

# Program Guidebook

Illinois Shines (Adjustable Block Program)

Draft Version Released March 13, 2024 for Stakeholder Feedback\*



*\*Updated to conform with the ICC's Final Order on the IPA's 2024 Long-Term Plan dated February 20, 2024 (Docket 23-0714) NOT EFFECTIVE UNTIL 2024-25 PROGRAM YEAR*



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# Introduction

The Illinois Shines Program (“Program”)<sup>1</sup> is a state-administered solar incentive program created to facilitate the development of new photovoltaic distributed generation and community solar projects through the issuance of renewable energy credit delivery contracts, as required by Illinois law. The Program Guidebook is a document created by the Illinois Power Agency (“IPA” or “Agency”) and the Program Administrator to provide existing and prospective Program participants with necessary guidance about application requirements, participation requirements, Program processes, and other aspects of the Program. The Program Guidebook and the Consumer Protection Handbook detail Program requirements for Approved Vendors and their subcontractors in accordance with the Illinois Power Agency’s Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan.

The Program Guidebook is reviewed and updated on periodic basis by the Program Administrator, Energy Solutions, Inc., in consultation with the Illinois Power Agency to reflect changes in law and/or orders of the Illinois Commerce Commission (“Commission”) which impact the Illinois Shines program, or the development of other requirements through separate comment and requirement publishing processes. Any omission of content from a prior version of this Guidebook through an update may not necessarily constitute the omission of a requirement, as some edits are made for cosmetic or synthesizing purposes and not to reflect the removal of a requirement. In the event of a conflict between this Guidebook and subsequent changes in law, new Commission orders, or the subsequent development of other program materials, those statutes and orders shall supersede the relevant portions of this Guidebook until Guidebook revisions may be updated. More information on the update process of this document can be found in Section 9: Guidebook Update Process.

This edition of the Guidebook incorporates changes for the 2024-25 Program Year. Key changes include, but are not limited to:

- Annual Program size increase to 800 MW
- New information regarding the Equity Eligible Contractor requirements
- Application fee increase to \$20 per kW, not to exceed \$15,000 per project
- New information on the Advance of Capital process
- Escrow process and restitution program for stranded customers
- Group A and Group B distinctions removed for distributed generation categories
- New DG prioritizations in Public Schools and EEC categories
- New DC/AC ratio capacity of 200% for all systems that include a battery/storage component

<sup>1</sup> Referred to in the law as the “Adjustable Block Program,” Illinois Shines was created pursuant to Section 1-75(c)(1) of the Illinois Power Agency Act.





## Section 1: Program Description and Background

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A complete description of the Program can be found in the Agency’s 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan (“Plan” or “Long-Term Plan”).<sup>2</sup> This Guidebook also reflects changes to the Program that were proscribed through the enactment of Public Act 102-0662 and adopted in the Long-Term Plan. On February 20, 2024, the Commission approved, with modifications, the Agency’s 2024 Long-Term Plan (“2024 Plan” or “2024 Long-Term Plan”). The Final 2024 Long-Term Plan will be published by the Agency on its website and filed prior to the finalization of this Guidebook..

This Section of the Program Guidebook contains a summary of the Program designed for quick reference; subsequent sections elaborate on various aspects of the Program, including further guidelines not found in the Plan. A glossary in Section 10 of this Guidebook provides a description of key terms used throughout.

The Program provides incentives for the development of new photovoltaic distributed generation (“DG”) and community solar (“CS”) projects located in Illinois. These incentives are provided through payments made for the Renewable Energy Credits (“RECs”) generated by participating projects over their first 15 or 20 years of operation, dependent upon the project category as described further herein. These payments are made through contracts between Illinois electric utilities and Approved Vendors (as described below).

The Program is administered pursuant to Section 1-75(c) of the IPA Act (20 ILCS 3855). The Illinois Power Agency is the state agency responsible for the Program’s general management and implementation. Day-to-day administration of the Program is the responsibility of the Agency’s third-party Program Administrator, Energy Solutions, Inc.

In addition to the approval of the Agency’s Long-Term Plan and the approval of REC Contracts, many other aspects of photovoltaic development and installation in Illinois are under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Commerce Commission. These include the certification of distributed generation installers, interconnection standards, net metering tariffs, and tariffs allowing for a smart inverter rebate for non-residential PV systems.

## A. Establishment of Program

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### Public Act 99-0906 (Future Energy Jobs Act)

In December 2016 the Illinois General Assembly passed Public Act 99-0906, known as the Future Energy Jobs Act, which took effect on June 1, 2017. This statute required the development and ongoing operation of an “Adjustable Block” program. This program, also known as the Illinois Shines program, is intended to facilitate the development of new community solar and distributed photovoltaic generation projects, and must feature a “transparent schedule of prices and quantities” for RECs “to enable the photovoltaic market to scale up and for renewable energy credit prices to adjust at a predictable rate over time.” Public Act 99-0906 provided for three program categories: 1) Small Distributed Generation (behind the meter projects up to 10 kW AC); 2) Large Distributed Generation (behind the meter projects over 10 kW AC up to 2 MW AC); and 3) Community Solar.

<sup>2</sup> The most recent version of the Plan can be found here: <https://ipa.illinois.gov/energy-procurement/current-approved-plan.html> and here: <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/>.

