



Illinois Shines Minimum Equity Standard Compliance Plan and Waiver Request Training

March 13, 2023

Today's Presenters



Kelly Turner
Illinois Power Agency
Interim Chief Legal Counsel



Sarah Duffy
Illinois Power Agency
Deputy Legal Counsel



K.C. Doyle
Energy Solutions
Strategy Team Manager



Agenda

- Recap of Previously Covered EAS Materials
- MES Compliance Plan Process and Form
- Energy Workforce Equity Portal Overview
- Waiver Request Process
 - When to Request a Waiver
 - Project-basis vs. Portfolio-Basis
 - Multiple/repeat Waiver Requests
- Resources and Questions



Recap of Equity Accountability System

CEJA DEI Goals & the Equity Accountability System

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (Public Act 102-0662) amended the Illinois Power Agency Act to expand the "**priority access** to the clean energy economy for business and workers from **communities that have been excluded from economic opportunities** in the energy sector, have been subject to **disproportionate levels of pollution**, and have disproportionately experienced **negative public health outcomes**."

The **Equity Accountability System (EAS)**, includes:

1. Minimum Equity Standards (MES) applicable to all applicants to the Agency's Adjustable Block Program and competitive procurements.

- Beginning in **Program Year 2023-2024**, which starts June 1, 2023, at least 10% of project workforce for each entity that participates in Illinois Shines that year must be comprised of Equity Eligible Persons (EEP). **By 2030**, at least 30% of the project workforce for each entity participating comprised of EEPs.

2. The Equity Eligible Contractor category within the Program



Who are Equity Eligible Persons and Contractors?

The IPA Act defines Equity Eligible Persons as:

1. Graduates or current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, Illinois Climate Works Preapprentice Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multicultural jobs program created by FEJA
2. Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
3. Persons who were formerly incarcerated
4. Persons whose primary residence is in an equity eligible investment community

Equity Eligible Contractor: A business that is majority-owned by eligible persons, or a nonprofit or cooperative that is majority-governed by eligible persons, or is a natural person that is an eligible person offering personal services as an independent contractor.

Scope of Project Workforce

- Employees, contractors and their employees, and subcontractors and their employees
- Job duties are directly required by or substantially related to the development, construction, and operation of a project that is participating in or intended to participate
- Including workforce in administrative, sales, marketing, and technical roles where those workers' duties are performed in Illinois



Compliance Planning and MES Begin With 2022-2023 Program Year, and Process Repeats Each Year

Post-webinar correction: Compliance Plan and MES Begin with Program Year 2023-2024



The Agency proposes to increase the minimum equity standard to 12% for the 2024-2025 delivery year. In the next Long-Term Plan, the Agency will propose future increases of the minimum equity standard over subsequent delivery years to eventually reach the 30% statutory requirement by 2030

Equity Accountability System and Illinois Shines – Previous Webinars and Resources

The Agency and Program Administrator presented an “Equity Accountability System and Illinois Shines” webinars on October 4 and on November 15, 2022.

All AVs and Designees are strongly encouraged to view the recording to ensure comprehension and compliance with Program requirements and to complete the Attestation Form linked at this page.

Resources from the first two webinar are available on the Equity Accountability System page of the Illinois ABP website, IllinoisABP.com/equity-accountability-system, including:

- Webinar Recordings
- Presentation Slides
- Attestation Form
- Q&A Documents





MES Compliance Plan Process & Forms

Compliance Plan Overview

By June 1, 2023, all non-EEC Approved Vendors and Designees are required to submit MES Compliance Plans.

- Outline how the Approved Vendor or Designee plans to achieve the minimum equity standard for the upcoming delivery year
 - E.g., the Compliance Plans submitted on June 1, 2023, will explain how the AV plans to meet the 10% MES for all projects submitted to ABP in the 2023-2024 Program Year.
- If an entity applies to be an AV or Designee during a delivery year, Compliance plans required at time of initial application
- AVs must amend and/or correct Compliance Plans after review by the Program Administrator (within 14 days)



Compliance Plan Requirements


Compliance plans must include the following items:

- i. A statement of intent to comply with equity accountability standards for the applicable delivery year
- ii. A narrative description of how the applicant will meet these commitments.
- iii. Projected number of workers and the demographic breakdown by race, gender, and participation in job training or workforce development programs, or other means of compliance with the standard for equity eligible persons.
- iv. Plans for the use of Equity Eligible Contractors, if applicable.
- v. Applicant classification (i.e., Minority-owned, Woman-owned, Disabled-owned, Veteran-owned, Small Business, etc.), if applicable.
- vi. Communication plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of Equity Eligible Persons and Equity Eligible Contractors.
- vii. Status of any corrective actions or adjustments from prior year Compliance Plans.

