Reminder: TCS Score Appeal Deadline, Application Processing Update, Ongoing Operations and Program Portal Updates

March 24, 2023

Program News

- **Reminder: Traditional Community Solar Score Appeal Deadline – March 24, 2023**
  In accordance with the TCS scoring guidelines, the Program Administrator has scored all TCS projects submitted on November 1, 2022 that are Part I verified. These scores will be used to determine which projects will be selected for a REC contract once random selection (if needed) takes place and the 20% developer cap is applied. The scores and a full announcement regarding the scoring process were posted on the Program website on the Solar Project Categories page under the Traditional Community Solar sub-section.

  An Approved Vendor may appeal decisions made by the Program Administrator on the scoring of their projects. An Approved Vendor has two weeks from March 10, 2023 to file an appeal. Submitted appeals must be received by the Program Administrator at admin@illinoisabp.com, by <mark>11:59 pm CPT March 24, 2023</mark>. As the determination of appeals may influence a project's final score, and thus possibly the final selection of projects, all appeals must be reviewed by the Agency within a distinct timeframe. The Agency intends to have all submitted appeals determined by April 21, 2023, subject to the quantity and substance of appeals submitted.

  This week, the Program Administrator found two distinct errors (impacting 10 applications) in the scores posted on March 10, 2023. The Approved Vendors with the impacted applications have been contacted and informed of these scoring errors.

  An additional, full review of scores is underway to ensure no further errors exist in the published scores. The PA will publish updated scores after this audit is completed, if needed. There will be an allowance for additional appeals after that process concludes, if any additional errors are uncovered. As the two errors uncovered thus far decrease the scores of the impacted projects and thus do not have a negative impact upon other AVs, the deadline for appeal submission TODAY, March 24th will not change for AVs not impacted by errors in scoring. Those AVs who had a score change as a result of the errors have been notified of the change in scores and been given an additional two weeks to appeal their corrected scores.

- **REC Pricing Updates** - The Agency is conducting two processes to update REC prices for the Illinois Shines Program and the Illinois Solar for All Program:
  - **Proposed 2023-2024 REC Prices** - The first process is a refresh of inputs into the current REC pricing model to establish the REC prices for the 2023-2024 program year. The Agency issued a Request for Stakeholder Feedback on the proposed prices. Comments are <mark>due by March 24, 2023</mark> and should be sent to IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov.
  - **Update to REC Pricing Model & REC Prices for Subsequent Years** - This second process is a review of the REC pricing approaches for consideration of changes in methodology to be included in the next Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan ("LTRRPP"). The Agency has engaged Sustainable Energy Advantage ("SEA") to conduct that review. The report developed by SEA will be used by the Agency to develop the REC pricing methodology for the next LTRRPP. SEA released a written request for stakeholder feedback on March 7, 2023, with comments <mark>due on March 28, 2023</mark>. SEA hosted a public webinar for Illinois Shines and ILSFA stakeholders on Tuesday March 14, 2023 to discuss REC pricing policy issues, options, and implications. A recording of the webinar and presentation slides can be found at the Renewable Resources Workshops page of the Agency's website.

Ongoing Operations Updates

- **Schedule B Generation and Availability via Approved Vendor SharePoint Folders**
  March REC invoicing is closed, and as the Program Administrator resumes verification of Part II applications, Schedule Bs are being generated weekly and placed in Approved Vendor SharePoint folders. The Program

