

Group B EEC Block in Soft Close, Ongoing Portal and Operations Updates, and Consumer Protection Proposal Feedback

January 20, 2023

Program News

- **Group B EEC Block Reaches Capacity, Soft Close Period Initiated**

The annual block of capacity for the Group B Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”) block has been filled. The soft close period which allows the block to remain open for seven calendar days or when the next project application submitted to the block would exceed capacity by 10 megawatts began on January 19, 2023 and will extend to January 26, 2023 at 11:59 PM CPT. The Program Administrator will announce if the 10 MW of soft close capacity is reached prior to January 26, 2023. Any applications batched and submitted to the Program under Group B EEC group/category after the soft close capacity is reached **OR** after January 26, 2023 at 11:59 PM CPT will be placed on a waitlist. More information on the soft close period as previously announced here: <https://illinoisabp.com/2023/01/19/groupb-eec-soft-close/>

- **Ongoing Program Portal Updates**

The PA continues to update the Program portal, and provide new help guides, informational webinars, and open Office Hours. Ongoing portal updates can be found at [IllinoisABP.com/portal-updates/](https://illinoisabp.com/portal-updates/). A growing library of diverse portal help guides, including updated materials, can be found at [IllinoisABP.com/portal-help](https://illinoisabp.com/portal-help).

Updates on Portal Issues/Improvements

- **Fixes and Features** – The Program Administrator has continued progress on a number of fixes and improvements to the Program portal, including the following:
 - A software release on January 13, 2023 included:
 - Enhancements to Disclosure Forms including cosmetic improvements and fixes to data fields and validations. Continued DF fixes and enhancements are in progress, with information forthcoming on the impact to the Disclosure Form Leniency Period that remains in effect.
 - Introduction of a REC estimate confirmation checkbox for use when a custom capacity REC value is greater or less than 20% of the PVWatts REC estimate.
 - Addition of Program Administrator application review and processing tools
 - Data migration and synchronization efforts continue across various application batches, including syncing legacy application data and updating batch information, including application and batch status, further enabling participants and the Program Administrator to proceed with application submission and review across both Part I and Part II applications.

Future Release Information

- The Program Administrator and Agency continue development on the Program portal, and expect to soon provide further information on a variety of planned functionality and enhancements, including but not limited to:
 - Community Solar Disclosure Form API – This functionality is expected to be available in Q1 2023, and the Program Administrator expects to deliver a draft specifications document, reflecting stakeholder input by the end of January for stakeholder feedback.
 - Distributed Generation Disclosure Form API, including an upcoming Working Group
 - Other functional and cosmetic updates to both CS and DG Disclosure Forms
 - Importing custom capacity factor calculations for Part II applications
 - Re-batching functionality (tentatively aimed for release in the portal in early 2023)

- **Ongoing Operations Updates**

Recent and forthcoming operational updates include:

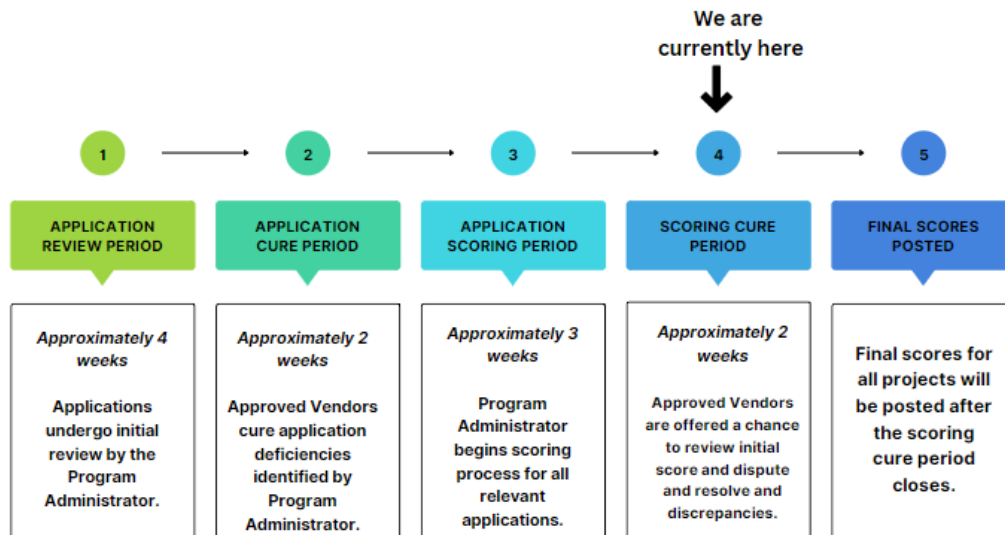
- **February REC Invoicing** – Updated Quarterly Reports for the upcoming February Subscriber Verification are due by January 31, 2023. Invoices will reflect the data in the utility portal downloaded

on January 31, 2023; as noted in the REC Contract, changes made after this date will not be permitted for purposes of invoicing for the quarterly period. REC invoices and Quarterly Netting Statements will be made available for download from Approved Vendor SharePoint folders the morning of February 1, 2023. Invoices must be submitted to the utility by February 10, 2023 to receive payment for the February invoice period. Any invoice amounts not submitted to the utility by February 10, 2023 will be carried forward and included in the next invoice period (May 2023).