Note: Approved Vendors do not need to submit Compliance Plans for their Designees but shall report which Designees they worked with in the delivery year to allow the Agency to correlate activities and compliance. This is not meant to relieve Approved Vendors of responsibility to comply with the Equity Accountability Standard, but rather to ensure that efforts are not double counted.

Compliance Plan Submission Process

- A fillable PDF template for MES Compliance Plans will be available for download by AVs and Designees. The form will be shared widely via program update emails, as well as posted on the Program website and portal.
- Vendors will be able to download the fillable form, complete it on their own time, and upload it to the program portal (portal.illinoisabp.com) as an attachment.
- The portal submission window will open in April; **all plans due by June 1st.**


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Minimum Equity Standards Compliance Plan
Upon completion of this form, please upload it to the program portal, in the section designated 'MES Compliance'.

Approved Vendor Information	
AV or Designee Company Name	
AV or Designee ID #	
Name of Person Completing Form	
Email of Person Completing Form	

Do you intend to submit projects to Illinois Shines during the 2023-2024 program year? Yes No
If you answer 'no', you do not need to complete the rest of this form.

affirms its intent to comply with all necessary requirements of Act 102-0662 (Climate and Equitable Jobs Act) relating to the Minimum Equity Standard and agree to the obligations, including hiring a diverse project workforce and working with Equity Eligible Contractors.


Yes No

Please type the name of the individual agreeing to the above attestation.

Today's Date:

Please select any of the following categories that apply to your business

- Minority-owned business enterprise (MBE)
- Woman-owned business enterprise (WBE)
- Disabled-owned business
- Veteran-owned business
- Small business
- None
- Other (comment box to fill in)

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Please provide a narrative description of how the AV will ensure that at least 10% of its project workforce are Equity Eligible Persons.

Projected total number of employees/workers on ABP projects during the 2023-2024 program year

Demographic breakdown of projected workforce
Please provide an estimate of the number of individuals that belong to the following demographic groups:


- Male
- Female
- Other/Non-Binary
- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- Multiracial

Estimated Number of Equity Eligible Persons **currently** in project workforce, per category

- Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.
- Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
- Persons who were formerly incarcerated
- Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community
- I don't have this information

Number of Equity Eligible Persons your organization **seeks to hire** to meet MES Compliance over the Program year, per category

- Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.

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Compliance Plan Assessment

Compliance Plans will be evaluated on the following scale:

1) Needs Development (a rating of 1)

The plan will not be accepted without updating of or inclusion of requirements that need resolution or are missing. AVs will need to review, correct and/or include missing compliance items in order for the Compliance Plan to be approved. Indicates risk of non-compliance.

2) Accepted (a rating of 2)

The plan will be accepted. Indicates that all compliance requirements are in place for Compliance Plan approval.

3) Exceeds Requirements (a rating of 3)

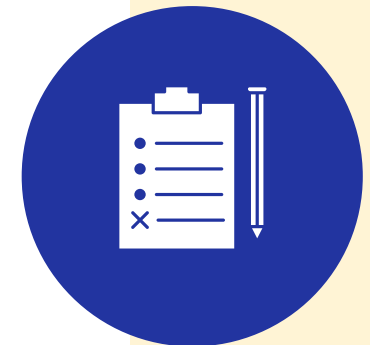
The Compliance Plan will be approved. Indicates that the entity has committed in their written plan to take internal, periodic checks before the mid-year confirmation of progress to evaluate continued effectiveness or risk of the plan and will go beyond the minimum equity standards by 50% (e.g., if the standard for a delivery year is 10%, they commit to achieving 15%). This will include noting best practices and/or areas of adjustment.

Compliance Plans Needing Development

Example reasons a Compliance Plan may receive a rating of 1 and **Needs Development**:


- Narrative description of how AV will meet MES is limited or provides little detail
 - E.g., simply states "The AV will post job posting to several websites."
- Demographic information provided for workforce is missing or incomplete
- Missing any of the reporting requirements outlined in 10.1.1.4 of the Long-Term Plan (Slide 13 of this presentation)

Correction Timeline: After notification of any necessary corrections within 14 days of Plan submission, the AV will have 30 days to amend the plan (extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis) and the Agency will notify AVs of the final re-evaluation status within 21 days of resubmission.



Compliance Plan – Sample "Needs Development"

Sample Compliance Plan* that would receive a rating of 1, due to: 1) Insufficient narrative description of plan to ensure minimum 10% EEP workforce composition; 2) Incomplete demographic data on project workforce; and 3) Insufficient level of detail on communication plan for outreach



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Minimum Equity Standards Compliance Plan
Upon completion of this form, please upload it to the program portal, in the section designated 'MES Compliance'.