## **Public Act 102-0662 (Climate and Equitable Jobs Act)**

Public Act 102-0662 (“P.A. 102-0662”), known as the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, became effective on September 15, 2021. This sweeping energy legislation amended the IPA Act as well as other Illinois laws that affect the Program and its requirements, thus significantly modifying the Illinois Shines program.

First, P.A. 102-0662 expanded the number of project categories in the Program from three to six. The three additional categories are: Community-Driven Community Solar, Public Schools, and the Equity Eligible Contractor category. These are further defined below.

Additionally, P.A. 102-0662 provided that most projects that participate in the Program were now subject to requirements under the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act. This means individuals engaged in the construction of applicable projects submitted to the Program must be paid the relevant prevailing wage. Prevailing wage is a minimum compensation level set by the Illinois Department of Labor (“IDOL”) by county for construction activities related to public works.

P.A. 102-0662 introduced new equity provisions for the Program. This statute introduced the concept of an Equity Eligible Person, an Equity Eligible Contractor, and the Minimum Equity Standard, all under an umbrella called the Equity Accountability System. The Minimum Equity Standard (“MES”) requires that starting June 1, 2023, 10% of the workforce on projects developed for the Program be made up of equity eligible persons, with an increase of this percentage to 30% by 2030. All participants in the Program must comply with the MES on an annual basis.

Additionally, P.A. 102-0662 shifted the Program away from a cascading block program to an annual block program. Annual blocks of capacity are released for the Program each year on the first day of the Program year, which aligns with the Delivery year. As such, Program years span from June 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup> <sup>3</sup> of the following calendar year. Once annual blocks of capacity are full, new capacity is not released until the subsequent Program year.

P.A. 102-0662 also requires the Agency to “collect data from program applicants in order to track and improve equitable distribution of benefits across Illinois communities for all procurements the Agency conducts.” The IPA specifically requires the Agency to collect certain information, including but not limited to the racial or ethnic identities and geographic residencies of employees and agents of Program applicants and participants. The Agency has determined that a multi-part data collection process will be utilized to collect demographic and geographic information required under the Act; that is, information will be collected both through the Part II application, the AV application process, and through the MES Year-End report submitted by Approved Vendors. In order to facilitate the ongoing tracking and collection of information from Approved Vendors’ employees and subcontractors, the Part II application collects information on the race, gender, and residential ZIP code of all employees or employees of subcontractors involved in the construction/installation of a particular project and the approximate hours worked. Approved Vendors will also be required to indicate whether any of the workers involved in the construction/installation of the project are graduates from the Solar Training Pipeline Program, Craft Apprentice Program, Multi-Cultural Job Training Program, or another job training program. As additional workforce development programs established by Public Act 102-0662 come online, they will be added to the options available for selection. Approved Vendors upon application to participate in the Program will be asked to provide information related to their workforce. Additionally, all

<sup>3</sup> Or the next business day if June 1st or May 31<sup>st</sup> do not fall on a business day.



Approved Vendors and Designees will be asked to report on diversity data related to their project workforce at the MES Year-End Report.

## **B. Program Administrator and IPA**

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### **Program Administrator as Extension of IPA**

Per Section 1-75(C)(1)(M) of the Illinois Power Agency Act the Agency may retain an expert consultant to support in the administration of the Program. As such, the Agency goes through an RFP process in order to select the Program Administrator. The selection of the current Program Administrator was approved on April 21, 2022. The Program Administrator works at the express direction of the Agency to administer the Program on a day-to-day basis.

### **Appeal of Program Administrator Decisions**

A Program participant can appeal any and all decisions made by the Program Administrator to the IPA. While the Program Administrator is an extension of the Agency and works in lockstep with the Agency, the Agency offers this route to Program participants as a matter of course. Entities should endeavor to submit appeals within two weeks following the decision that is being appealed. For decisions related to consumer protection Unless otherwise specified by the Program Administrator, the deadline to submit an appeal is two weeks after the determination.

## **C. Program Requirements and Key Documents**

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### **Key Program Documents**

The Program has three guiding documents that contain requirements for all Program participants: the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, the Program Guidebook, and the Consumer Protection Handbook. The Long-Term Plan governs the requirements of the Program which cannot be modified without approval of the Illinois Commerce Commission (“ICC” or “Commission”), while the Program Guidebook and Consumer Protection Handbook further detail requirements that are outlined in the Long-Term Plan.

**Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan** - The Agency’s Long-Term Plan covers all Agency activities related to the Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard, which includes the Illinois Shines program. The Agency updates the Long-Term Plan at least every two years. Each updated version of the Long-Term Plan is litigated before the ICC, and then approved by the ICC through a final order.

**Consumer Protection Handbook** – The Consumer Protection Handbook provides details on consumer protection requirements for Approved Vendors and Designees that participate in the Illinois Power Agency’s Illinois Shines program and/or Illinois Solar for All program. All requirements discussed in the Consumer Protection Handbook apply to both Programs, and apply to distributed generation and community solar projects of any size, unless otherwise indicated. The Consumer Protection Handbook focuses specifically on Program requirements related to consumer interactions in order to ensure strong consumer protections. The

Consumer Protection Handbook is updated more frequently than the Long-Term Plan and does not require ICC approval prior to publishing.

**Program Guidebook** – This Program Guidebook establishes details on Program requirements that stem from the Agency’s Long-Term Plan. This document, along with the Consumer Protection Handbook together provide the detail to Approved Vendors and Designees on Program requirements and compliance with those requirements. The Program Guidebook is updated more frequently than the Long-Term Plan and does not require ICC approval prior to publishing.

