

Prevailing Wage Fix, Nightly Portal Maintenance Plan, Equity Portal Beta Testing Invitation

January 6, 2023

Program News

- **Prevailing Wage Fix in Program Portal**

On Tuesday, January 3, 2023, the Program Administrator, in coordination with the Agency, corrected the calculation of Prevailing Wage reporting requirements in the Program portal and in the publicly available Project Application Reports including *Report #1, Project Applications Received*. These reports now reflect updated and corrected Prevailing Wage values.

- **Latest Expanded Consumer Protection Working Group Meeting Held January 6, 2023**

The Agency and Program Administrator thank all participants and stakeholders who participated in the Expanded Consumer Protection Working Group meeting held on January 6, 2023. Topics addressed in the discussion included Supporting Stranded Distributed Generation Customers, and Transition Period: Disclosure Form Timing Exception. Meeting notes will soon be posted to the Program website, where stakeholders can also find information on past and future Working Group meetings including upcoming agendas and Zoom links. If you would like to receive direct notifications of meetings, agendas, and meeting notes, please fill out the sign up form here: <https://illinoisabp.com/cp-working-group/>. The next Consumer Protection Working Group meeting will be held on February 3, 2023, with the meeting agenda to be posted on the website.

- **Part II Application Portal Release and Application Processing**

Part II applications were reopened and made available in the Program portal on December 15, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. CPT, and review of applications continues. The Program Administrator is implementing functionality to the portal to help accelerate the ability of the application processing team to review Part II applications. Along with data migration, updates from the legacy portal, and continued resource optimization, further updates will be provided in the coming weeks regarding application review and processing times. Additional support for stakeholders includes:

- [Portal Help Guide for Part II Applications](#)
- Webinar walk-through of Part II Application: view [a recording of the webinar](#), [presentation slides](#) and Questions and Answers
- Office hours sessions - please see Office Hours section below for upcoming sessions. Stakeholders experiencing any challenges in submitting Part II applications should contact the Program Administrator via email at admin@illinoisabp.com or joining us at office hours.

- **Ongoing Program Portal Updates**

The Program Administrator continues to update the new Program portal, and provide new help guides, informational webinars, and open Office Hours. Ongoing portal updates can be found at <https://illinoisabp.com/portal-updates/>. A growing library of diverse portal help guides can be found at IllinoisABP.com/portal-help.

Updates on Portal Issues/Improvements

- **REC Estimates** – As previously shared, the Program Administrator found that several portal coding errors led to miscalculations of PVWatts capacity factors and REC estimates, as well as custom capacity factor REC estimates in Section 5 of the Part I application. The Program Administrator has since fixed the miscalculations of the PVWatts capacity factors and REC Estimates. Approved Vendors with impacted applications received an email on December 9, 2022, with more information on updates to their impacted applications. Applications started between December 8, 2022, and December 10, 2022 were not impacted.
- **Other Fixes and Features** – The Program Administrator has continued progress on a number of fixes and improvements to the Program portal, including the following:

- On Friday, December 30, a software release improved both functional and appearance features to better enable submission of Distributed Generation Disclosure Forms, including improvements to the Disclosure Form Portal interface as well as the incorporation of the new Distributed Generation brochure prepended to the Disclosure Form PDF for customer review and signature.
- Additional improvements and corrections are expected for Distributed Generation and Community Solar Disclosure Forms in the coming weeks.
- Data migration and synchronization efforts have continued across various application batches, including syncing legacy application data and updating other batch information, including application and batch status, enabling stakeholders 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 appreciate the continued patience and input of stakeholders as development continues on the Program portal. The PA and Agency are dedicated to sharing more information with AVs and Designees, and expect to provide further information shortly on a variety of planned functionality and enhancements, including but not limited to:
 - Community Solar Disclosure Form API – Expected to be available in Q1 2023. On December 14, 2022, the PA held a second working group meeting for the Community Solar DF API, which produced further valuable insights that are informing API development. An additional meeting is anticipated. If you are interested to participate in future API development meetings, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@illinoisabp.com with subject line “CS DF API”.
 - Distributed Generation Disclosure Form API, including an upcoming Working Group
 - Other functional and cosmetic updates to both CS and DG Disclosure Forms
 - Re-batching functionality (tentatively aimed for release in the portal in early 2023).