Approved Vendor Information	
AV or Designee Company Name	Company X
AV or Designee ID #	XXX
Name of Person Completing Form	John Smith
Email of Person Completing Form	jsmith@xcompany.com

Do you intend to submit projects to Illinois Shines during the 2023-2024 program year? Yes No
If you answer 'no', you do not need to complete the rest of this form.


affirms its intent to comply with all necessary requirements set forth in Public Act 102-0662 (Climate and Equitable Jobs Act) relating to the Minimum Equity Standard and agrees to comply with certain obligations, including hiring a diverse project workforce and working with Equity Eligible Contractors, where applicable."
 Yes No

Please type the name of the individual agreeing to the above attestation.

Today's Date:

Please select any of the following categories that apply to your business

- Minority-owned business enterprise (MBE)
- Woman-owned business enterprise (WBE)
- Disabled-owned business
- Veteran-owned business
- Small business
- None
- Other (comment box to fill in)



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Please provide a narrative description of how the AV will ensure that at least 10% of its project workforce are Equity Eligible Persons.

Company X will make its best efforts to comply with the MES requirements, including job postings and ads.

10 Projected total number of employees/workers on ABP projects during the 2023-2024 program year

Demographic breakdown of projected workforce
Please provide an estimate of the number of individuals that belong to the following demographic groups:


- Male
- Female
- Other/Non-Binary
- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- Multiracial

Estimated Number of Equity Eligible Persons **currently** in project workforce, per category

- Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.
- Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
- Persons who were formerly incarcerated
- Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community
- I don't have this information

Number of Equity Eligible Persons your organization **seeks to hire** to meet MES Compliance over the Program year, per category

- Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.



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- Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
- Persons who were formerly incarcerated
- Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community

Do you plan to partner with Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendors or Designees for applications associated with this company?
 Yes, Name of AV/Designee
 No


Please list the Designees you intend to use within the delivery year

Please describe your communication plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of EEPs and EECs.
Please try to keep your response to one page.

The Communication Plan for Outreach might answer questions such as:

- What is the entity's overall plan around outreach?
- What messaging will the entity utilize?
- Which organizations (community colleges, unions, non-profits, etc.) will the entity reach out to and coordinate with? What is the timeline for that outreach?
- What are your plans to use social media and other communications for outreach?
- What is the entity's plan for following up on its outreach?
- What course correction do you plan if you are insufficiently recruiting EEPs?
- Where will you post job openings?
- Will you offer job shadowing/mentorship opportunities for position exposure?
- Are there townhalls and workshops held to advertise your company need?
- Have you considered language accessibility needs to reach everyone in the community?
- Have you reached out within your own firm for potential candidates?

1. Spoke with Community Based Organization on 5/15/23
2. Registered to utilize Energy Equity Database on 5/27/23



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***The Compliance Plan is not finalized yet; this sample is illustrative only, and should not be considered an official template.**

Compliance Plan – Sample "Needs Development"

1) Insufficient narrative description of plan to ensure minimum 10% EEP workforce composition

Please provide a narrative description of how the AV will ensure that at least 10% of its project workforce are Equity Eligible Persons.

Company X will make its best efforts to comply with the MES requirements, including job postings and ads.

Projected total number of employees/workers on ABP projects during the 2023-2024 program year

3) Insufficient detail on outreach communication plan

Please describe your communication plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of EEPs and EECs.
Please try to keep your response to one page.

The Communication Plan for Outreach might answer questions such as:

- What is the entity's overall plan around outreach?
- What messaging will the entity utilize?
- Which organizations (community colleges, unions, non-profits, etc.) will the entity reach out to and coordinate with?
What is the timeline for that outreach?
- What are your plans to use social media and other communications for outreach?
- What is the entity's plan for following up on its outreach?
- What course correction do you plan if you are insufficiently recruiting EEPs?
- Where will you post job openings?
- Will you offer job shadowing/mentorship opportunities for position exposure?
- Are there townhalls and workshops held to advertise your company need?
- Have you considered language accessibility needs to reach everyone in the community?
- Have you reached out within your own firm for potential candidates?

1. Spoke with Community Based Organization on 5/15/23
2. Registered to utilize Energy Equity Database on 5/27/23

2) Incomplete demographic data on project workforce

Demographic breakdown of projected workforce

Please provide an estimate of the number of individuals that belong to the following demographic groups:

Male
 Female
 Other/Non-Binary
 White
 Black or African American
 American Indian or Alaska Native
 Asian
 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 Hispanic or Latino
 Multiracial

Estimated Number of Equity Eligible Persons **currently** in project workforce, per category

Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.

Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system


Persons who were formerly incarcerated

Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community

I don't have this information

Compliance Plan – Sample "Accepted"

Sample Compliance Plan* that would likely receive a rating of 2, with all details completed, including descriptive narrative of plan to ensure minimum 10% EEP workforce composition, 2) Complete demographic data on project workforce; and 3) Sufficient and thorough level of detail on outreach communication plan.