### **Drafting and Approval Process for Long-Term Plan**

The Agency’s Long-Term Plan is updated at least every two years and undergoes a months-long public comment, litigation, and approval process, pursuant to the requirements of Section 16-111.5(b)(5) of the Public Utilities Act. First, the Agency releases a draft Plan for public comment. At the close of the public comment period, the Agency reviews comments and may revise the Plan based upon feedback received. Next, the Agency files the Plan for approval with the ICC. Stakeholders then may participate in the docketed proceeding before the Commission to modify the Plan, in accordance with the provisions of 16-111.5 of the Public Utilities Act and the ICC’s Rules of Practice.<sup>4</sup> After litigation concludes, the ICC issues a Final Order approving or modifying the Plan, thus giving the Agency final decisions on any contested matters. Following the entry of a Final Order by the Commission, the Agency amends the Plan to conform to the Final Order and releases a final Long-Term Plan, which will be in effect until the next update of the Long-Term Plan is approved by the ICC.

### **Reopening of a Long-Term Plan**

In very rare circumstances, the Agency may seek to reopen the ICC Docket in which the Long-Term Plan was approved in order to make an amendment to a requirement contained in the Plan. In order to re-open an already approved Plan, the Agency must petition for and get approval to re-open the docket under which the Plan was approved. Once the ICC approves such a re-opening, stakeholders may participate in the docketed proceeding in accordance with the ICC’s rules of practice. Once this proceeding concludes, the ICC issues a Final Order which may modify the Plan requirements through re-opening.

## **D. Changes to Program Structure Resulting from Approval of 2024 Long-Term Plan**

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In the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Agency posed several solutions to the Group A oversubscription challenges experienced in recent Program Years which were subsequently approved by the Commission. The IPA Act requires the Illinois Shines program to be “generally designed to provide for the steady, predictable, and sustainable growth of new solar photovoltaic development in Illinois.” The Agency and the market recently have observed unsteady and unpredictable capacity availability in the Program, toward this end the Agency

<sup>4</sup> 83 Ill. Adm. Code § 200

seeks to remedy this unsteadiness and unpredictability through employing the following methods beginning with the 2024-25 Program Year.

1. Elimination of the distinction between Group A and Group B for Small DG and Large DG blocks
2. Increase of the overall Program size, thus resulting in larger Small DG and Large DG blocks
3. Adjust the prioritizations for uncontracted capacity at close of Program Year
4. Prioritize distributed generation projects within the Public Schools and Equity Eligible Contractor categories
5. Institute a price adjustment cap for changes to REC prices for waitlisted projects

### **Eliminating the distinction between Group A and Group B for the Small DG and Large DG blocks**

Beginning with the 2024-25 Program Year, the Group A and B capacity split will be removed from the Small Distributed Generation and Large Distributed Generation Program categories. Groups A and B for other categories will retain the traditional 30%/70% allocation (with the exception of the Public Schools category) utilized since Program inception. The Agency does not feel that it is appropriate to continue to retain the Group A and Group B distinctions for the Small and Large Distributed Generation categories given that the market continues to signal that there is demand for more development than currently allowed for with the current percentage split in Group A. This approach allows for additional capacity to potentially support additional Group A Small DG and Large DG projects without significant resultant RPS budget impacts and without altering the statutory balance between categories. As this change is meant to enable more capacity for distributed generation projects statewide, removing group capacity distinctions will not impact the REC pricing approach taken for Small Distributed Generation and Large Distributed Generation projects. Small Distributed Generation and Large Distributed Generation projects will retain Group A and Group B distinctions for purposes of establishing REC prices only.

### **Increasing overall Program size to 800 MW annually, thus resulting in larger distributed generation blocks**

The Agency has increased the overall capacity of the Program to 800 MW beginning with the 2024-25 Program Year. The IPA Act instructs the Agency to “strive to issue a single block sized to provide for stability and market growth” for all Program categories each Program Year. The solar market in Illinois is currently exhibiting immense growth, but the Program’s categories were not appropriately sized under prior the 2022 Long-Term plan to provide for stable growth within the Program. By increasing the overall size of the Program to 800 MW of capacity for each Program Year, the Agency expects to deliver the stability that recent market growth requires to sustain that growth on a continuous basis from Program Year to Program Year.

The Agency is therefore able to both achieve REC delivery goals early while providing the stability and predictability necessary to move shovel-ready projects forward on a timely basis and avoid projects languishing on waitlists.

### **Adjustment to the prioritizations for uncontracted capacity at close of Program Year**

The Agency also adjusted the prioritization in assigning uncontracted capacity to future Program Years. Reallocation prioritization focused on distributed generation project should further alleviate boom and bust cycles and increase stability for distributed generation projects by providing more capacity to support waitlisted distributed generation projects. This prioritization is discussed further in Section 1.H; for reference,

the updated prioritization list for the reallocation of uncontracted capacity at the close of each Program Year is as follows:

- Small Distributed Generation
- Large Distributed Generation
- Equity Eligible Contractors Distributed Generation Subcategory
- Public Schools Distributed Generation Subcategory
- Community-Driven Community Solar
- Equity Eligible Contractors Community Solar Subcategory
- Public Schools Community Solar Subcategory
- Distributed evenly across remaining categories with outstanding waitlists

### **Prioritize distributed generation projects within the Public Schools and Equity Eligible Contractor categories**

In addition to expanding the overall Program capacity, the Agency will prioritize distributed generation subcategories within Equity Eligible Contractor and Public Schools categories through dedicated capacity allocations. This dedicated path forward for development of distributed generation projects in those two categories should further alleviate capacity stressors experienced by Program participants in the Small and Large Distributed Generation categories by providing clear pathways for distributed generation projects in other Program categories.

