

## Group B Small DG Block Now Closed, Illinois Shines Legacy Portal Retirement, MES Year-End Report Webinar

February 16, 2024

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

- **Events**
  - Friday, February 23, 2024 - **Illinois Power Agency Power Hour - Clean Energy Future for Public Schools** at 12:00 p.m. CPT. Please visit this [link](#) to register for the event.
  - Monday, February 19, 2024 - In observance of Presidents' Day, the Program will have limited services and updates, and the Program's customer support center and other services will be unavailable.
- **Due Dates**
  - February 20, 2024 – Re-batching Opens for AVs
  - February 22, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. CPT – Re-batching closes for AVs

### Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – February 21, 2024 - 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, portal, application, or other questions. Zoom 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.
  - **Disclosure Form Signatures** - The customer's email address in the *customer information* section of the Disclosure Form and the email address used to electronically sign the Disclosure Form (shown on the *signature tracking* page) should match. If the emails do not match, the Program Administration's Consumer Protection team will need to contact the customer to verify they signed the Disclosure Form, which will delay application review and processing.
    - If a customer does not have an email address, an [email address waiver](#) must be wet signed by the customer and uploaded in the Portal. In this case, the Disclosure Form must also be wet signed and uploaded.
    - As a reminder, it is never permissible for an AV to electronically sign a Disclosure Form on behalf of a customer.
- **Illinois Solar for All Small and Emerging Business Workshop** - ILSFA is [hosting a workshop](#) on Tuesday, **February 27, 2024**, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. CPT to support small and emerging businesses. The workshop may be beneficial to businesses that participate in both Illinois Shines and ILSFA. The workshop will be held online and in-person at the Jackson Park Conference Room at the University of Chicago's Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation located at 1452 E. 53rd Street. [Register today](#) to attend the workshop.

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

- **Group B Small Distributed Generation Block Now Closed** – As announced on [February 14, 2024](#), the Group B Small DG soft close period concluded on February 13, 2024, and applications batched and submitted to the Program under Group B Small DG block after February 13, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. CPT have been placed on a waitlist. All projects submitted to Group B Small DG for the remainder of the Program Year will be waitlisted. New capacity for this category will be released next Program Year, which commences on June 1, 2024.
- **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) 2023-24 Year-End Report Webinar** – The MES Year-End Report is due July 15, 2024, following the close of this Program Year, and encompasses reporting related to participating entities' workforce across the 2023-24 Program Year. Information on the MES Year-End Report will be

released next week by the Program Administrator. The Program will hold a Minimum Equity Standards (MES) 2023-24 Year-End Report webinar on **Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. CPT**. Register link: [https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_hGGe-H0hTCi698wS18wyzw#/registration](https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hGGe-H0hTCi698wS18wyzw#/registration).

- **Illinois Shines Legacy Portal Retirement** - On June 30, 2024, the Program will be retiring the Illinois Shines legacy Portal administered by the prior Program Administrator, after which AVs and Designees will no longer be able to access it. **To minimize disruptions to AVs and Designees and ensure they have necessary portal data, the Program requests users who still access the legacy portal provide information on how they currently use the legacy Portal and how often it is accessed.** Approved Vendors and Designees who continue accessing the Illinois Shines legacy portal should provide this information to the Program Administrator at [Admin@IllinoisShines.com](mailto:Admin@IllinoisShines.com).
- **Security Enhancement: Illinois Shines Portal Password Expiration** - To maintain security of the portal and its data, effective after the March 5 portal maintenance window, registered users will be required to update their password every 180 days. AVs and Designees can change their passwords at their convenience but will receive a reminder notice 10 days prior to expiration. If a registered user fails to change their password, their password will become expired, and users will need to request a new one before they can log in. To establish a new password for an expired account, select the "Forgot Password" link on the Portal login page and the system will send the user an email with a link and instructions for setting a new password. Steps to change your password before expiration:
  1. Login to the [Illinois Shines Portal](#).
  2. View your profile by selecting the **person** icon in the upper right corner next to your name.
  3. Scroll to the bottom of your profile and select the **Change Password** button.
  4. Enter your new password in both fields and select the **Change** button.
  5. Once back on your profile select **Save**.

**Please Note:** Passwords already over 180 days in age on **March 5, 2024**, when this update is released will be locked out and require use of the Forgot Password option. **The Program Administrator suggests registered users be proactive and update their password now.**

- **Public Schools Category Update** - 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 project category to include Illinois public higher education institutions as defined by the Illinois Board of Higher Education Act. The following changes will be implemented to accommodate projects submitted by public higher education institutions to the category.
  - Application questions in Section 2 of the Part I application will be updated to facilitate the submission of projects located at public higher education institutions, and to delineate between K-12 and higher education projects.
  - The category specific resources found on the [Public Schools project category hub](#) of the Illinois Shines website have been updated to reflect the change in definition.

While the abovementioned portal changes will be implemented on February 20, 2024, applications for projects located at public higher education institutions can be submitted before that date. Please reach out to [schools@illinoisshines.com](mailto:schools@illinoisshines.com) if you have any questions.

