted industries such as hospitality and restaurants.

Justice Department Inspector General Michael Horowitz, who leads a panel of inspectors general known as the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee and the committee’s executive director Robert Westbrook signed the letter to Congress and said “we are writing to bring to your attention to an issue that could impact the ability of the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee (“PRAC”) and federal inspectors general to provide effective oversight of over \$1 trillion in pandemic-related funds, as well as transparency to the public about how those monies are being spent.”

Senator Richard Shelby (R-Ala), chair of the Senate Appropriation committee, has stated that he supports legislation that addresses the transparency requirement. House of Representatives Oversight committee Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney also supports legislation to require more transparency for CARES Act funds.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY LOBBIES CITY HALL FOR A POLICE DISCIPLINE ONLINE DATABASE

In the wake of the state legislature passing and the Governor Andrew Cuomo signing into law legislation that repealed section 50-a of the Civil Rights Law, the Legal Aid Society is calling for the construction of an online searchable database with disciplinary records. Section 50-a kept records of disciplinary actions and misconduct complaints against members of the police, corrections and fire departments confidential.

On June 15, 2020 the Legal Aid Society sent Mayor Bill de Blasio and City Council Speaker Corey Johnson a letter stating that “a failure to take this step would be a step backward for police accountability, ensuring months and even years will be lost in the case-by-case processing of Freedom of Information Law requests filed by the many journalists, academics, advocates, and people directly impacted by police misconduct who will seek access to these records.”

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