### **Price adjustment cap for changes to REC prices for waitlisted projects**

The Agency understands that providing additional capacity is not the only solution required to provide stability and predictability to the Program. The IPA recognizes that Approved Vendors require certainty and predictability around REC prices when capacity within the Program or certain categories is exhausted in order for those Approved Vendors to provide realistic financing estimates to their customers. As such, the Agency considers it important to provide solutions that minimize periods of time without available capacity in each Program Year and to provide a predictable path forward for Approved Vendors in the case where capacity is depleted prior to the conclusion of the Program Year.

Beginning with the 2024-25 Program Year, the Agency will employ a REC price adjustment cap of 20% for all waitlisted distributed generation projects, meaning that any distributed generation project that is waitlisted during any Program Year will receive a REC price that is within a 20% differential from REC prices posted for the Program Year in which the project was waitlisted. This adjustment cap will last for one calendar year only. If a project subject to this price adjustment cap remains on a waitlist for over one calendar year, the project will receive the price associated with the block of capacity available when the project is selected off the waitlist. For example, if the REC price for the Small Distributed Generation category for the 0-10 kW AC size band is \$60/REC in a given year, then any Small Distributed Generation project that might be waitlisted in that Program Year would be guaranteed receive a REC price between \$48/REC and \$72/REC, regardless of the REC prices approved for the following Program Year.

If updated REC prices for the next subsequent Program Year (when the waitlisted project would be selected off the waitlist) fall within this adjustment cap range, the project will utilize the REC price that is posted for that Program Year. If updated REC prices for the next Program Year fall outside the 20% size cap range, the

project will receive the edge price of the price adjustment cap. That is, if REC prices within the category drop 30% in the subsequent Program Year when the project is selected off the waitlist, the waitlisted project will receive a 20% lower REC price rather than the 30% lower price that will otherwise be applied to the category.

## **E. Program Categories**

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The Program broadly supports only two project types: photovoltaic distributed renewable energy generation devices (i.e., solar DG), and photovoltaic community renewable generation projects (i.e., community solar). These two project types are broken down further into six project categories, as outlined below.

Each project application must be allocated to one of these six categories. More detail on each of the six categories is outlined below, and can also be found in Section 1-75(c)(1)(K) of the IPA Act:

- **Small Distributed Generation (“Small DG”)** – Distributed Generation projects up to and including 25 kW AC in size (prior to the December 14, 2021 Program reopening, Small DG projects had to be less than or equal to 10 kW).
- **Large Distributed Generation (“Large DG”)** – Distributed Generation projects greater than 25 kW AC in size up to and including 5 MW AC (prior to the December 14, 2021 Program reopening, Large DG projects had to be more than 10 kW and less than or equal to 2 MW).
- **Traditional Community Solar (“TCS”)** – Community Solar projects up to and including 5 MW AC in size.<sup>5</sup>
- **Public Schools** – Small and Large Distributed Generation projects, as well as community solar projects which serve a public school in Illinois.<sup>6</sup>
- **Community-Driven Community Solar (“CDCS”)** – Community Solar projects up to and including 5 MW AC that meet the criteria to be classified as community-driven per the guidelines specified in Section 1.D.
- **Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”)** – Distributed generation projects or community solar projects that are submitted to the Program by an Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendor per the guidelines specified in Section 2.B up to and including 5 MW AC in size.<sup>7</sup>

If a project is eligible for more than one category, the Approved Vendor may select any one of those eligible categories into which to submit the application during the Part I application as described in Section 5 below. Approved Vendors will be provided with a drop-down list in the Part I application displaying all categories for which the project is eligible in order to make a selection. An application must be submitted into one and only one category.

### **Traditional Community Solar**

Due to the fact that there is a limited amount of capacity available in the Program for the development of Traditional Community Solar projects, the Agency has developed a scoring mechanism for if/when the annual block of capacity is exceeded on the first day of the Program Year. This scoring mechanism is

<sup>5</sup> Previous blocks of capacity for Traditional Community Solar prior to the passage of P.A. 102-0662 and the subsequent December 14, 2021 program reopening allowed for projects up to and including 2 MW in size.

<sup>6</sup> For the December 14, 2021 block of capacity for Public Schools, only DG applications were accepted.

<sup>7</sup> For the December 14, 2021 block of capacity for Equity Eligible Contractors, only DG applications were accepted.



outlined in Appendix E. A 20% developer cap for any affiliated family of project developers for this Traditional Community Solar capacity will apply. Any affiliated<sup>8</sup> family of project developers which exceeds 20% of the awarded capacity in a given year's Traditional Community Solar block (determined separately for Groups A and B) will have any projects that cause them to exceed the 20% capacity cap moved to become the first projects on the waitlist for the applicable group. Between projects with tied scores that belong to a single Approved Vendor, an Approved Vendor will have the option to select which of their projects would be selected and which moved to the waitlist in order to keep that Approved Vendor within the 20% developer cap. For projects subject to a developer cap, projects will be subject to the cap by the date/time that they are submitted to the Program, meaning there is no swapping permitted to reorder projects to fit into the 20% allowance. The first project that goes above the 20% cap will have the opportunity to be resized to fit within developer cap. Waitlisted projects carried over from the prior Program Year are included in determining whether the developer cap has been met, with the capacity from previously waitlisted projects considered on the first day of the new Program Year.