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Minimum Equity Standards Compliance Plan
Upon completion of this form, please upload it to the program portal, in the section designated 'MES Compliance'.

Approved Vendor Information	
AV or Designee Company Name	Company X
AV or Designee ID #	XXX
Name of Person Completing Form	John Smith
Email of Person Completing Form	jsmith@companyx.com

Do you intend to submit projects to Illinois Shines during the 2023-2024 program year? Yes No
If you answer 'no', you do not need to complete the rest of this form.


" affirms its intent to comply with all necessary requirements set forth in Public Act 102-0662 (Climate and Equitable Jobs Act) relating to the Minimum Equity Standard and agrees to comply with certain obligations, including hiring a diverse project workforce and working with Equity Eligible Contractors, where applicable."
 Yes No

Please type the name of the individual agreeing to the above attestation.

Today's Date:

Please select any of the following categories that apply to your business

Minority-owned business enterprise (MBE)
 Woman-owned business enterprise (WBE)
 Disabled-owned business
 Veteran-owned business
 Small business
 None
 Other (comment box to fill in)



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Please provide a narrative description of how the AV will ensure that at least 10% of its project workforce are Equity Eligible Persons.

Company X will survey all current & new employees to understand if they fall into EEP categories. We plan to partner with local organizations to promote any open positions to applicable groups.

10 Projected total number of employees/workers on ABP projects during the 2023-2024 program year

Demographic breakdown of projected workforce
Please provide an estimate of the number of individuals that belong to the following demographic groups:


7 Male
 3 Female
 Other/Non-Binary
 White
 2 Black or African American
 American Indian or Alaska Native
 Asian
 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 Hispanic or Latino
 Multiracial

Estimated Number of Equity Eligible Persons currently in project workforce, per category

1 Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.
 Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
 Persons who were formerly incarcerated
 1 Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community
 I don't have this information

Number of Equity Eligible Persons your organization seeks to hire to meet MES Compliance over the Program year, per category

2 Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.



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Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
 2 Persons who were formerly incarcerated
 3 Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community

Do you plan to partner with Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendors or Designees for applications associated with this company?
 Yes, Name of AV/Designee
 No

Please list the Designees you intend to use within the delivery year

Please describe your communication plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of EEPs and EECs.
Please try to keep your response to one page.

The Communication Plan for Outreach might answer questions such as:


- What is the entity's overall plan around outreach?
- What messaging will the entity utilize?
- Which organizations (community colleges, unions, non-profits, etc.) will the entity reach out to and coordinate with? What is the timeline for that outreach?
- What are your plans to use social media and other communications for outreach?
- What is the entity's plan for following up on its outreach?
- What course correction do you plan if you are insufficiently recruiting EEPs?
- Where will you post job openings?
- Will you offer job shadowing/mentorship opportunities for position exposure?
- Are there townhalls and workshops held to advertise your company need?
- Have you considered language accessibility needs to reach everyone in the community?
- Have you reached out within your own firm for potential candidates?

Company X will conduct the following outreach methods to promote open positions to potential EEPs:
 - Email/phone outreach to XX Community College by 7/2023 to offer job shadowing opps to recent graduates
 - Posting open positions on LinkedIn, Indeed, and other job searching sites, as well as holding "town halls"
 - Consistent use of IPA's Energy Workforce Equity Portal to connect with EEPs and EECs
 - Contact 5 local Community-Based Organizations about job opportunities by September 2023, asking them to post on their own job boards or offering to present at a future membership meeting

Company X's messaging will share information about our business, and commitment to diverse, inclusive hiring. We will use multi-lingual flyers and incorporate diverse representation in appeals to job seekers.

Company X is developing social media campaigns with calls to join our growing and diverse team.

Company X will frequently check in on and evaluate progress on the above. All new hires will be surveyed to understand whether they fit EEP criteria, and we will continually monitor progress toward the 10% MES goal.



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Compliance Plan – Sample "Accepted"

Sample Compliance Plan* that would likely receive a rating of 2, with all details completed, including descriptive narrative of plan to ensure minimum 10% EEP workforce composition, 2) Complete demographic data on project workforce; and 3) Sufficient and thorough level of detail on outreach communication plan.

1) Sufficient narrative description of plan to ensure minimum 10% EEP workforce composition

Please provide a narrative description of how the AV will ensure that at least 10% of its project workforce are Equity Eligible Persons.

Company X will survey all current & new employees to understand if they fall into EEP categories. We plan to partner with local organizations to promote any open positions to applicable groups.

Projected total number of employees/workers on ABP projects during the 2023-2024 program year

3) Sufficient detail on outreach communication plan

Please describe your communication plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of EEPs and EECS.
Please try to keep your response to one page.

