

TCS Score Appeal Update, CDCS Scoring Cure Period Begins, Preparing for the New Program Year

May 26, 2023

Program News

- **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 today; any changes to scores related to appeals will be reflected in the scoring spreadsheet on the Program website.**

Following the finalization of post-appeal determination scores, the Agency will utilize a random selection process to break ties between projects that received the same scores. The Agency will hold the random selection reordering event on **Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. CPT**. Registration link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kFNju5RMSPqN5lNdeZxIHA

- **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.
 - The Agency and Program Administrator hosted a webinar on May 25, 2023 and the [recording](#) and [Resource Guide](#) have been uploaded to the [Program Year Updates](#) page on the website. Questions and answers from the webinar will be shared with stakeholders shortly.
 - **The portal will be down May 31, 2023 from 7:00 p.m. CPT to 8:00 a.m. CPT on June 1, 2023 CPT in order to prepare for the new Program year.**
- **New Disclosure Forms for Program Year 2023-2024** - On May 5, 2023 the Program [announced the release](#) of new DG and CS Disclosure Forms, which will be available in the 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.
 - The SharePoint workaround process for the CSV upload of Disclosure Forms is being discontinued and may not be used after **May 31, 2023**. All AVs using the workaround are asked to begin using the Community Solar Disclosure Form CSV portal upload functionality as soon as practicable, and no later than June 1, 2023.
 - A [REC payments calculator](#) has been added to the Program website and can be used to calculate the estimated value for specific projects for Disclosure Form submission.
 - **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 for the new Disclosure Forms. Draft CSV templates are now available at the Program website's [Resources](#) page, in the Disclosure Forms section. Please note, beginning June 1, 2023, participating entities should always ensure they download the current version of the CSV template from the Program portal.

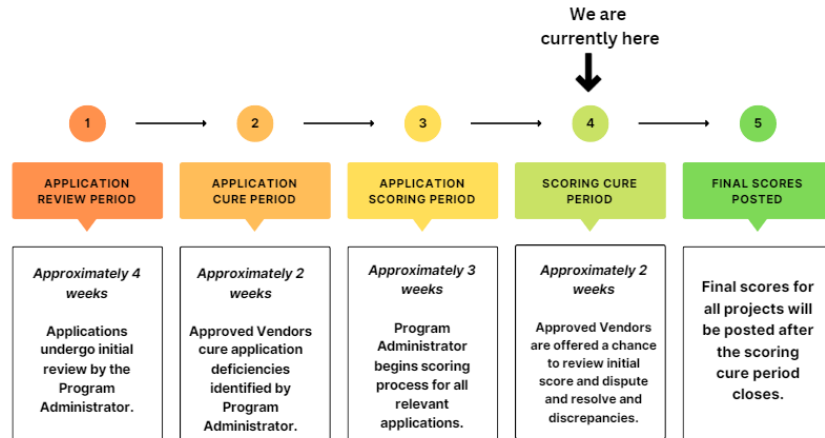
- A stakeholder informational webinar was held Thursday, May 18, 2023 and the [recording](#), [presentation slides](#), and [Q&As](#) have been uploaded to the [Program Year Updates](#) page on the website.
- **Annual Reports** - AVs participating in Illinois Shines are required to submit an Annual Report 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.
 - On May 19, AVs received emails requesting them to update SharePoint folder permissions by June 2, 2023. If you do not believe you received an email, or continue to need SharePoint permission, contact the Program Administrator.
 - **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.**
- **Eligibility Criteria for EECs and the EEC Category** - Pursuant to the Agencies [request for stakeholder feedback](#) on strategies to strengthen the criteria for qualifying as an Equity Eligible Contractor and participating in the EEC category in the Program, the Agency received 10 comments which have been posted to the Program website's [Equity Accountable System page](#). The Agency would like to thank those who submitted feedback. These comments are under review and consideration by the Agency to be included in its draft of the 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, to be released for public review and comment this summer.

Ongoing Operations Updates

- **Portal Tips and Tools** - Below are tips to assist those submitting applications:
 - **Need Info** - Resolving the high *Need Info* volume and resulting delays in application approvals is a high priority. The *Need Info* working group, created to address this volume of applications continued to resolve currently flagged applications and prevent erroneous patterns. The *Need Info* working group has identified the most common causes of *Need Info* requests resulting from AV submissions on project applications. These include:
 - Part I Applications
 - Inconsistency or errors in Financing/Ownership structure: For example, project is listed as "Customer-Owned", but owner listed on DF and/or Application is conflicting.
 - Documents uploaded for wrong property address.
 - Part II Applications
 - Meter photos which do not show cumulative lifetime meter reading as required.
 - The number of modules in the application do not match the number of modules shown in the array photos as required.
 - Demographic and zip code information missing or incomplete. Reminder, this requirement comes from the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act.
 - The inverter information in the application does not match the inverter photos.

Application Processing Updates

- **Application Processing Tables** - The Program Administrator updates the application processing tables at [IllinoisABP.com/project-application-reports/](https://illinoisabp.com/project-application-reports/) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On May 22, 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** - The Program Administrator has completed the application scoring period. Community-Driven Community Solar projects are now entering the scoring cure period on May 26, 2023. AVs, please check your SharePoint folders for more information regarding the curing of any Need Info requests related to project scores. Please respond promptly when possible so the scoring cure process can close out on time.



Ongoing Program Portal Updates

- Ongoing portal updates can be found at [IllinoisABP.com/portal-updates/](https://illinoisabp.com/portal-updates/), and a library of portal help guides can be found at [IllinoisABP.com/portal-help/](https://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.
- Additionally, the portal will be down **May 31, 2023 from 7:00 p.m. CPT to 8:00 a.m. CPT on June 1, 2023 CPT** for a special software release in support of the 2023-2024 Program year opening. Please plan accordingly as the portal will not be available for use during this time.

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 15, 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.

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
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](#) (last edited May 25, 2023) 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). **As a reminder, MES Compliance Plans are due June 1, 2023.**

- 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

- 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.
- Updated Block Capacity Dashboard** - The Program announced on May 19, 2023, 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 [Project Map](#) has been restored to the Program’s website. 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.
- 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 31, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT
 - Thursday, June 1, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. CPT for **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 for **Program Year Launch Support**

- Friday, June 2, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT for **MES Support**
- Wednesday, June 7, 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.