

## Public Schools Category Update: Public Act 103-0580 Passed, Restored Consumer FAQs

January 12, 2024

Next Week in Illinois Shines (Program events & due dates found at the [Vendor Forums & Key Dates webpage](#))

- **Events** - No events scheduled
- **Due Dates** - No due dates

### Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** - January 17, 2024 - 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, portal, application, or other questions. Zoom join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>
- **Application Tips and Tricks** - Supplementing previous guidance, the Program Administrator seeks to continue supporting stakeholders in the avoidance of project applications entering *Need Info* status.
  - Missing signatures on Disclosure Forms is a common cause for applications to trigger a *Need Info* request, and delay application review. As a best practice, using the Program portal to send documents for signature will ensure that documents have the necessary signatures and verification.
  - For documents that cannot be sent and signed via the Portal, and that must be shared with the Program Administrator via email or SharePoint upload, it's critical to include both the fully executed document, as well as the signature tracking page when uploading or emailing.
  - For documents that are not signed electronically, the “wet” signature must be present for each signatory. Checking that all required signatures are present before uploading will avoid *Need Info* delays.

Program News – New or Updated Items (All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#))

- **Public Schools Category Update: Public Act 103-0580 Passed** - On December 8, 2023, Governor Pritzker signed Senate Bill 1699 into law as [Public Act 103-0580](#). This statute went into immediate effect on December 8, 2023 and expands the definition of “Public Schools” eligible for the Public Schools category to include Illinois public higher education institutions as defined by the Illinois Board of Higher Education Act. It also requires projects for this category to be located on public school land. The Program Administrator is developing needed updates to the application, application process, and/or data (Portal) impacts for the Public Schools project category.
- **AV Application Stakeholder Feedback Request** - The deadline for stakeholder feedback was due January 11, 2023. The Program Administrator did not receive any feedback and will now finalize the Approved Vendor application update. Once the Long-Term Plan is published, the Program Administrator will update the Program Guidebook and application link on the website.
- **Inaugural Mentorship Pilot Concluded** - The Illinois Shines Mentorship Pilot concluded on December 18, 2023. Participants in the Mentorship Pilot, which began October 30, 2023, completed eight weekly sessions with the Program Administrator team during the pilot. The Program would like to congratulate those participants who completed the pilot, and to thank them for their engagement, participation, and feedback which will be used to strengthen Program support for participating entities.
- **Drawdown Calculations Have Been Sent** – The contracting utilities have delivered final notices of collateral drawdowns for the 2023 Annual Report and will be drawing down collateral and requiring top-up, if required.

**Resources:** Please see 6(d)(v)(1) on page 9 and Section 4.3 on page 26 of the [2019 REC Contract](#) for full detail on this process.

- [REC Performance Evaluation Guide](#)
- [REC Performance Evaluation Walk through Video](#)
- **New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to [www.IllinoisShines.com](http://www.IllinoisShines.com) have been shared:
  - Restored [Consumer FAQs](#) to the Consumer Resources section
  - [Updated Portal Rates Inputs](#) ([Program Documents](#) and [Vendor Disclosure Form Resources](#) pages)

**Program News – Previously Published Items** (All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#))

- **General Program**
  - **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Year End Report Details Forthcoming** - Details on the MES Year End Report will be released soon by the Program Administrator. The MES Year End Report will be due following the close of this Program Year and will encompass reporting related to participating entities' workforce across the 2023-24 Program Year.
  - **Micro Grant of \$10,000 7th District Small Business Restoration Grant** - State Senator Mike Simmons announced the launch of the 7th District Small Business Restoration Grant with \$2.5 million in funds available to assist small businesses located in the 7th District. The grant is provided in partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and facilitated by five local organizations:
    - Andersonville Chamber of Commerce
    - Rogers Park Business Alliance
    - Edgewater Chamber of Commerce
    - Uptown Chamber of Commerce
    - Lincoln Square Ravenswood Chamber of CommerceApplications for the 7th District Small Business Restoration Grant close February 2, 2024 at 5 p.m. To apply or learn more about eligibility and application requirements, visit: [www.7sbrg.org](http://www.7sbrg.org).
- **Distributed Generation (DG) Program News** - See full [Small DG](#) and [Large DG](#) hubs on Program website
  - **Guidance on Group A Distributed Generation (DG) Capacity and Waitlists** - As [previously shared](#), guidance on Group A DG capacity and waitlists was provided for [AVs](#) and [Consumers](#).

**Ongoing Operations Updates**

- **Part II Verification Cut Off for January** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for January will be January 24, 2024. Applications that are Part II verified on or before **January 24, 2024** will be included in the February invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between January 25, 2024 and January 31, 2024 will be invoiced in March 2024.
- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** - In advance of each submission of batches to the ICC for approval, AVs are provided the opportunity to withhold or re-batch projects. In the absence of any action by an AV, the Program Administrator will re-batch the projects at their discretion and submit eligible projects to the ICC.