The Communication Plan for Outreach might answer questions such as:

- What is the entity's overall plan around outreach?
- What messaging will the entity utilize?
- Which organizations (community colleges, unions, non-profits, etc.) will the entity reach out to and coordinate with? What is the timeline for that outreach?
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Company X's messaging will share information about our business, and commitment to diverse, inclusive hiring. We will use multi-lingual flyers and incorporate diverse representation in appeals to job seekers.

Company X is developing social media campaigns with calls to join our growing and diverse team.

Company X will frequently check in on and evaluate progress on the above. All new hires will be surveyed to understand whether they fit EEP criteria, and we will continually monitor progress toward the 10% MES goal.

2) Complete demographic data on project workforce

Demographic breakdown of projected workforce

Please provide an estimate of the number of individuals that belong to the following demographic groups:

Male

Female

Other/Non-Binary

White

Black or African American

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Hispanic or Latino

Multiracial

Estimated Number of Equity Eligible Persons **currently** in project workforce, per category

Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.

Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system

Persons who were formerly incarcerated

Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community

I don't have this information

Number of Equity Eligible Persons your organization **seeks to hire** to meet MES Compliance over the Program year, per category

Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.

***The Compliance Plan is not yet developed; this sample is illustrative only, and should not be considered an official template.**

Confirmation and Year End Reporting

- Each Approved Vendor and Designee must submit a year-end report within 45 days after the end of the delivery year in which they participated in ABP through submitting a Part I or Part II project application.
- Year-end reporting will consist of an updated version of the Compliance Plan submitted at the start of the delivery year that provides data on actual performance compared to the original Compliance Plan.
- Reporting should also reflect any major differences from the Compliance Plan such as new and innovative ways to provide employment opportunities to low-income participants and residents within the environmental justice communities.
- The first Reports will be due after the end of the 2023-2024 delivery year.
- Approved Vendors and Designees must meet all applicable minimum equity standards before being awarded a contract for RECs under an IPA program or procurement, unless the entity has obtained a waiver.



Energy Workforce Equity Portal Overview

Energy Workforce Equity Database Overview

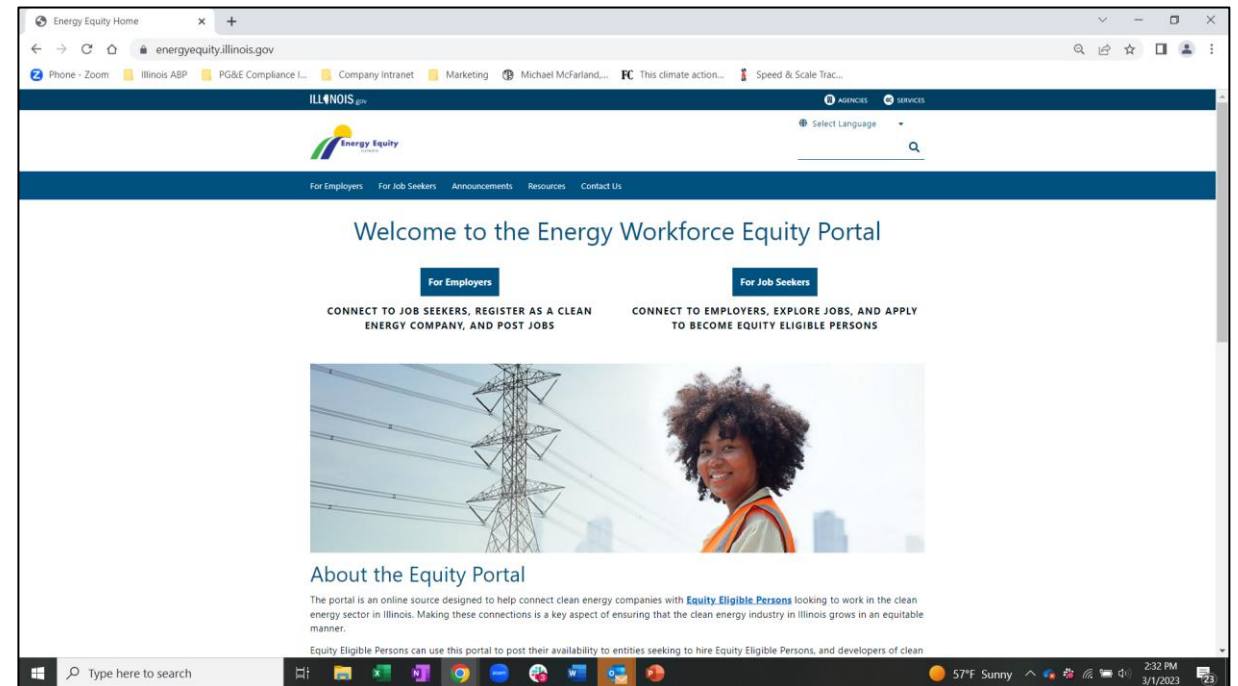
CEJA directed IPA and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (“DCEO”) to help historically underserved communities participate in and benefit from the growing clean energy economy. On January 31, 2023, IPA announced Phase I launch of the **Energy Workforce Equity Portal**.