Nightly Portal Maintenance Plan

- In support of ongoing system maintenance, feature rollout, and bug fixes, and following a successful period in December with the help of portal users, **the Program portal will have an additional nightly, planned system maintenance window from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. CPT, each night from January 6, 2023, through January 31, 2023.** During these windows, the Portal may be unavailable to users. The Program Administrator and Agency are hopeful that the maintenance window, scheduled after typical business hours, will be minimally disruptive to Program participants, and 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.

• Ongoing Operations Updates

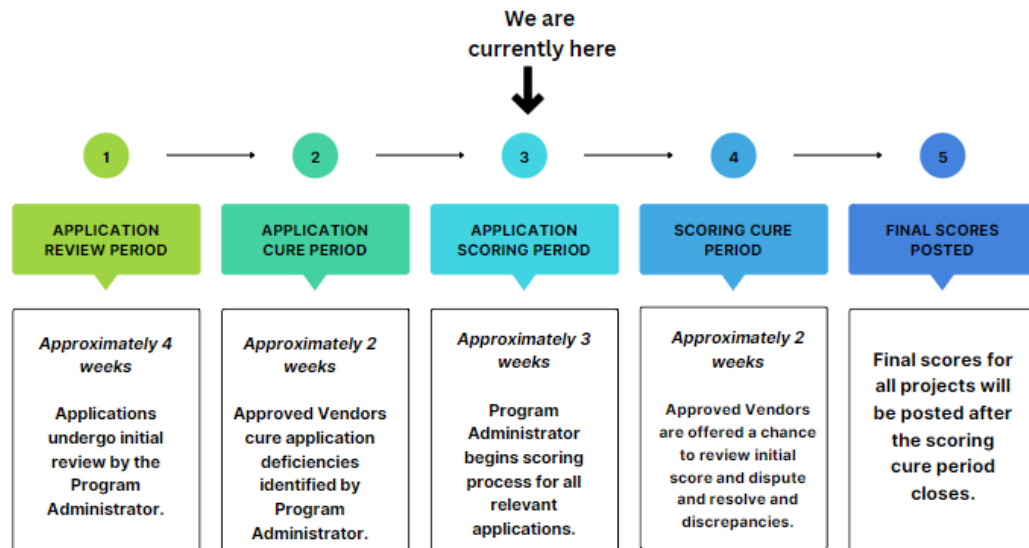
Recent and forthcoming operational updates include:

- **Community Solar December Quarterly Subscriber Verification** - The Program Administrator is reviewing Quarterly Reports and will be following up with Approved Vendors in the coming weeks regarding needed clarifications and reviewed subscription rates.
- **Application Processing Update** - The Program Administrator’s Application Processing team is managing the review and scoring of 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:
 - Distributed Generation Applications, with processing in the order received within subgroups:

- New Part I DG apps received in the portal on or after September 1, 2022
- New Part II DG apps received in the portal on or after December 15, 2022
- There will be a continued focus on responding to and processing Need Info responses
- 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.