**It is extremely important that AVs review their re-batching files on SharePoint to indicate any re-batching preferences, but especially requests to withhold projects from submission.** The Program Administrator alerts AVs by email when they have projects that are eligible for re-batching and planned to be submitted to the ICC

in the next memo. Unfortunately, sometimes these communications are missed, and projects are submitted to the ICC despite an AVs intent to hold a project back.

The Program Administrator requests that AVs who believe they may want to withhold or re-batch projects mark their calendars and review SharePoint folders for re-batching templates. This way, if any email alerts are missed, AVs are still aware of the dates that re-batching opens and can check if any projects are in the upcoming ICC submission. Below are re-batching windows for early 2024:

Re-Batching Opens for AVs	Election Deadline – 12:00 CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
1/12/2024	1/17/2024	1/31/2024
1/23/2024	1/25/2024	2/8/2024
1/31/2024	2/2/2024	2/20/2024
2/20/2024	2/22/2024	3/7/2024
3/5/2024	3/7/2024	3/21/2024
3/19/2024	3/21/2024	4/4/2024
4/2/2024	4/4/2024	4/18/2024
4/16/2024	4/18/2024	5/2/2024
4/30/2024	5/2/2024	5/16/2024

### Application Processing Updates

- **Reminder that Project Submissions to Group A Still Encouraged** – See prior [announcement](#).
- **Extended Part II Application Processing Times** – See prior [announcement](#).
- **Application Processing Tables** - Application processing tables are maintained at [IllinoisShines.com/project-application-reports/](https://IllinoisShines.com/project-application-reports/). These tables are updated daily. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at [admin@IllinoisShines.com](mailto:admin@IllinoisShines.com).

### Ongoing Program Portal Updates

- **Portal Upgrade to PVWatts API Version 8 Completed December 21, 2023** – See [prior announcement](#).
- Ongoing portal updates, a Portal Development Roadmap, and a library of help guides can be found at [IllinoisShines.com/portal-updates-help-guides/](https://IllinoisShines.com/portal-updates-help-guides/). As of November 14, 2023, portal releases will take place on Tuesday nights. Stakeholders can refer to the Portal Updates page to view the latest market facing enhancements.
- **Updates on Portal Issues, Improvements, and Future Releases** – Scheduled system maintenance windows continue on **Tuesday and Thursday evenings (from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. CPT)**, during which times the Portal is expected to be unavailable to users, which the Program hopes is minimally disruptive to Program participants. **Users working in the portal should save their work prior to the 8:00 p.m. CPT start of system maintenance window, as any unsaved information will be lost when the system is moved into maintenance mode.** In some cases, Portal availability may resume earlier than 11:00 p.m. CPT, though **AVs and Designees should plan on the full three hours.**

### Requirements and Reminders

- **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
<a href="#">AV Application Stakeholder Feedback</a>	December 8, 2023	January 11, 2024	AV Application update will be updated once the final 2024 Long-Term Plan is published.
<a href="#">Advance of Capital Evaluation Criteria</a>	October 31, 2023	November 14, 2023	<a href="#">Final advance of capital evaluation criteria and rationale were released on December 12, 2023.</a>
<a href="#">Draft 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan</a>	August 15, 2023	September 29, 2023	The filed 2024 Long-Term Plan and Redline between the Draft 2024 Plan and Filed 2024 Plan, along with stakeholder comments for <a href="#">Chapter 7, 9, and 10</a> have been posted at the Program's website; <a href="#">all other comments</a> have been shared at the Agency's website.

- Long-Term Plan Update** - As announced on [October 23, 2023](#), the IPA filed the 2024 Long-Term Plan with the ICC on October 20, 2023. Stakeholders can engage with the filed 2024 Long-Term Plan in [Docket 23-0714](#) following the ICC's rules of practice. Please keep in mind that the filed 2024 Plan is not finalized upon filing and anything contained within the Plan should be considered preliminary. The Agency expects a final order from the ICC approving the 2024 Long-Term Plan no later than February 20, 2024, which will contain the final determination on any contested issues. The Agency will subsequently publish a final 2024 Long-Term Plan in compliance with that final order, marking the conclusion of this process. Stakeholders can access the [filed 2024 Long-Term Plan](#) and [Redline between Draft 2024 Long-Term Plan and Filed 2024 Long-Term Plan](#) on the [Program Documents page](#) on the website.
- IPA Issues Request for AVs and Installer Designees Interested in Serving Stranded Illinois Shines DG Customers** - As previously [announced](#), the Program continues to review submissions on a rolling basis for entities interested in serving stranded customers, with particular interest in identifying AVs and/or installer Designees willing to assist stranded customers with project maintenance/repair work. Please see the full [Request for AVs and Designees](#), including details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.

**CONTACT US:** For portal, application, or Program-specific questions and inquiries, please contact [admin@IllinoisShines.com](mailto:admin@IllinoisShines.com) or call 877-783-1820.