Job seekers can use the portal to:

- See if they qualify as Equity Eligible Persons
- Register to be listed on the portal
- View clean energy jobs postings for EEPs

Clean Energy Project Developers can

- Advertise clean energy jobs
- Search for Equity Eligible Persons seeking employment



energyequity.illinois.gov/



Waiver Request Process

Waiver Overview

- All Approved Vendors should be working to make progress and achieve compliance with the Minimum Equity Standards.
- All AVs are expected to submit a Compliance Plan, even if they won't be able to comply. In cases where AVs are unable to achieve compliance, they may subsequently submit a waiver request.
- The Program Administrator will accept waiver requests on a rolling basis throughout the program year.




Waiver Requirements

The Agency will grant waivers in rare circumstances where the applicant provides evidence of significant due diligence toward meeting the minimum equity standards. Per the Long-Term Plan, waiver requests should include:

- i. A brief narrative describing the entity's effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons prior to the start of project development, including utilization of the Energy Equity Workforce Database developed by the Agency as well as the following:
 - a. Working consistently and assertively with approved State job training and workforce development programs to recruit a diverse workforce and provide evidence of outreach
 - b. Maintaining applications of individuals not selected for an opening for contact regarding future project openings
 - c. Participating in job fairs and related local community events to recruit a diverse workforce
- ii. Evidence of efforts to hire or contract with EECs, such as communications with affiliated CBOs and/or training program facilities, State workforce hubs, union hall registers, professional development associations, etc. This should include the date of contact, the agency official and title of the individual contacted.

Final waiver linked at: <https://illinoisabp.com/equity-accountability-system/>



Illinois Power Agency
105 W Madison Street, Suite 1401
Chicago, IL 60602

Minimum Equity Standard Waiver Request

For Projects Participating in Illinois Shines and Utility-Scale Competitive REC Procurements

Minimum Equity Standard Waiver Request Program Year Delivery Year 2023-24

Please use this form to request a waiver from the Minimum Equity Standard. All questions below should be answered truthfully, accurately, and with as much detail as possible.


1. State the name of the entity submitting this waiver request. If this waiver is sought jointly by affiliated Approved Vendor(s) under the Illinois Shines Program, please identify the affiliated entities and explain the nature of the affiliation.
2. Is this waiver request intended for projects which received a Renewable Energy Credit ("REC") contract under the Illinois Shines Program, or through an award under one of the Illinois Power Agency's utility-scale competitive REC procurements?
3. Please list the projects included in this waiver request.
4. Please provide a brief narrative describing the entity's effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons ("EELPs") prior to the start of project construction. Recruitment efforts may include the following:
 - a. Working consistently and assertively with job training and workforce development programs (6 points). Evidence may include:
 - i. Recruitment efforts from workforce development programs, such as correspondence with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to identify EEP-qualifying workforce training programs in target areas, or correspondence with workforce program staff notifying them of available employment opportunities in the industry
 - ii. Outreach to workforce training programs could include contacting training programs that may not qualify a person as an equity eligible person, but (1) are located in communities where residents may qualify as an EEP based on residency, (2) provide job training to formerly incarcerated individuals, or (3) provide job training to graduates of the foster care system.
 - b. Maintaining applications and contact information of individuals who were not selected for employment but may be contacted for future project employment opportunities. Supporting documentation could include waitlisted applications or reserved resumes and may be required to demonstrate this criterion has been met. (2 points)
 - c. Participating in job fairs (in-person or virtual) and related local community events to recruit an equitable workforce (5 points)
 - i. Demonstration of participation must be submitted with the waiver request, and could include emails from job fair organizers confirming participation at a job fair or event, printed materials handed out at such events, a list of contacts made at the event, etc.
 - ii. Waiver requests will also receive credit for demonstration of attempted participation in such events, including reaching out to past job fair organizers, etc.

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the Illinois Power Agency's utility-scale competitive REC procurements.