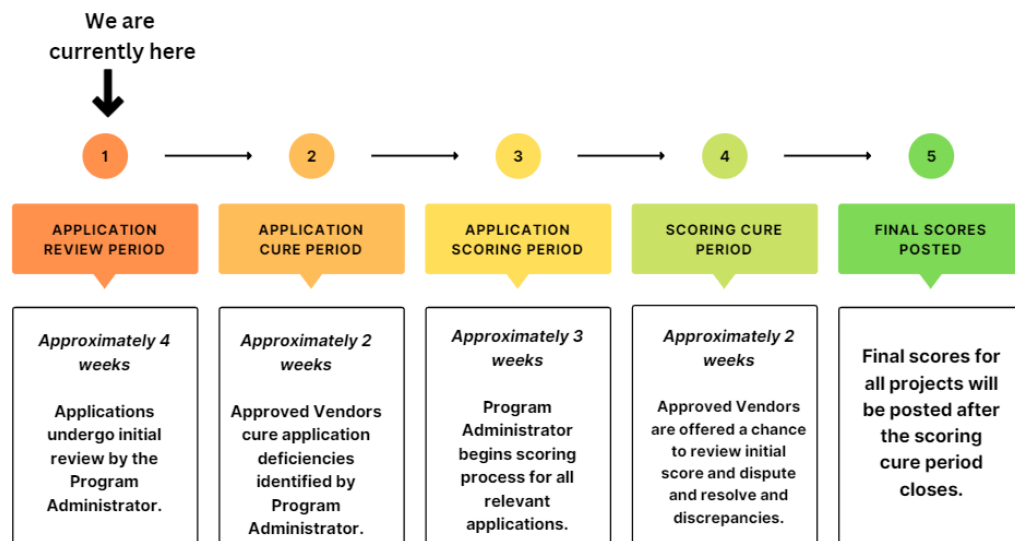
• **Traditional Community Solar Application Review and Scoring Process**

The Program Administrator completed initial review of submitted TCS applications and concluded the application cure period on December 21, 2022, and the process is now in the Scoring phase. The Program Administrator and Agency have made significant progress in scoring of TCS applications, with this phase is expected to conclude approximately the second week of January 2023.



○ **Community-Driven Community Solar Application Review and Scoring Process**

The Program Administrator is currently working on reviewing 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.



• **Energy Equity Portal - Invitation for Beta Testers**

The Illinois Power Agency (IPA) is seeking five Approved Vendors or Designees to help beta test the job posting functionality of the Energy Workforce Equity Portal. This beta testing is expected to run the week of

January 16, 2023. The process will involve Approved Vendors and Designees participating in the Adjustable Block Program testing the functionality of the form to post positions for which they are seeking to hire Equity Eligible Persons.

Beta testing space is limited to five participants. Beta testers will be chosen on a first come, first serve basis. Therefore, those that are interested in participating should express their interest by emailing IPA.Solar@illinois.org with subject line “Energy Equity Portal Beta Test” by **January 10**. Once selected, the IPA will inform beta testers of next steps.

The beta testing will allow the IPA to test the Energy Workforce Equity portal before it launches on January 31. The feedback the IPA receives from beta testers will help fine-tune the portal and make necessary improvements to deliver a great user experience. Over the course of 2023, the IPA will be including additional functionality and resources to the portal.

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 11 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>
- Wednesday, January 18 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>
- Wednesday, January 25 – 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 <https://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. ISTC has consulted with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC), ComEd, and Ameren to obtain data on solar installations that are connected to the grid, and they are seeking to verify this data while determining an estimate for current solar energy generation capacity not connected into the power grid. This will help our state to better anticipate the amount of decommissioned solar panels that will need to be managed in the near future. ISTC anticipates the survey will take 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 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 – Group B**

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 Category to determine whether those projects qualify under program requirements. While the Agency awaits Illinois Commerce Commission action in Docket No. 22-0231 on the question of dealing with applications submitted on November 1 in EEC Group A, the Program Administrator may hold Group B applications for ICC approval if it appears possible that Commission action may impact Group B capacity.

- **Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Updates**

Below are DCEO announcements related to programs authorized by the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act some of which may interact with the Illinois Shines program.

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for the Energy Transition Community Grant Program. Submit your application via the [online form](#) by **January 20, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. CPT**.
- [Request for Information](#) for the Illinois Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Energy Transition Navigators Program, and the Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program. Submit responses via the [online form](#) by **January 6, 2023**. Responses to the RFI [are made publicly available](#).
- Additionally, responses to past RFIs are available on the DCEO website at [CEJA Program Announcements](#).