

Approved Vendor Program Requirements Annual Checklist

The following items must be submitted or made available to the Illinois Shines Program Administrator on an annual basis. Each Illinois Shines Program Year lasts from June 1 – May 31.

Requirements to Maintain Status as an Approved Vendor / Designee

- Approved Vendor Renewal**
- Designee Renewal (If applicable)**
- Designee Management Plan (If applicable)**

MES Reporting Requirements

- MES Compliance Plan**
- MES Compliance Mid-Year Report**
- MES Compliance End of Year Report**

REC Contract Reporting Requirements

- Bi-Annual Report**
- Annual Report**
- Community Solar Subscriber Verification**
- Project Inspections**

Requirements to Maintain Status as an Approved Vendor / Designee

Approved Vendor Renewal

As outlined in the Program Guidebook, Approved Vendors are required to renew their approval once a year and should complete this [Approved Vendor Renewal Application](#).

In addition to the completed renewal form, the supplemental documents listed below are also required to renew each Approved Vendor.

- Printout of either PJM-GATS aggregator account or M-RETS account ownership confirmation
- Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (if applicable)
- Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing Dated within the past 12 months
- Marketing Uploads

Approved Vendors must complete the Approved Vendor Renewal by the anniversary of their Approved Vendor approval each year. The Program Administrator will send a reminder the month before and the month of your renewal.

Designee Renewal

Designees must go through an annual process to renew their registration, similar to the current renewal process for Approved Vendors. As part of this process, Designees will submit their training materials and certifications showing that their agents have been trained in accordance with Program requirements. Approved Vendors should work with their Designees to ensure that Designee renewals are submitted annually. Approved Vendors, who are also Designees, will need to submit a Designee renewal form in addition to the Approved Vendor renewal form.

Designee Management Plan

Approved Vendors are expected to review their Designee Management Plan at least annually and update it as needed. This requirement is outlined in Section X.B.1 of the Consumer Protection Handbook, which includes details on required plan content. Approved Vendors must submit their Designee Management Plan to the Program Administrator or Agency upon request. Failure to have and follow a Designee Management Plan that includes applicable elements identified above on or after September 1, 2023, will be considered a violation of Program requirements. The Designee Management Plan is not a requirement for Approved Vendors that have not and do not plan to work with any designees.

MES Reporting Requirements

MES Compliance Plan

Starting June 1, 2023, existing Approved Vendors and Designees must file an annual Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Compliance Plan. The MES Compliance Plan describes how the Approved Vendor or Designee plans to meet the MES for the Program Year by hiring and retaining Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs). The MES requirement for the 2023-2024 Program Year is 10% EEPs for an entity's project workforce, and the MES for the 2024-2025 Program year is 12% EEPs for an entity's workforce. For more information on the Program's MES and related requirements, please visit: illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system.

MES Compliance Plans are due annually on June 1. New Approved Vendors must submit an MES Compliance Plan at the time of application to the Program.

Note: Approved Vendors who are Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs) are, by virtue of their participation in the Program, in full compliance with the Equity Accountability System (EAS) and thus do not need to submit a MES Compliance Plan.

MES Compliance Mid-Year Report

Each December, halfway through the Program Year, each Approved Vendor and Designee must respond to a written inquiry from the Program Administrator, confirming that the MES Compliance Plan is progressing in accordance with requirements.

MES Compliance End of Year Report

Approved Vendors and Designees must submit a year-end report within 45 days of the end of the Program Year (i.e., by July 15, 2024) that includes data on its performance compared to the MES Compliance Plan submitted the previous year.

REC Contract Reporting Requirements

Bi-Annual Report

Approved Vendors are required to submit a system status update (or Bi-Annual report) every six months after the Trade Date for systems that are not yet Energized (Part II Verification). For projects under the 2021 and 2022 REC contract, this only includes systems over 25 KW. For systems under the 2019 REC contract, this includes all systems. More information can be found in the respective REC contract under the [Program Documents section](#) on the Program website.

Annual Report

On an annual basis, each Approved Vendor is required to submit an Annual Report of the contracts and systems in its portfolio, which serves as the basis for verifying that RECs are being delivered as required. Approved Vendors without REC Contracts are not required to submit an Annual Report, however are encouraged to do so in order to provide updated contact information. The report will include the following information:

- Number of RECs delivered by each of the systems in the portfolio.
- Status of all systems that have been approved, but not yet Energized (Part II Verified), including any extensions requested and granted.
- Energized systems that have not delivered RECs in the year.
- For Community Solar systems, a summary of subscriber information.
- Balance of collateral held by each utility.
- A summary of requests for REC obligation suspensions, reductions, or eliminations, due to force majeure events or other circumstances.
- Information on consumer complaints received.
- Workforce demographic information.

More information on Annual Reports can be found in section 7.A of the Program Guidebook, the Approved Vendor [Annual Report Guide](#), or by viewing the respective REC contract under the [Program Documents section](#) on the Program website.

Community Solar Subscriber Verification

Community Solar projects in the Program are subject to subscriber verification at Part II application verification and additional intervals depending on the project's REC contract. For 2019, 2021, and 2022 15-Year REC contract projects, they will be subject to quarterly subscriber verification in the first year after Part II Verification (Energization). For 2021 and 2022 20-Year REC contract projects, they will be subject to bi-annual subscriber verification in June and December throughout the lifetime of the project.

Project Inspections

At any point in the year, Approved Vendors are expected to comply with requests for on-site or virtual inspections of their projects participating in the Program. Inspections will be scheduled in advance but may occur at any time during which the project is still within the Program. Customers are expected to be informed of the possibility of an inspection by the Approved Vendor or Designee. It is the Approved Vendor's responsibility to ensure customer compliance if that Approved Vendor's system is selected for inspection.