3. Please list the projects included in this waiver request.
4. Please provide a brief narrative describing the entity's effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons ("EELPs") prior to the start of project construction. Recruitment efforts may include the following:
 - a. A signed letter from at least one individual who was contacted for employment but may be contacted for future employment opportunities. Supporting documentation could include waitlisted applications or reserved resumes and may be required to demonstrate this criterion has been met. (2 points)
 - b. Maintaining applications for employment but may be contacted for future employment opportunities. Supporting documentation could include waitlisted applications or reserved resumes and may be required to demonstrate this criterion has been met. (2 points)
 - c. Direct outreach to Equity Eligible Contractors ("EECs") listed on the Illinois Shines program website (where applicable - if applicant did not work with any subcontractors, please include that information and this point category will not be included in waiver request evaluation) (5 points)
 - d. For each of the items identified in 4.a.-c., please include the dates associated with the event, meeting, or contact, and the names and titles of the individuals contacted, where available.
5. Did the entity advertise any available positions on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal? Or review the list of EELPs looking for employment opportunities posted on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal? If so, did the applicant contact these available EELPs? If not, please provide an explanation. (3 points)
 - a. Please provide documentation of any efforts in this category.
 - b. Please note that the Illinois Power Agency will cross-reference activity in the Energy Workforce Equity Portal to verify activities described in this waiver request.
6. Please provide a signed letter from a local, relevant trade union stating that no apprentices nor journey workers who meet the requisite criteria are available. The letter must describe efforts that local union has undertaken to recruit EELPs in order to meet demand in response to the Minimum Equity Standard, such as the efforts listed in this waiver request. (8 points)
7. Please provide documentation of direct outreach to trade associations or other relevant organizations to notify them of the project and employment opportunities.
 - a. Efforts to contact community colleges (2 point)
 - b. Efforts to contact community-based organizations (2 point)

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Total Points Possible	Points Awarded
6	-
2	-
5	-
4	-
3	-
2	-
2	-
2	-
2	-
2	-
2	-
-5	-
3	-
35	-

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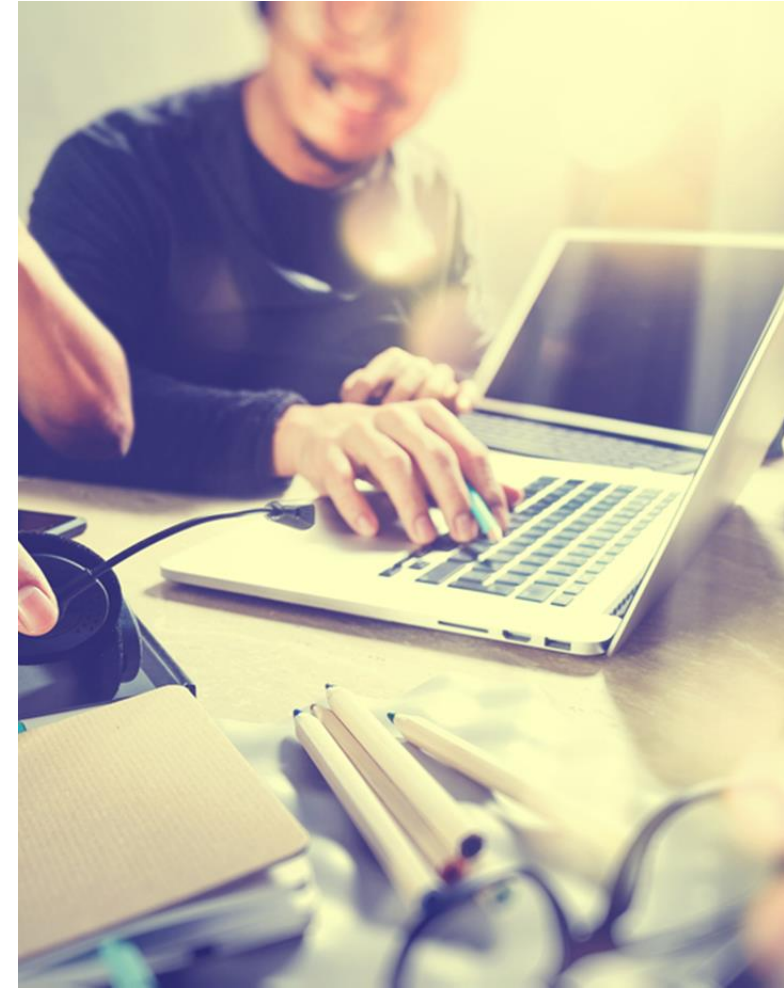
Cs	4	-
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Waiver Requirements (cont.)

- iii. Efforts to proactively establish contracting relationships with Equity Eligible Contractors.
- iv. Advertising or formal solicitation using various platforms of targeted social media. Engagement in direct and extensive outreach to appropriately-targeted associations or other relevant organizations to notify them of the project opportunity.
- v. Evidence that the entity posted all solicitations on appropriate State agency websites, include direct targeted e-mail alerts to appropriate respondents who have registered with State agencies to learn of opportunities.



Enforcement of Standards

Non-compliance of the MES may lead to disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to:

- i. Suspension of the entity's ability to submit project applications to IPA programs during the remainder of the delivery year.
- ii. Repeated violations could potentially result in the Approved Vendor or Designee becoming suspended from the IPA's programs for an entire delivery year.



Project-basis vs Portfolio-basis

- IPA will accept a waiver request for an AV's portfolio of DG projects across a delivery year.
- AVs must request a waiver for Community Solar projects on a project basis.
- DG projects submitted in the Public Schools category may be included in a portfolio waiver request.