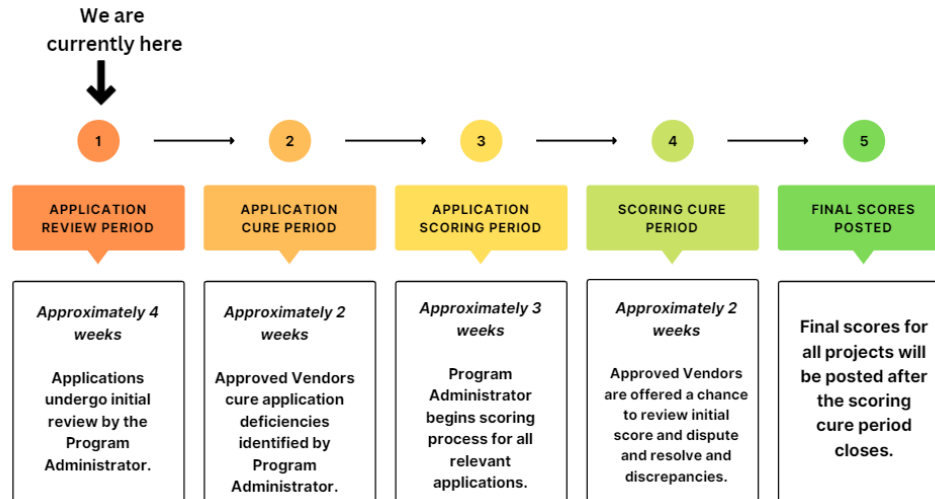
- **Community Solar December Quarterly Subscriber Verification** – The Program Administrator has finalized the review of nearly all December Quarterly Reports. Approved Vendors should expect revised Schedule Bs via SharePoint in the next two weeks.
- **Application Processing Update** – The Program Administrator’s Application Processing team is reviewing and scoring Traditional Community Solar applications, Community-Driven Community Solar applications, and Part I and Part II Distributed Generation applications. TCS and CDCS application review and scoring will last into the first quarter of 2023, at which point processing of Distributed Generation applications can resume at full capacity. The planned schedule and sequence for application processing for 2023, includes:
 - DG Applications, with processing in the order received within subgroups:
 - New Part I DG applications received in the portal on or after September 1, 2022
 - New Part II DG applications received in the portal on or after December 15, 2022
 - The PA continues review of Part II applications, and is implementing functionality, completing data migration, and addressing bugs to support the submission and review of Part II applications, and including continued focus on responding to and processing Need Info responses. Further information on progress will be shared shortly, as the PA implements solutions and adds resources to accelerate application review. Support for stakeholders includes an updated portal help guide, a recorded webinar, presentation, and Questions and Answers, and ongoing Office Hours. Stakeholders experiencing challenges should contact the PA via email at admin@illinoisabp.com or join us at Office Hours.
 - Community Solar Applications (TCS & CDCS):
 - These projects will move through the Program as a group, due to the scoring element, and this is expected to last into the first quarter of 2023.

- **Traditional Community Solar Application Review and Scoring Process**

The Program Administrator completed initial review of submitted TCS applications and concluded the Application Scoring period on January 17, 2023, and the process is now in the Scoring Cure Period. On January 17, 2023, the Program Administrator sent initial project scores to AVs, who have the opportunity to review, dispute, and resolve discrepancies. The phase is expected to last approximately two weeks, with further information to follow.



- **Community-Driven Community Solar Application Review and Scoring Process**
The Program Administrator continues initial review of CDCS applications submitted to the Program during the application window, which closed on November 29, 2022. The PA will continue to share updates as we move through the process of application review and scoring.



Transition Updates

- **Program Administrator Office Hours**

AVs and Designees experiencing technical difficulties with use of the portal or in resolving other challenges are invited to utilize open Office Hours that the Program Administrator offers via Zoom. Office Hours use a waiting room format to support meetings with individual AV or Designee teams for privacy. Upcoming Office Hours are planned for the following dates and times with more dates expected to follow:

- Wednesday, January 25 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>
- Wednesday, February 1 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>
- Wednesday, February 8 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>

REMINDER: All transition updates can be found on the [ABP Transition Hub webpage](#), and a new [Events & Engagement](#) page at the Program website provides a calendar of upcoming webinars, meetings, support, feedback requests, key dates, holidays, and more. Please visit illinoisabp.com/events-engagement/ for continuous updates.

CONTACT US: For portal, application, or Program-specific questions and inquiries, please contact admin@illinoisabp.com or call 877-783-1820.

