

Project Map Restored, EEC Block Changes, New Disclosure Forms Update

May 19, 2023

Program News

- **Updated Block Capacity Dashboard** – The Program is pleased to announce that the [block capacity dashboard](#) has been updated to provide a clearer resource for stakeholders to view the status of Program capacity. The dashboard now provides a toggle that enables users to view a separate dashboard for soft close capacity.
- **Illinois Shines Project Map Restored** – The Program is pleased to announce that the [Project Map](#) has been restored to the Program’s website and appreciates the patience of stakeholders in this effort. With this important tool, users can utilize a dynamic, visual map tool to search projects by Approved Vendor, Energization status, Program category, projects or kilowatts, county, zip code, and application ID to view project information.
- **EEC Block Changes – Long-Term Plan Reopening** - On May 9, 2023, the Agency made a compliance filing of a modified Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan to conform with the changes stated in the ICC’s Order on Reopening in [Docket No. 22-0231](#). The ICC’s Order modified the EEC category including changes to the EEC block size for the 2022-23 Program year, new EEC subcategories, and a developer cap. This modified Plan is now the [current approved Plan](#) can be found in the Program’s website [Resources page](#) in the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan section. [An announcement](#) outlining these changes in more detail was released on May 19, 2023.
- **Group A, Small DG Soft Close Period Concludes; Waitlist in Effect** - As [announced on May 17, 2023](#), the Group A Small Distributed Generation soft close period has concluded. On Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 6:19 p.m. CPT, the soft close limit of 10 additional megawatts of capacity was reached through projects batched and submitted to the block. As of the conclusion of the soft close period, the total batched project capacity for Group A, Small DG is 52.18 MW. Any applications batched and submitted to the Program under Group A, Small DG block after May 16, 2023 at 6:19 p.m. CPT will be placed on a waitlist.
- **Traditional Community Solar Score Audit and Appeal Update** - 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. 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. The Program Administrator undertook a full audit of scores, and [on May 3, 2023](#) shared the results of the audit and updated project scores. As outlined in the announcement, individual entities whose project scores have been directly affected will be contacted and are provided two weeks to appeal and changes to scores; appeals were due May 17, 2023 and the Agency received 6 appeals. **The IPA determination on submitted appeals will be finalized by May 26, 2023.**

Following the finalization of scores post-appeal determination, the Agency will utilize a random selection process to break ties between projects that received the same scores. This process will occur after the appeal process is complete and all scores are confirmed. The Agency will hold the random selection reordering event on **Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. CPT.** Register link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kFNJu5RMSPqN5INdeZxIHA

- **Preparing For the New Program Year** - June 1, 2023 will mark the opening of the 2023-2024 Illinois Shines Program year, which will bring new block capacity across project categories and groups, new REC prices, updated contract requirements, an updated Program Guidebook, an updated Consumer Protection Handbook, new Disclosure Forms, the start of the first year of the Minimum Equity Standard requirements, and more. As a reminder, on [April 17, 2023](#) the Agency published an updated [Program Guidebook](#), [Consumer Protection Handbook](#), [Distributed Generation Contract Requirements](#), and [Community Solar Contract Requirements](#); these materials take effect on June 1, 2023. On [April 21, 2023](#), the Rationale documents for the updated materials were added to the Program website’s [Resources](#) Page. In support of stakeholders, the Agency and Program Administrator will host an upcoming webinar on **Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. CPT** to familiarize participants with the new and updated materials and requirements. Register link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_aMXfBt3LQo-AgmVU7hOz2Q