If further ordering is required across first-day submitted projects (for instance, ordering of projects featuring the same score where projects receiving that score span across selected and unselected capacity within that block), the Agency proposes only then to utilize a random selection process to create a rank-order within those equivalently-scored projects.

### **Community-Driven Community Solar**

Community-Driven Community Solar projects are community solar projects up to 5 MW in size featuring attributes allowing the project to be evaluated for participation in the community-driven community solar category, as established through Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(v) of the IPA Act.

A Community-Driven Community Solar ("CDCS") project is defined as a solar project which (1) is interconnected to an electric utility, a municipal utility, or a rural electric cooperative, (2) allows subscribers to pay for shares or some other "interest" in the project, receiving bill credits in exchange; and (3) does not exceed 5,000 kW AC in size, and which features attributes allowing the project to be evaluated for participation in the community-driven community solar category, as established through Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(v) of the IPA Act.

Each Program Year, there will be a 90-day period for Community-Driven Community Solar projects to be submitted prior to any project selection. Upon closing of the 90-day period, projects will be reviewed and scored based on the scoring criteria as outlined in Appendix F, with projects selected from the application pool in the order of highest to lowest score until the block is fully allocated. A minimum score of 6 points must be achieved to be eligible for a REC contract in the CDCS category. Random selection will be utilized as a tiebreaker only for equally scored projects to fill available capacity, if any. However, should the capacity available be so small as to only accommodate one or more projects below a certain size, then the Agency may only consider those projects small enough to not exceed that remaining capacity. After project selection for

<sup>8</sup> "Affiliated" means, with respect to any entity, any other entity that, directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with each other or a third entity. "Control" means the possession, directly or indirectly, of the power to direct the management and policies of an entity, whether through the ownership of voting securities, by contract, or otherwise. Affiliates may not have shared sales or revenue-sharing arrangements, or common debt and equity financing arrangements.

any given Program Year, projects that have a minimum score of 10 points will be placed on a waitlist for the following Program Year.

## Public Schools<sup>9</sup>

A public school project is defined as a distributed generation or community solar project that is located on public school land. Public schools include public schools as defined under Section 1-3 of the Illinois School Code and includes public institutions of higher education, as defined in the Board of higher Education Act.

In the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Public Schools category is further divided into two subcategories, one for community solar and one for distributed generation. Under this approach, 75% capacity of the Public Schools category will be set aside for distributed generation projects, while 25% of the category will be set aside for community solar projects.

Within these subcategories, 70% of capacity will be allocated to schools categorized as Tier 1, Tier 2, and schools located within Environmental Justice Communities. The remaining 30% will be allocated to Tier 3 and Tier 4 schools not located within Environmental Justice Communities. Tiers will be determined using the prior year's results of the annual Evidence-Based Funding Distribution process conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education. Environmental Justice Communities will be defined by the Illinois Solar for All program's identified EJC map.<sup>10</sup>

Public Schools Subcategory	School Tier	Project Size		
		≤250 kW	>250 - 1,000 kW≤	>1,000 - 5,000 kW
DG (75%)	Tier 1, 2, and EJC (70% of 75%)	25% of the 70% for this Tier group	50% of the 70% for this Tier group	25% of the 70% for this Tier group
	Tier 3, 4 (30% of 75%)	25% of the 30% for this Tier group	50% of the 30% for this Tier group	25% of the 30% for this Tier group
CS (25%)	Tier 1, 2, and EJC (70% of 25%)	25% of the 70% for this Tier group	50% of the 70% for this Tier group	25% of the 70% for this Tier group
	Tier 3, 4 (30% of 25%)	25% of the 30% for this Tier group	50% of the 30% for this Tier group	25% of the 30% for this Tier group

<sup>9</sup> The Agency released [Clarifications for Public Schools Category for 2022-23 Program Year](#) on October 7, 2022

<sup>10</sup> Details can be found at [Evidence-Based Funding Distribution Calculation \(isbe.net\)](#) and [Environmental Justice Community Search Map \(arcgis.com\)](#)

Public School Subcategory		School Tier		Project Size	
		≤250 kW	>250 - 1,000 kW≤	>1,000 - 5,000 kW	
DG (80 MW)		Tier 1, 2, and EJC	14 MW	28 MW	14 MW
		Tier 3, 4	6 MW	12 MW	6 MW
CS (27 MW)		Tier 1, 2, and EJC	5 MW	9 MW	5 MW
		Tier 3, 4	2 MW	4 MW	2 MW

For each Program Year, if any of the above allocations are not filled within 180 days, projects located at a public school will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis regardless of Tier, Environmental Justice Community location, or project size.

Beginning with the 2023-24 Program Year and continuing in subsequent Program Years, public school projects must be submitted to the Illinois Shines and may no longer apply for incentives through the Illinois Solar for All program via the Non-Profit and Public Facility sub-program.

### Project Location for Public Schools

Distributed generation projects submitted to the Public Schools category must be located on public school land. Community solar projects submitted to the Public Schools category must be sited on district- or school-owned land, in accordance with the Commission's Final Order on the 2022 Long-Term Plan and the provisions of Public Act 103-0580.