Resources and Questions

Sector Strategist Support for Illinois Shines

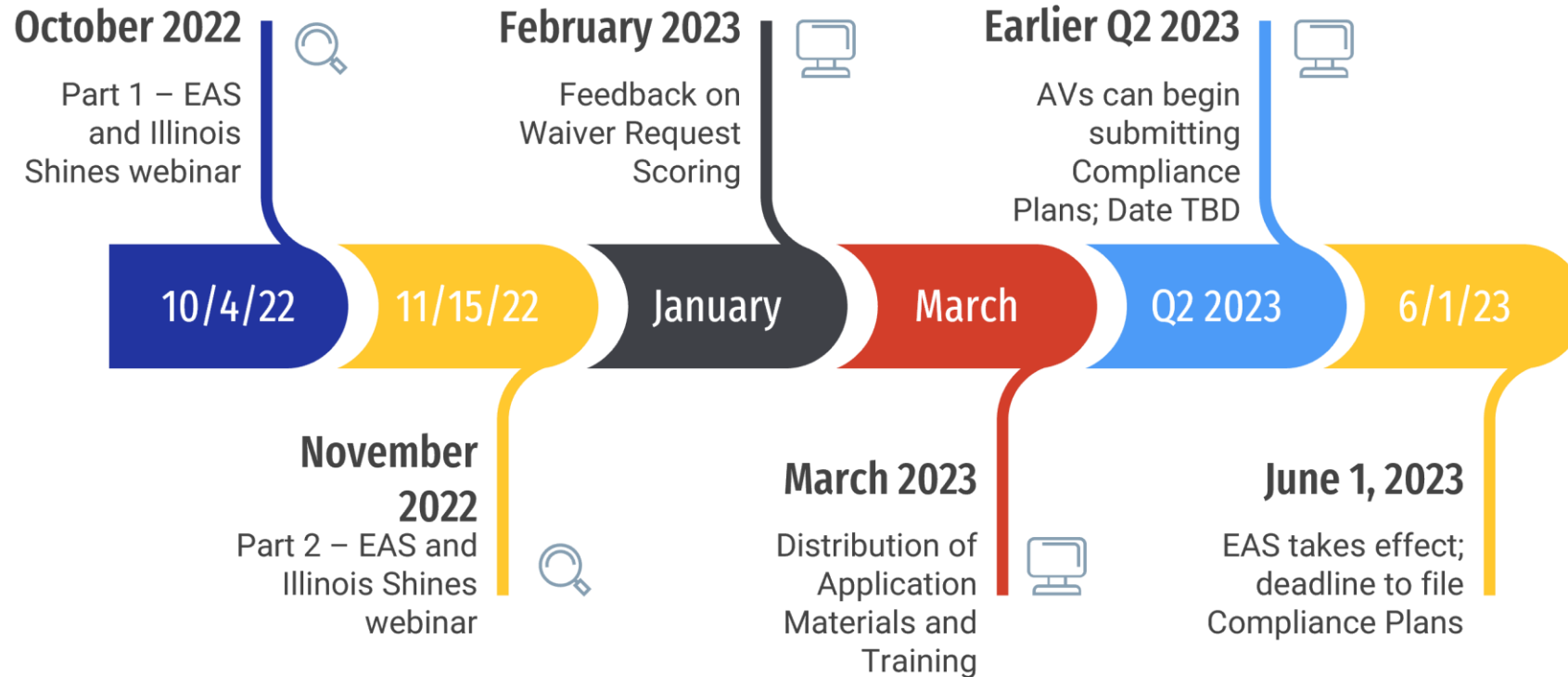
Energy Solutions' efforts as Program Administrator include the addition of Sector Strategists to support stakeholders and Program success.

Strategists will be available across each of the six sectors

Small DG smallDG@illinoisabp.com	Large DG largeDG@illinoisabp.com	Community Solar communitysolar@illinoisabp.com
Community-Driven Community Solar communitysolar@illinoisabp.com	Public Schools schools@illinoisabp.com	Equity Eligible Contractors EEC@illinoisabp.com

General and ongoing technical support can always be accessed by emailing admin@illinoisabp.com

Compliance Plan Implementation Timeline and Support Materials



Coming Soon - New Collateral & Content

- Updated website content
- Guide to the Equity Accountability System
- Spanish-language materials

Attendance Information

Please fill out the webinar Attendance form by scanning the QR code below or following the link posted in the meeting chat.

For later viewers, the link and QR code will be posted on the Program website at <https://illinoisabp.com/equity-accountability-system/>.

<https://forms.office.com/r/DYNDnScyG5>

Illinois Shines - Minimum Equity
Standard Compliance Plan and
Waiver Request Training



Thank you!