Administrator will send Approved Vendors an email for each project that is verified, to include confirmation of verification status and date. March 26, 2023 is the last valid Part II verification date for March to allow time to generate April REC invoices. Review of applications will continue throughout the last week of March, with Part II verification dates finalized in April.
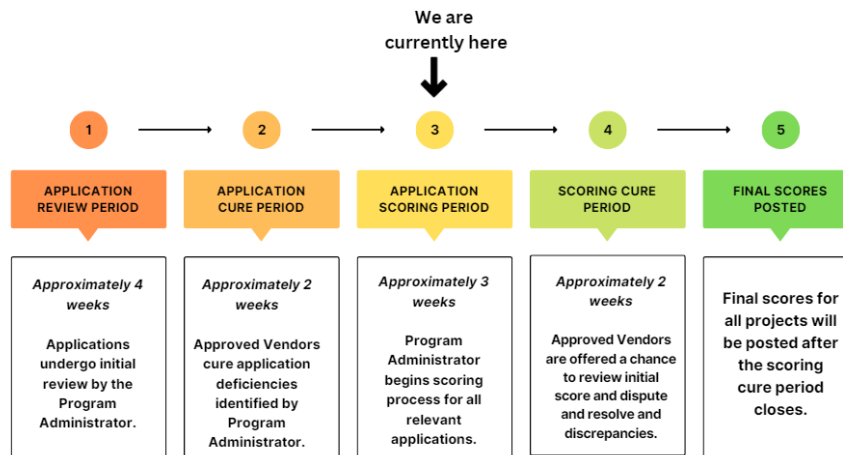
Application Processing Updates

- The Program Administrator is now updating the application processing table at IllinoisABP.com/project-application-reports/ on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On March 17, 2023, the PA released a detailed plan addressing the application backlog and remediation plans, and this week provides the following updates:
  - o *Weekly Special Announcements* **-** Beginning Monday, March 27, 2023, the PA will publish a weekly special announcement dedicated to application processing updates, our progress tracking, and any modifications to our processing plans to meet our commitments.
  - o *Clarification on date of "Reviewing Applications"* – An application submitted prior to the date shown in this column may still be in the verification process or in "Need Info" status. For example, an AV may have submitted an application and responded to and resolved any Need Info requests, but the Program Administrator may be reviewing data from multiple locations, performing or confirming calculations, or completing other activities necessary to verify the information in the application.
  - o *Need Info request delays* – The Program Administrator is currently addressing delays in the issuance of Need Info requests and thus processing of some applications. Our next special announcement on Application Processing will include revised processing and remediation plans.
  - o *Application Processing Table Enhancements*
    - The breakout of Part I and Part II applications by Group A and Group B within each project categories is in continued development.
    - By Monday, March 27, 2023, the application processing table will provide further clarification on the number of applications *Submitted, Reviewed*, in *Need Info* status, and *Verified* within each project category and application type.
- For questions about specific project applications, please contact the PA at admin@illinoisabp.com.

Application Processing as of Friday, March 24, 2023			
Project Category	Application Type	Reviewing Applications Submitted As Of:**	Applications in Process Queue
Small Distributed Generation	Part I	December 2, 2022	4,639
Small Distributed Generation	Part II	January 10, 2023	3,965
Large Distributed Generation	Part I	December 2, 2022	101
Large Distributed Generation	Part II	January 11, 2023	77
Traditional Community Solar – Waitlist Reallocation	Part I	None submitted at this time	0
Traditional Community Solar – Waitlist Reallocation	Part II	December 19, 2022	8
Traditional Community Solar – November 2022*	Part I	Scores announced March 10	262
Traditional Community Solar – November 2022*	Part II	None submitted at this time; Part I applications in scoring process	0
Community-Driven Community Solar	Part I	In scoring period	67
Community-Driven Community Solar	Part II	None submitted at this time; Part I applications in scoring process	0
Public Schools	Part I	December 19, 2022	4
Public Schools	Part II	None submitted at this time	0
Equity Eligible Contractor	Part I	November 1, 2022	85
Equity Eligible Contractor	Part II	None submitted at this time	0

*Includes only applications submitted on November 1, 2022. **Reviewing Batched Paid applications submitted as of the week indicated. Applications actively in review may be in process or in need of information to proceed to verified stage. Additional application processing resources have been added toward making significant progress in reducing the application backlog the coming weeks. This table will be updated with volume of incoming and reviewed applications by category on March 27, 2023.