A school/district **must own** the land on which a project submitted to the Public Schools category is sited. Projects developed on land leased by a school/district are not permitted for submission to this category, unless a public school is sited on the same parcel of leased land. A school district must own the land on which the prospective project is sited at the time of application to the Program. Schools/districts are not permitted to enter into agreements to purchase land that would be contingent on receiving a REC Contract from the Program in order to qualify for this Program category.

A public school or school district must continue to own the land the project is sited on for the entire lifetime of the REC Contract (20 years). Any change in land ownership that occurs during the lifetime of the REC contract that causes the sale of the land on which a project in the Public Schools category is sited should be brought to the Program's attention and will be assessed for continuation in the Program on a case-by-case basis. The Program Administrator, along with the Agency, will make a determination on whether the project no longer being sited on land owned by a by a public school or district constitutes material non-conformance with the REC contract.

## **Subscriber and Anchor Tenant Requirements for Community Solar Projects in the Public Schools Category**

For projects participating in the Public Schools category, the public school or school district at which the project is sited must be an anchor subscriber to the community solar project, commonly referred to as “anchor tenant”. As such, the public school or school district must subscribe to a minimum of 10% of the project’s capacity, without exceeding 40% of the project’s capacity.

As the REC Contract for Public Schools projects is 20 years in length, the school must commit to being an anchor tenant for the Community Solar project for the life of the REC Contract. In order to comply with anchor tenant requirements, the Approved Vendor will need to submit a letter of intent in the Part I application from the school/school district serving as the anchor tenant. When subscription levels for the project are reviewed by the Program Administrator during the Part II application review, the school/school district must be subscribed to between 10-40% of the project’s capacity.

Per requirements for community solar projects under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, community solar projects submitted to the Public Schools category will be required to retain a subscription mix of at least 50% small subscribers. The school or school district hosting the project must act as the anchor tenant and 50% of the remaining capacity must be met by small subscribers (those requiring  $\leq 25\text{kW}$ ). After the fulfillment of these two requirements, any type of subscriber can fill the additional capacity for the project.

### **Anchor Tenant Waiver for Public Schools**

The Agency will allow flexibility around the ability of an anchor tenant of a Public School category community solar project to transfer the subscription to another public school or school district and adjust the subscription size (within the 10-40% range) as needed. The anchor tenant may request a waiver from the subscription requirements as necessary at any point during the 20-year subscription term. As the waiver process is intended to be used in limited instances when a school can no longer serve as an anchor tenant due to unforeseen circumstances that may arise over a 20-year period, a school and/or district may not request a waiver in advance of a demonstrated need or in advance of a project application.

The Agency will accept waiver requests from Approved Vendors for changes in circumstances that prohibit the public school or district from acting as an anchor tenant at the original subscription size including, but not limited to: decreased electric load (possibly due to lower than average attendance levels), closure of a school, consolidation of schools, etc. The public school or district must retain a subscription of at least 10% of the community solar project. Additional reasons not contemplated here will be considered by the Agency and all waivers will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Sufficient documentation of such circumstances will be required in order for a waiver request to be considered. The Agency may disfavor waiver requests that are made within the first four years following a project’s Energization/Part II verification.

An Approved Vendor seeking a waiver from this requirement should reach out to the Program Administrator.

### **Equity Eligible Contractors**

An Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”) is a business that is majority-owned by equity 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. The definition of an equity eligible person can be found in the Glossary of this Guidebook.

Utilization of the capacity in the Equity Eligible Contractor category is limited to Approved Vendors who qualify as an EEC. Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendors may choose to work with Designees or on their own, and those Designees may or may not be also EEC certified. However, Approved Vendors that do not qualify as an EEC but partner with a Designee that does qualify as an Equity Eligible Contractor are ineligible to participate in this category.

For projects submitted to the EEC category and verified during Part I from an EEC-certified Approved Vendor, the Approved Vendor must maintain that EEC certification through Part II verification. If the EEC certification was based on EEP-status of persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community at the time of certification and those individuals have a change in EEP status after Part I approval and receipt of a REC contract, the project will maintain its status as eligible for the EEC category. If an EEC project is assigned under the 2021 or 2022 REC Delivery Contracts to a non-EEC Approved Vendor before Part II verification, it will have failed to meet EEC requirements, will not be Part II verified, and will be removed from REC contract with forfeiture of collateral. The project may be reapplied to another category for which it is eligible. If there is a waitlist for the new category to which it is applied, the project will be added to the waitlist as of the date of this reapplication to the new category. Projects that are developed by Approved Vendors certified as EEC and receive a REC contract through the EEC block of capacity may not assign those projects to an Approved Vendor that is not also a certified Equity Eligible Contractor for six years after the Part II verification date of the project. After six years from the Part II verification date has passed, this moratorium on assigning EEC projects to Approved Vendors that are not certified as an EEC is lifted.

The lesser of \$750,000 or 50% of the total REC incentive value may be advanced to an EEC-certified Approved Vendor for an EEC project with a maximum REC incentive value of \$1.5 million or less. To be eligible for an advance of capital, an EEC will need to include the request for the advance of capital in Part I application submission. Their request will be reviewed and approved, in whole or in part, or denied based on the scoring criteria outlined in Appendix O. Once a project with an approved request has been Part I verified and the relevant REC contract or product order is subsequently approved by the Commission, the EEC AV will then submit verification of achievement of the specified milestones that were outlined in their request to the Agency for review and approval. If the milestones are confirmed to have been met, the EEC will then invoice the utility for the advancement following the invoicing process outlined in the 2022 REC Contract and the utilities will process this invoice following the same, with payments made by the contracting utility on the regular monthly invoicing cycle. If an EEC requests advances of capital for multiple projects, there will be a cap on the cumulative total of advances awarded to that entity and its affiliates in a single Program Year at \$5 million in value.