- **New Disclosure Forms for Program Year 2023-2024** - On May 5, 2023 the Illinois Shines program [announced the release](#) of new Distributed Generation and Community Solar Disclosure Forms, which will be available in the Illinois Shines Program portal and required for use by participating AVs and Designees beginning June 1, 2023, the commencement of the 2023-2024 Program year. On May 18, 2023 the agency [announced](#) the following updates:
 - **The Disclosure Form leniency period for Community Solar (creating a limited exception to the requirement that Disclosure Forms must be signed before the subscription contract) will extend through June 29, 2023.** This extension **does not** apply to Distributed Generation Disclosure Forms, and the leniency period for DG Disclosure Forms officially ends on May 31, 2023 as shared in the May 5, 2023 announcement.
 - **Users that intend to utilize the community solar Disclosure Form API should reach out ASAP to admin@illinoisabp.com in order to join the API working group and to get involved in beta testing of the API. Participating in beta testing will allow for users to begin their programming process with the API.**
 - The SharePoint workaround process for the CSV upload of Disclosure Forms is being discontinued and may not be used after May 31, 2023.
 - A stakeholder informational webinar was held Thursday, May 18, 2023 and the [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#) have been uploaded to the Program Year Updates page on the website. Questions and answers from the webinar will be shared with stakeholders shortly.
- **Annual Reports** - AVs participating in Illinois Shines are required to submit an Annual Report pertaining to the contracts and systems in their portfolio. On May 1, 2023, AVs received an email that gave an overview of the Annual Report process including the model, requirements, and a general timeline for important Annual Report dates. Community Solar AVs received an email that provided guidance on updating their Subscriber Workbook which included important reminders. An informational webinar was held Tuesday, May 9, 2023, and the [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#) have been uploaded to the [Program Year Updates page](#) on the website. **Annual Reports will open on July 1, 2023 and are due no later than July 17, 2023. Failure to submit an Annual Report is an Event of Default under the REC Contract and could impact an Approved Vendor's standing in the Program.** As a reminder, the 2023 Program Year ends May 31, 2023. **This means generational data must be uploaded into GATS or M-RETS and transferred to the Buyer by May 31, 2023.**

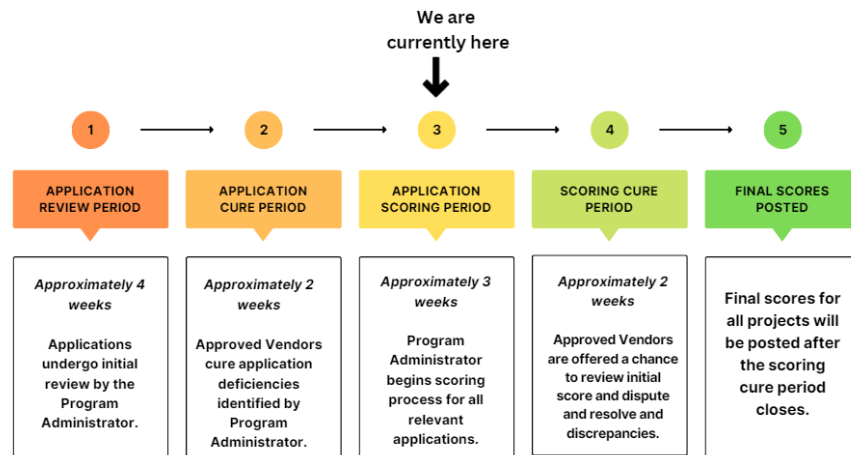
Ongoing Operations Updates

- **Portal Tips and Tools** - Below are tips to assist those submitting applications:
 - **Need Info** - In the May 16, 2023 [Weekly Detail on Application Processing Progress announcement](#), the Program Administrator shared that a high proportion of new application processing staff has resulted in a significant volume of project applications erroneously flagged as *Need Info*. Addressing this issue and resulting delays in application approvals is a very high priority. Last week a *Need Info* working group, led by experienced Program staff, was formed, and began meeting to review data, identify erroneous patterns and assign responsibilities to correct applications and improved training of reviewers. The Program Administrator appreciates the feedback of stakeholders and expects to soon report significant progress here.
 - **Avoiding Need Info Reminder:** When submitting a DF with any changes, it *must be signed by the customer*.

Application Processing Updates

- **Application Processing Tables** - The Program Administrator updates the application processing tables at IllinoisABP.com/project-application-reports/ on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On May 9, 2023, the Program Administrator published its newest [Weekly Detail on Application Processing Progress announcement](#), including updated processing tables and staffing and portal improvements. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@illinoisabp.com.
- **Community-Driven Community Solar Application Review and Scoring Process** - Effective February 20, 2023, Community-Driven Community Solar entered the Scoring phase, which was originally expected to last for approximately three weeks, from February 20 – March 10, 2023; the scoring period is extended for additional

time and is expected to last throughout the month of May but will conclude before June. The Program Administrator will continue to share updates as we move through the process and thanks AVs for their patience in this process.



Ongoing Program Portal Updates

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

Updates on Portal Issues, Improvements, and Future Releases

- The planned system maintenance windows on **Tuesday and Thursday evenings (from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. CPT)** will extend through May. During these maintenance windows, the Portal is expected to be unavailable to users, which the Program Administrator 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 AVs and Designees.
- An additional special software release will occur **May 31, 2023 from 7:00 p.m. CPT to 8:00 a.m. CPT on June 1, 2023.** CPT in support of the 2023-2024 Program year opening.