- **IPA Annual Report** – On February 15, 2024, the Illinois Power Agency released its [Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report](#). This report demonstrates how IPA programs and procurements are creating an impact in the growing clean energy economy. This Annual Report period covers the State Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023) as well as subsequent events in the second half of calendar year 2023. Through intuitive charts and graphs, this report demonstrates how the IPA is developing an equitable clean energy landscape in Illinois.
- **Draft Policy Study Open for Public Comment** – Following the publication of an errata to the Draft Policy Study on February 8, 2024, the IPA has extended the public comment feedback to February 26, 2024. The IPA has

[published](#) the comments received prior to February 12, 2024, the original due date, and will add additional comments that are received. Stakeholders can visit [this webpage](#) for links to the draft Policy Study, information on the development of the Policy Study, background, approach, and key dates. **Comments are now due to the Agency on February 26, 2024.** Please email all comments to [IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov](mailto:IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov).

- **ComEd Electric Choice ID Implementation and the CS March Quarterly Reporting Period Key Dates** - On [January 16, 2024](#), the Program published information on ComEd's switch from Account Numbers to Electric Choice ID Numbers, including implementation details and relevant impacts. Please note that the existing CS disclosure form will not be impacted by this update. Approved Vendors will enter the ComEd's Electric Choice ID Number, rather than the ComEd Account Number into the 'Utility Account #' field of the disclosure form. Key dates for the Illinois Shines CS March Quarterly Reporting Period:
  - **February 15 – 19, 2024** – Planned outage of ComEd Community Solar Portal
  - February 20, 2024 – Planned return of ComEd Community Solar Portal access
  - February 29, 2024 – Deadline for subscription data to be updated
  - March 1, 2024 – Program Administrator pulls reports from ComEd for March 2024 quarterly reporting period
  - March 10, 2024 – Updated subscriber reports due to Program Administrator, which should reflect subscribers as of March 1, 2024
- **New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to [www.IllinoisShines.com](http://www.IllinoisShines.com) have been shared:
  - Errors in Filling Out CS Disclosure Forms ([Vendor Disclosure Form Resources](#) page)
  - Updated versions of the [Public Schools Program Category Brochure](#) and [Public Schools Project Guide](#) flyers have been added

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

- **General Program**
  - **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.
- **Public Schools Program News** - See full Public Schools [hub on Program website](#)
  - **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, the Carbon Free Assessment Program, higher education in regards to the [Public Act 103-0580](#), and including solar curriculum in schools. Speakers include: Audrey Steinbach (Senior Program Manager, Illinois Shines at IPA), Mia Korinke (Campaign Mobilization Director at Climate Jobs Illinois), and Ryan Zarembra (Veteran Educator, member of the Illinois Federation of Teachers)). Please visit this [link](#) to register for the event.

#### **Ongoing Operations Updates**

- **Part II Verification Cut Off for February** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for February will be **February 22, 2024**. Applications that are Part II verified on or before February 22, 2024 will be included in the March invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between February 24, 2024 and February 29, 2024 will be invoiced in April 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 the first half of 2024:

| Re-Batching Opens for AVs | Election Deadline – 12:00 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs) | Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date) |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 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                     |
| 5/17/2024                 | 5/21/2024   | 6/5/2024                      |
| 6/3/2024                  | 6/5/2024  | 6/20/2024                     |

### Application Processing Updates

- **Reminder that Project Submissions to Group A Still Encouraged** – See prior [announcement](#).
- **Extended Application Processing Times** – The Program Administrator has returned Part II application processing times back to within the two-week expected turnaround time. Part I application processing times remain extended, and the Program Administrator anticipates processing all remaining Part I applications for this Program Year near, the end of February. As a reminder, AVs may continue to submit Part I applications to be placed on the waitlist for next Program Year.
- **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

- **Upcoming Portal Maintenance on March 4, 2024** – The portal will be unavailable due to a scheduled system maintenance window on **Monday, March 4, 2024 from 2:00 a.m. – 5:00 a.m. CPT** during which 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 2:00 a.m. CPT start of system maintenance window, as any unsaved information will be lost when the system is moved into maintenance mode.** The Portal

availability may resume earlier than 5:00 a.m. CPT, though AVs and Designees should plan on the full three hours.

- Ongoing portal updates, a Portal Development Roadmap, and a library of help guides can be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/portal-updates/>. 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="#">Draft Policy Study Open for Public Comment</a>                | January 22, 2024             | February 26, 2024    | On January 22, the IPA released the preliminary <a href="#">draft version of its 2024 Policy Study</a> for public comment and <b>on February 13, 2024, extended the deadline for comments through February 26, 2024. Please email all comments to <a href="mailto:IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov">IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov</a>.</b><br><br>Already received comments <a href="#">published here</a> . |
| <a href="#">AV Application Stakeholder Feedback</a>                       | December 8, 2023             | January 11, 2024     | AV Application 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. On January 16, 2024, the Commission issued a [Proposed Order](#), which can be accessed via its eDocket. 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.

**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.