

ICC Final Order Approving 2024 Long-Term Plan, Project Inspections Resuming March 1, MES Year-End Report

February 23, 2024

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

- **Events**
 - March 1, 2024 - **Consumer Protection Working Group** at 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. CPT. Please visit this [link](#) to access the meeting's zoom link.
- **Due Dates**
 - February 26, 2024 – Public comments on the Draft IPA Policy Study due to the Agency

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** - February 28, 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.
 - **Avoid Duplicate Applications:** When submitting project applications, it is important to confirm that the project has not already been submitted. The Program Administrator continues to improve systems to catch duplicates before they go to contract, but it is better for all parties if duplicate projects don't enter the system at all.
 - **Expansions:** If a project is at the same address as another project, please be sure to clearly indicate if it is intentional due to an expansion (or a co-location). This is not only important for pricing but also will prevent delays in processing if the application is mistakenly flagged as a duplicate.
- **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](#))

- **ICC Issues Final Order Approving the 2024 Long-Term Plan** - On February 20, 2024, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) issued a Final Order in which it approved the Administrative Law Judge's Proposed Order, with modifications, of the 2024 Long-Term Plan. The Final Order is available in [Docket 23-0714](#). The Agency has 60 days to publish a final 2024 Long-Term Plan that conforms to the 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; a final version of the Plan will be added when it becomes available.
- **Energy Workforce Equity Portal Participation Sees Continued Growth** - Earlier today, the Agency published an [announcement](#) on the [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#). The Portal continues to serve as a valuable tool for job seekers to find out if they qualify as EEPs, register to be listed on the Portal, and view clean energy job postings from entities seeking to hire EEPs. Please see announcement for additional information.
- **Project Application Reports Page on the Program Website** - The Program Administrator is currently experiencing technical issues and data on the [Project Application Reports](#) page and it may not be updated daily. Thank you for your patience as the Program Administrator works on a solution.

- **Project Inspections to Resume March 1, 2024** - Inspections are critical to ensure Program requirements are met and that the system equipment described in the project's technical documentation of the Part II application, including site plans and photos match what is installed on-site. The inspection process is designed to verify that installations meet the Program requirements outlined in the Program Guidebook. Illinois Shines project inspections will resume on March 1, 2024, and a detailed announcement providing an overview of the inspection types, minor and material deficiencies, and the inspection results process will be provided to stakeholders.
- **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) 2023-24 Year-End Report Webinar** - The Program will be publishing guidance on the MES Year-End Report next week. 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. The Program will hold a 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.
- **ComEd Electric Choice ID Implementation and the CS March Quarterly Reporting Period** - The IPA understands that the ComEd community solar subscription portal has been inaccessible since February 15, 2024, despite being scheduled to come back online on February 20, 2024. The IPA is working closely with ComEd on a solution for AVs impacted by this outage that need to conform with the March Quarterly Reporting Period and February 29, 2024 deadline for inputting subscription data. AVs with projects that need to report subscriptions for this quarter will receive specific instructions regarding next steps in this extenuating circumstance.
- **Consumer Protection Working Group** - The Agency and its Program Administrators for Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All will host the next Consumer Protection Working Group meeting on **March 1, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. CPT**. The Working Group's meeting agendas, Zoom links, and a participation interest form can be found on the [Consumer Protection Working Group page](#) on the Program website.
- **New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to www.IllinoisShines.com have been shared:
 - [Group B Small DG Waitlist \(Block Capacity Dashboard page\)](#)
 - Restored [Consumer FAQs](#) to the Consumer Resources section

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. Please see the full [Request for AVs and Designees](#), including details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.
 - **Draft Policy Study Open for Public Comment** - The IPA extended the request for public comment feedback on the draft Policy Study to February 26, 2024, following the publication of an errata on February 8, 2024. The IPA has [published](#) 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.
 - **IPA Annual Report** – On February 15, 2024, the Illinois Power Agency released its [Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report](#). Through intuitive charts and graphs, this report tells an interesting story of how the IPA is integrating and developing an equitable clean energy landscape in Illinois. Additionally, the report provides a sneak peek into the future by highlighting upcoming key initiatives for the Agency. 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.

- **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.**

- **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.

Ongoing Operations Updates

- **March REC Invoicing Opens March 1, 2024** - REC invoices and Quarterly Netting Statements will be made available for download from AV SharePoint folders on March 1, 2024. Invoices must be submitted to the utility by **March 10, 2024** to receive payment for the March invoice period. Any invoice amounts not submitted to the utility by March 10, 2024 will be carried forward and included in the next invoice period (June 2024).
- **Part II Verification Cut Off for March** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for March will be **March 25, 2024**. Applications that are Part II verified on or before March 25, 2024 will be included in the April invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between March 26, 2024 and March 31, 2024 will be invoiced in May 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)
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
6/13/2024	6/17/2024	7/2/2024

Application Processing Updates

- **Extended Application Processing Times Resolved** - The Program Administrator has returned both Part I and Part II application processing times back to within the two-week expected turnaround time. As a reminder, AVs may still submit applications for closed blocks to be placed on a first-come-first-served waitlist. Waitlisted applications will not be verified until after the start of the new program year.
- **Application Processing Tables** - Application processing tables are maintained at 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.

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.

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
Enhancements, Features and Bug Fixes		
DG API - Create Disclosure Form DG Enhancement - Update Party Enums to replace Seller with Lessor for Lease Forms only	The API Endpoint to create DG Disclosure Forms has been updated to also accept the value of "Lessor" in several DG Disclosure Form fields to identify the responsible party for various deliverables (EG: Interconnection Party, Warranty Party, etc). The additional value will only be accepted for Projects where the project type of "Lease" is selected. The value of "Seller" should continue to be used for Purchase and PPA projects. This will allow the API to more closely reflect the current behavior of CSV Upload and Web Portal generated DG Disclosure Forms. No non-API related functionality is affected.	February 21, 2024
Public School Part I Application Changes	This enhancement changes the text for several questions in the Public School section of Part I. These changes including modifying the text of existing Public School questions, adding two new conditionally required questions, and updating links to match the most current URLs.	February 21, 2024
PVWatts: Add Bifaciality	This enhancement adds the option for adding bifacial modules in projects.	February 21, 2024

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
Draft Policy Study Open for Public Comment	January 22, 2024	February 26, 2024	<p>On January 22, the IPA released the preliminary draft version of its 2024 Policy Study for public comment and on February 13, 2024, extended the deadline for comments through February 26, 2024. Please email all comments to IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov.</p> <p>Already received comments published here.</p>

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