- **EEC Subcategories** - Beginning in the 2023-24 Program Year, the EEC category will feature subcategories for Community Solar and Distributed Generation projects in order to ensure a diverse set of projects are developed within this category. Projects within the DG subcategory will be assigned REC prices from the Small DG and Large DG categories according to the same size parameters and the CS subcategory will be assigned REC prices of the Traditional Community Solar (TCS) category. Each Group in the EEC category will feature subcategories for Community Solar and Distributed Generation projects for the initial nine months the block of capacity is open. The 2023-2024 capacity of each Group will be split 75% for community solar and 25% for distributed generation. This split will ensure that some capacity remains available for EECs seeking to develop distributed generation projects, especially as new EECs enter the market. After the category has been open for eleven months, the reserve of capacity for the subcategories will



end, and all remaining capacity in the block will be available to both CS and DG projects within the respective Group.

#### EEC Subcategory Capacity for Initial Eleven Months of Category Opening<sup>11</sup>

Group A Total – 48 MW	Group B Total – 112 MW
Community Solar – 36 MW	Community Solar – 84 MW
Distributed Generation – 12 MW	Distributed Generation – 28 MW

- **EEC Developer Cap** – A 20% developer cap for any affiliated family of project developers for the Equity Eligible Contractor capacity will be applied across Group A and Group B separately, regardless of whether the category fills on the first day. Any affiliated family of project developers which exceeds 20% of the awarded capacity in a given year’s Equity Eligible Contractor block will have any projects that cause them to exceed the 20% capacity cap moved to become the first projects on the waitlist for the applicable group. The Approved Vendor will have the opportunity to resize the project that causes them to exceed the 20% developer cap if there is enough remaining capacity within the 20% cap for a project to receive a REC Contract and not be waitlisted. The developer cap will reset at the commencement of each new Program Year, such that an Approved Vendor and its affiliates are only permitted to 20% of a block’s capacity for a given Program Year. If an Approved Vendor (and its affiliates) have previously waitlisted projects that exceed the 20% cap, only those waitlisted projects that keep the Approved Vendor (and its affiliates) within that cap will be permitted to move forward. For projects subject to a developer cap, projects will be subject to the cap by the date/time that they are submitted to the Program, meaning there is no swapping permitted to reorder projects to fit into the 20% allowance. Subscriptions Across Traditional Community Solar and Community-Driven Community Solar Projects

Subscriptions to community solar projects occur at the utility account level. A single utility account may have multiple subscriptions to different community solar projects. Additional requirements applicable to community solar subscriptions may be outlined in applicable utility tariffs.

Subscriptions to community solar projects are monitored by the Program Administrator per the process outlined in the relevant REC contract for each project type.

#### Confidential Treatment of Subscriber Information

In the course of marketing, soliciting, and subscribing customers, Approved Vendors and/or their Designees, subcontractors, or agents, may obtain confidential, proprietary, or otherwise generally non-public information from subscribers or potential subscribers. This information may include the subscriber or potential subscriber’s utility account number, utility account name, meter number, or other confidential information. Approved Vendors, Designees, subcontractors, and agents shall maintain the confidentiality and security of all such information received from subscribers and potential subscribers. Furthermore, Approved Vendors, Designees, subcontractors, and agents shall not release such information to any other person or entity without

<sup>11</sup> These capacity allocations do not include any additional capacity that may be added to the EEC block from the reallocation process as outlined in Section 1.H.

the written consent of the subscriber or potential subscriber. This restriction shall not apply to the necessary sharing of such information between an Approved Vendor and its Designees, subcontractors, or agents in order to enroll a community solar subscriber, nor shall it apply to requests from the Program Administrator and/or the Agency as needed for program administration. Approved Vendors and Designees who violate this program requirement, either directly or through the conduct of a subcontractor or agent, may be subject to disciplinary action, including possible suspension from the Program.

## **F. Block Structure**

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At the core of the Program is the concept of a “block.” A block constitutes a pre-established amount of program capacity available for a certain project type at a transparent, administratively set REC price or prices, with prices differing slightly depending on project attributes. The enactment of Public Act 102-0662 changed the Program’s original cascading block approach to an annual block approach.

A single annual block will open at the start of each Program Year, on or around June 1, establishing program years that align with Program Years. This schedule of annual blocks opening on June 3, 2024 will commence with the 2024-2025 Program Year and apply for all subsequent Program Years. If a block’s capacity is filled at any point during the Program Year, then applications to that block will be placed on a waitlist until the subsequent Program Year.

Block capacity in the TCS, CDCS, and EEC categories is divided into two groups by service territory/geographic category. These two groups are also utilized to establish REC prices (but not capacity allocation) in the Public Schools and Small/Large DG categories. The geographic areas are categorized as follows::

- Group A: for projects located in the service territories of Ameren Illinois Company (“Ameren Illinois”), MidAmerican Energy Company (“MidAmerican”), Mt. Carmel Public Utility, and rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities located in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (“MISO”) service area.
- Group B: for projects located in the service territories of Commonwealth Edison Company (“ComEd”), and rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities located in the PJM Interconnection (“PJM”) service area.