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
Enhancements, Features and Bug Fixes		
Part I and Part II project applications	A variety of field visibility and validation updates have been implemented across all project applications, and field validation updates specific to Community-Driven Community Solar applications. Please see the Portal Updates Page for more details.	Week of May 8, 2023
Community Solar DF API	Beta Version 1.0 of the Community Solar Disclosure Form API was released on April 26, 2023. On May 18, 2023, the Program Administrator released confidential updated Developer's Guide and a sample Community Solar DF.	On May 16, the Program Administrator invited community solar developers to two upcoming working group sessions in support of API development and integration.
Re-batching Functionality	On/off toggle, ability to create batches by project and by batch Screen, export Batch Shuffling and Batch Audit Log.	Tentatively planned for Q3 2023.
Required Functionality		
Program year (PY) 2023-2024 Updated Disclosure Forms	Implementation of updated English and Spanish DFs covering all DG and CS.	June 1, 2023 for Program year opening.

Requirements and Reminders

- Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Compliance Plans** - On April 14, 2023, the Agency launched the Minimum Equity Standard (MES) for Illinois Shines, including the publication of the Minimum Equity Standard [Compliance Plan submission form](#), and associated resources and support, updated instructional content at the

Program website's [Equity Accountability System page](#), an [MES sample document](#) to preview the Compliance Plan submission form, a [Guide to the Equity Accountability System](#), [FAQs](#) on the Minimum Equity Standard, past webinars regarding compliance with equity requirements, MES Waiver Request and Rationale document, and MES-specific expanded office hours which are being held each Friday through May 26, 2023 (please see end of this announcement for details). The Agency and Program Administrator appreciate the valuable questions of stakeholders and the Agency is developing additional FAQs to provide guidance to stakeholders.

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

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
REC Pricing Update for 2023-24 Program Year	March 1, 2023	March 24, 2023. Comments have been shared at the Agency's website .	https://illinoisabp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2023-2024-ABP-REC-Prices-For-pub-17-April-2023.xlsx
REC Price Modeling Update for Next Long-Term Plan	March 7, 2023	April 4, 2023. Comments have been shared at the Agency's website .	Under Agency review. To be included in Next Long-Term Plan
Program Guidebook updates for Program Year 2023-24	March 14, 2023	April 3, 2023. Comments have been shared on Program website .	Final document: https://illinoisabp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/PY2023-24-Program-Guidebook-FINAL-230417-1745.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Guidebook Rationale

- **3G Cell Pack Switch Out** - In 2022 all major mobile carriers, including AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon, discontinued their 3G networks and switched to 5G networks. This switch has impacted solar system owners in the U.S. who installed 3G modems as a part of their solar array. As technology progresses over time, this can be foreseen to be an ongoing compliance issue within the Program for AVs. A 3G modem or “cell card”, is the hardware within a solar inverter that communicates with the internet to report production of a solar array. Production is required to be reported within the Program to remain compliant with the fifteen-year REC contract signed between an AV and the consumer. To address this issue, the Program Administrator requests AVs to capture their customers lifetime meter reads. Although communication may have been lost and not reported to the internet enabled inverter app, the data is still stored on the inverter itself. If the inverter has an interface screen, the consumer can report the lifetime meter read and then production values can be updated accordingly. For example, if an end use customer installed a SolarEdge inverter in October 2022, but no production had been reported through the SolarEdge app from December 2022 to May 2023, the AV could request the customer go to their inverter and read the total kwh’s that inverter has produced in its lifetime. This lifetime meter read would then be subtracted from the last known data retrieved in December 2022. This lifetime meter read would then be reported to the Program Administrator to ensure the solar array has met their REC requirements.

For further information on this topic, please visit your inverter manufacturer’s website. Many solar inverter manufacturers have service or support teams in place to request the replacement parts needed to address your customer’s concerns on getting their 3G cell cards switched to the 5G cell cards to ensure monitoring of their production continues. The Program Administrator acknowledges there could be delays in shipments of these parts as they are in high demand.

- **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, 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>
 - Wednesday, May 24 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT
 - Friday, May 26 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT for **MES Support**
 - Friday, May 26 – 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. CPT for **Disclosure Form Support**
 - Wednesday, May 31 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT
 - Thursday, June 1, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. CPT – **Program Year Launch Support**

- Thursday, June 1 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT for **Disclosure Form Support**
- Thursday, June 1 – 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. CPT – **Program Year Launch Support**
- Friday, June 2 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT for **MES Support**

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.