- **Community-Driven Community Solar Application Review and Scoring Process**
  Effective February 20, 2023, Community-Driven Community Solar entered the Scoring phase, which was expected to last for approximately three weeks, from February 20 - March 10, 2023; the scoring period is expected to extend for additional time, and the PA will continue to share updates as we move through the process.

We are currently here

1	2	3	4	5
APPLICATION REVIEW PERIOD	**APPLICATION CURE PERIOD**	**APPLICATION SCORING PERIOD**	**SCORING CURE PERIOD**	**FINAL SCORES POSTED**
Approximately 4 weeks Applications undergo initial review by the Program Administrator.	*Approximately 2 weeks* Approved Vendors cure application deficiencies identified by Program Administrator.	*Approximately 3 weeks* Program Administrator begins scoring process for all relevant applications.	*Approximately 2 weeks* Approved Vendors are offered a chance to review initial score and dispute and resolve and discrepancies.	Final scores for all projects will be posted after the scoring cure period closes.

Ongoing Program Portal Updates

- Ongoing portal updates can be found at IllinoisABP.com/portal-updates/, and a library of diverse, updated portal help guides can be found at IllinoisABP.com/portal-help/.

  ### Updates on Portal Issues, Improvements, and Future Releases

  - With user support, the Program Administrator has continued utilizing a nightly, planned system maintenance window for the Program portal through March. **For the week of March 27, 2023, the system maintenance window will shift to, and only include, Tuesday March 28 and Thursday March 30, from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. CPT, both nights**. During these maintenance windows, , the Portal is expected to be unavailable to users, which the PA and Agency hope will be minimally disruptive to Program participants. **Any users working in the portal should save their work prior to the 8:00 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 10:00 p.m. CPT on a given evening, an update notice will be sent to Approved Vendors and Designees.
  - On **Saturday March 25, 2023**, a planned portal maintenance period will begin at 5:00 p.m. CPT, and is expected to last five hours, until 10:00 p.m. CPT. During this window, the portal is expected to be unavailable to users. Any users working in the portal should save their work prior to the 5:00 p.m. CPT start of the maintenance period. A notice of system restoration will posted to the Program website.

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
Bugs and Other Fixes		
Disclosure Form Remediation	DF enhancements continue to be implemented, with information forthcoming on the impact to the DF Leniency Period that remains in effect.	Enhancements ongoing
Community Solar DF API	The first version of this functionality will be released soon, pending beta testing. On March 7, 2023, the latest CS DF API Working Group met, reviewing the draft Developer's Guide and discussing beta testing.	Week of March 27, following upcoming beta testing
Part I and Part II Applications	Features, enhancements, and data updates including field data validation fixes, corrections to PVWatts value calculations where addresses included a special character, correction of issue impacting some records where Total Array Output did not always recalculate when parameters were updated, addition of downloading of REC App Attachments in Part I and II of REC applications	Weeks of March 13 and March 20, 2023
Re-batching Functionality	On/off toggle, ability to create batches by project and by batch Screen, export Batch Shuffling and Batch Audit Log	TBD – Tentatively planned for Q2 2023
Required Functionality		
Program Year (PY) 2023-2024 Updated Disclosure Forms	Implementation of updated English and Spanish Disclosure Forms covering all DG and CS	June 1, 2023 for Program Year opening
Equity Accountability System Compliance Plans and Waivers	Submission of mandatory EAS Compliance Plan or Waiver Request for 2023-2024 Program Year	April 2023. See MES Compliance Training webinar detail below.

Requirements and Reminders

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

  Per 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 PA 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 AVs 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. Deadline to comply is April 4, 2023.==

- **Minimum Equity Standard – Compliance Plans and Waivers**

  On March 13, 2023, the Agency and Program Administrator held a webinar, Minimum Equity Standard (MES): Compliance Plan and Waiver Request Training, for stakeholders, in support of upcoming release of the Compliance Plan form in April, 2023 for the 2023-2024 Program Year. The webinar followed two earlier webinars held on the Equity Accountability System on October 4 and November 15, 2022, and included information on prior presentations, the MES Compliance Plan process and draft form, the Energy Workforce Equity Portal, and the Waiver Request Process. A recording of each webinar, the presentation slides, and relevant Q&A documents can be found at the Equity Accountability System page of the Program website, along with the final MES Waiver and the MAS Waiver Rationale document.