Requirements and Reminders

- **Input Requested: Survey for Installers on Disposing and Recycling Solar Panels**

The Illinois Sustainable Technology Center’s (ISTC) Renewable Energy Equipment Recovery-Reuse Program focuses strategies for recovering and recycling of solar modules, wind turbine blades, energy storage systems and electric-drive vehicle batteries. These technologies have been identified as emerging waste concerns for the state of Illinois and across the US. The Program also fosters stakeholder mobilization across this sector, gathering input from individuals and organizations involved in managing a changing waste stream. A current goal of the Program is evaluation of waste material streams emerging from each of these renewable energy systems to inform future collection infrastructure, management strategies, and related policy approaches.

During this process, ISTC wants to hear from solar installers about their approach to disposing and recycling of solar panels through a short survey. This will help our state to better anticipate the amount of decommissioned solar panels that will need to be managed in the near future. The survey takes 10-15 minutes to complete, and it is expected to remain open through the end of January 2023. Participation in the survey is optional for all Program participants. The survey can be accessed with this link: <https://surveys.illinois.edu/sec/43453876>.

- **Stakeholder Feedback – Consumer Protection Proposals**

As previously shared, the Agency seeks public comment on thirteen proposals to update consumer protection documents for Illinois Shines (Adjustable Block Program) and Illinois Solar for All programs. Following incorporation of public comment, the Agency intends to finalize these documents for the 2023-2024 Program Year beginning June 1, 2023. The proposals and request for feedback can be found here: <https://illinoisabp.com/consumer-protection/>. Comments on Proposal #1 (Disclosure Forms) were due December 30, 2022, and the Agency appreciates the comments from numerous stakeholders, which have been posted and can be viewed at <https://illinoisabp.com/consumer-protection/>: Comments on Proposals #2 through #13 are due: **January 27, 2023**. Please see the [Proposal Packet](#) to review the proposals.

- **EEC Block Capacity – Long-Term Plan Reopening**

The Program Administrator and IPA have received inquiries regarding the timeline for the award of REC Contracts under Group B of the Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”) Category. The Program Administrator has begun reviewing Part I applications submitted to the EEC, Group B Category to determine whether those projects qualify under Program requirements. The Illinois Commerce Commission approved the request to reopen the 2022 Long-Term Plan in [Docket No. 22-0231](#), and stakeholders are invited to interact with the docket in accordance with the ICC’s rules of practice, with the following schedule in effect:

- Objections to the Agency’s proposal – Due February 2, 2023
- Responses to objections – Due February 16, 2023
- Replies to responses – Due March 2, 2023
- With the docket open, the Agency will seek to provide an update on the question of dealing with applications submitted on November 1 in EEC Group A once the above schedule has concluded; the Program Administrator may hold Group B applications for ICC approval if it appears possible that Commission action may impact Group B capacity.

- **Community Solar Projects – Requests for Data**

The IPA and Program Administrator seek updated Community Solar project information from developers to populate the [Find a Community Solar Project](#) list on the Program website. This list is valuable to potentially interested subscribers, the Agency, other developers, and other stakeholders. The PA has begun contacting AVs with Community Solar projects to confirm their interest to opt in and have projects included; those interested will be provided with a template to complete. Updates to this list will be made quarterly, and AVs are encouraged to reach out with any necessary updates between these releases. To submit a template, email communitysolar@illinoisabp.com by **January 27, 2023**, for inclusion in the next update.

- **Nightly Portal Maintenance Plan**

In support of ongoing system maintenance, feature rollout, and with the help of portal users, **a nightly, planned Portal maintenance window from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. CPT is continuing each night from January 6, 2023, through January 31, 2023**. The PA and Agency hope these maintenance windows will be minimally disruptive to Program participants. While the portal may not be in maintenance mode every evening during this period, this notice is shared so that users may plan accordingly. **Any users working in the portal should save their work prior to the 6:00 p.m. CPT start of the system maintenance window each day, as any unsaved information will be lost when the system is moved into maintenance mode.** In the event that portal restoration is unexpectedly incomplete as of 8:00 p.m. CPT on a given evening, an update notice will be sent to Approved Vendors and Designees.

- **Systems Out of Compliance for Failure to Deliver RECs - 90 Days to Comply**

According to Section 6(a) of the [2019 REC Delivery Contract](#), and 4.1(a) of the [2021 REC Delivery Contract](#), all systems must be registered in either the GATS or M-RETS tracking registry. For systems larger than 5 kW, the first REC must be delivered within 90 days of the date the system is Energized/Part II verified. For systems

equal to or less than 5 kW, the first REC must be delivered within 180 days of the date the system is Energized/Part II verified.

According to Section 12(e) of the [2019 REC Delivery Contract](#), and 2.3(e) of the [2021 REC Delivery Contract](#), “Seller shall upload meter readings to PJM-EIS GATS or M-RETS at least annually prior to the registry cutoff to produce RECs for generation occurring in May as well as all previous months for which generation has not been recorded.”

The Program Administrator has identified systems that are out of compliance with the REC contract for not delivering a REC and updating the tracking registry within one year of Part II verification. These systems have been communicated with Approved Vendors over SharePoint and/or email. Projects will be removed from the Program if they do not deliver a REC within 90 days of notice from the PA for failure to comply with requirements of the REC Contract.