

## Energy Workforce Equity Portal Updates, TCS – Part II Demonstration of Project Commitments, ComEd Electric Choice ID Implementation

January 19, 2024

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

- **Events** - No events scheduled
- **Due Dates** - January 25, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. CPT – Re-batching closes for AVs

### **Stakeholder Support**

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** - January 24, 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.
  - **System Photos:** Project applications require the submission of a photograph depicting the entire system and are used to verify information included in the application. Insufficiently clear or detailed photographs, or the use of stock photographs (from the manufacturer) or photographs of the same equipment installed at a different project are not acceptable, and will result in a *Need Info* request and delay in application review. Multiple photographs can be uploaded as separate files in the “Additional Documents” area of the application or may be combined into a single document and uploaded in the “Photograph(s) of the project” area. In addition, labeling the photos within such a document is extremely helpful in aiding review by application processors.
    - **Microinverters:** For projects using microinverters, acceptable examples include a monitoring portal screenshot stating the inverter model number or a photograph of one of the physical inverters that was installed. If a project utilizes a module model with integrated microinverters, project-specific documentation listing the module model number installed in lieu of a unique photograph of the inverter is also acceptable.

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

- **Illinois Power Agency Updates Energy Workforce Equity Portal** – On [January 18, 2024](#) the IPA announced an update to the [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#), in the form of a banner intended to guide individuals currently employed with clean energy companies participating in IPA-administered programs and who are just seeking certification as Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) and not seeking alternative employment.
- **Traditional Community Solar (TCS) – Part II Demonstration of Project Commitments and Permissible Changes** – As shared on [January 18, 2024](#), TCS Part II project applications submitted during or after the 2022-2023 Program Year require demonstration and confirmation that commitments made in the Part I application, including those that resulted in higher project scoring and thus greater likelihood of contract award, were fulfilled throughout project development and installation. Some changes to Part I commitments are permitted but must be approved by the Program Administrator via a properly submitted change in commitment request in writing. Any inability to meet Part I commitments or Part I commitments allowed a permissible change is considered an event of default under the REC Delivery Contract, and as noted in the Program Guidebook, will result in the full forfeiture of collateral, and the system will be removed from the REC contract and thus unable to be Part II verified. See the announcement for details on **documentation to be submitted to demonstrate fulfillment of Part I commitment, including permissible changes**.

- **ComEd Electric Choice ID Implementation and the CS March Quarterly Reporting Period** – On [January 16, 2024](#), the Program shared information on ComEd’s switch from Account Numbers to Electric Choice ID Numbers, including implementation details and relevant impacts and dates for the Illinois Shines Community Solar March Quarterly Reporting Period.
- **Illinois Power Agency Power Hour - Clean Energy Future for Public Schools: Benefits and Challenges** - The Agency will host the February Power Hour on Friday, February 23, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. CPT. The Power Hour will cover the following topics: Challenges, opportunities, Carbon Free Assessment Program, Higher Education in regards to the [Public Act 103-0580](#), and including solar curriculum in schools. The IPA will present along with other speakers. Please visit this [link](#) to register for the event.
- **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Year End Report Due July 15, 2024** - Details on the MES Year End Report will be released soon by the Program Administrator. The MES Year End Report will be due July 15, 2024, following the close of this Program Year and will encompass reporting related to participating entities’ workforce across the 2023-24 Program Year.
- **Public Schools Category Update: Public Act 103-0580 Passed; Higher Education Institutions May Apply** - 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 is compiling necessary updates to project applications, application processes and support, and other data and reporting impacts for the Public Schools project category resulting from the Public Act. Higher education institutions may apply to this category now, even as updates to the application portal are in process.

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

- **General Program**
  - **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 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
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
5/13/2024	5/15/2024	5/30/2024

### 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).
- **Interconnection Agreements and Certificates of Completion** – Interconnection Agreements and certificates of completion (COC)/permission to operate (PTO) are reviewed for accuracy during application processing. They do not have to match the application exactly and when the Interconnection Agreement or COC/PTO is equal or greater to the size listed on the application, the application can now be validated. (Applications in this situation may previously have previously resulted in a *Need Info* request). However, on project applications where either the Interconnection Agreement or COC/PTO are less than the size listed on the application will result in a *Need Info* request.

### 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, which can also be found [at the Program website](#):

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="#">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.