  - The Agency has released updated forms for MES Waiver requests. The original MES waiver was released last week on March 10, 2023 and has been updated to correct a few clerical errors. The rationale to accompany the final decisions can be found here: https://illinoisabp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/MES-Waiver-Rationale-31722-v002.pdf.
  - Additional information about the release of Compliance Plan materials and other resources will be added to the Equity Accountability System page of the Program website in April 2023.

- **Stakeholder Feedback -** This table outlines current and forthcoming proposals and feedback requests:

Proposal or Feedback Topic	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Details of Proposal/Feedback Request Available at:
Minimum Equity Standards (MES) Waiver Process	February 8, 2023	February 22, 2023. Comments have been shared at Program website	Final waiver and rationale found here: https://illinoisabp.com/equity-accountability-system/
Public Schools (Multiple topics, including anchor tenant requirement)	February 22, 2023	March 3, 2023. Comments have been shared at Program website	https://illinoisabp.com/solar-project-categories/#public-schools
REC Pricing Update for 2023-24 Program Year	March 1, 2023	==March 24, 2023==	Request for feedback here: https://ipa.illinois.gov/renewable-resources/stakeholder-engagement.html
New DG Disclosure Forms – Project Performance ("Efficiency") Disclosures	March 2, 2023	March 10, 2023. Comments have been shared at Program website and are under Agency review.	https://illinoisabp.com/consumer-protection/

Proposal or Feedback Topic	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Details of Proposal/Feedback Request Available at:
REC Price Modeling Update for Next Long-Term Plan	March 7, 2023	March 28, 2023	Request for feedback here: https://illinoisabp.com/2023/03/07/independent-rec-pricing-review-request-for-written-comments/
Program Guidebook updates for Program Year 2023-24	March 14, 2023	April 3, 2023	Draft version for public comment here: https://illinoisabp.com/2023/03/14/draft-guidebook-released-for-feedback-comments-due-april-3-2023/ and Redline to past version of Guidebook

- **EEC Block Capacity – Long-Term Plan Reopening**
  The Illinois Commerce Commission approved the request to re-open 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:
  - o Objections to the Agency's proposal – Due February 2, 2023
  - o Responses to objections – Due February 16, 2023
  - o Replies to responses – Due March 2, 2023
  - o Proposed Order – Due March 16, 2023
  - o Brief on Exceptions – Due March 23, 2023
  - o Reply to Briefs on Exceptions – Due March 30, 2023
  - o With the docket open, the Agency will seek to provide an update on the question of dealing with applications submitted on November 1, 2022 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.

- **3G Cell Pack Switch Out**
  The IPA is aware that, as of about May 2022, inverters with communication modules using 3G cellular are no longer supported by internet service companies. These inverters will have to be upgraded with a 4G or 5G cellular module, Wi-Fi connection, or some other replacement communication protocol. If an inverter is not upgraded, the solar array's ability to auto-report production data will cease, or has already ceased. Since some customers may not be aware that an inverter for their array may stop auto-reporting production data, many AVs have been notifying affected customers and assisting with inverter updates where needed. As a reminder, AVs are responsible for entering system production in the tracking registry where the system is registered. If the process in upgrading inverters has posed an issue in production data reporting, please contact your sector strategist to explain the barrier and the steps being taken to resolve the issue.

- **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 PA offers via Zoom, using a waiting room format to support meetings with individual AV or Designee teams for privacy. Upcoming Office Hours include the following dates and times with more dates expected to follow, using Join link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co
  - o Wednesday, March 29 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT
  - o Wednesday, April 5 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT
  - o Wednesday, April 12 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT

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.