The initial capacity allocation (by MW) for each category for the 2024-25 Program Year is as follows:

Category	Allocation	Group A (MW)	Group B (MW)	Statewide Allocation
Small Distributed Generation	18%	-	-	142
Large Distributed Generation	18%	-	-	142
Traditional Community Solar	27%	64	149	-
Community-Driven Community Solar	4%	11	25	-
Public Schools	13%	-	-	107
Equity Eligible Contractor	20%	48	112	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>391</b>

Due to requirements for reallocation of uncontracted capacity from previous Program Years outlined in the Agency's 2024 Long-Term Plan, the block sizes above will be adjusted slightly with reallocated capacity from the 2023-24 Program Year. The reallocation process is outlined further in Section 1.H. Final block sizes for the 2024-25 Program Year, inclusive of reallocated capacity, will be announced once the 2023-24 Program Year concludes.

## G. Block Closing

When a block's capacity is fully allocated, a "soft close" process is initiated for the relevant block. A soft close of a block is when the Program Administrator will announce that the block will close in seven calendar days or when the next project application submitted to the block would exceed the block's capacity by 10 MW from the original published block size, whichever comes first. During this soft close period, no more than 10 MW of additional capacity will be accepted into a given category. That capacity cap is managed at the batch level—meaning if a batch causes a block to exceed the 10 MW additional capacity limit, the Program Administrator may remove individual projects from that batch in consultation with the batch's Approved Vendor to ensure the block remains under allowed capacity cap.

Subject to the conditions outlined above as well as conditions outlined in Section 1.E, a project will receive the price of the block that is open at the time the Part I project application is submitted. If a block is closed at the time an application is submitted and that project is waitlisted, it will receive the REC pricing associated with the block of capacity for the Group/category combination it will utilize as outlined in the subsequent section below.

## H. Waitlist Procedures

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### General Waitlist Procedures Across All Program Categories

1. The Program will continue accepting project applications after a block has filled and place those projects on the waitlist for each Group/category on a first come, first served basis (unless otherwise noted in this Section G below regarding TCS, CDCS, and Public Schools), with newly opened space created by earlier projects that are not approved or are withdrawn, filled from the top of the waitlist at the last open block pricing. A project will be considered submitted when the batch to which that application belongs is submitted and payment for that batch is initiated. Waitlists of projects will carry over to the following Program Year to which they have been reallocated.
2. For the categories that have a waitlist, projects will be selected from the waitlist in the established waitlist order. Those selections will occur if/when project(s) in that Group/category that previously received the Program Administrator's recommendation for a REC Contract withdraw or are otherwise removed from the Program, thus opening up capacity. This may not be a one-to-one relationship by number of projects; in general, sufficient capacity must be vacated by withdrawn projects to accommodate a project coming off the waitlist.

Example: A 2 MW project that previously was selected for a REC Contract withdraws from Illinois Shines. The sizes of the next projects on the waitlist are, in queue order, 600 kW, 800 kW, and 700 kW. The 600 kW project and the 800 kW project would be selected off the waitlist, taking up 1.4 MW of the newly vacated capacity. The 700 kW project would remain on the waitlist because its selection would cause the remaining 600 kW of available capacity to be exceeded. The 700 kW project would **not** be skipped over in favor of selecting a waitlist project  $\leq 600$  kW. Rather, the 600 kW of available capacity would remain open until additional projects withdrew to open up sufficient capacity to accommodate the 700 kW project.

3. Once a project is selected off the waitlist, it will receive the REC pricing associated with the block of capacity for the Group/category combination it will utilize and the Approved Vendor will be given 10 business days to accept or decline the selection. If it declines, the next project(s) on the waitlist (subject to available capacity) would be selected along the same terms (10 business days to accept or decline) with this process repeated as necessary until the available capacity is filled (again, subject to available capacity).
4. Projects may, but are not required to, remain in the interconnection queue (i.e., maintain a valid interconnection agreement with the applicable utility) to maintain their place on the waitlist. This includes projects that are forced from the utility interconnection queue due to the utility's queue management process, including, but not limited to, being forced to pay a potentially nonrefundable deposit to remain in the queue, or incurring other costs to remain on the waitlist. Any project that is required to have a valid interconnection agreement as part of its Part I application that has exited the interconnection queue must provide proof that it has reapplied for interconnection as a condition of its selection off of the waitlist. Any project that declines a utility interconnection restudy, declines to pay a potentially nonrefundable deposit to remain in the queue, or otherwise takes an action that preemptively removes itself from the utility interconnection queue rather than wait for involuntary removal will be deemed to have been removed from the queue involuntarily. Such projects will remain eligible for selection off of the waitlist.

## **Traditional Community Solar Waitlist Specifics**

Traditional Community Solar projects must receive a minimum score of 5 points to receive a spot on the waitlist. Should first day project applications not exceed category capacity, then all applicant projects otherwise qualifying shall be deemed acceptable and may qualify for a REC Delivery Contract. Should category capacity fill later in the program year, then from that point forward, only projects meeting this scoring threshold of 5 points may be considered for an eligible spot on the waitlist for the Traditional Community Solar category. Projects that do not meet the minimum score of 5 points may reapply at a later date, either within the same Program Year or in a subsequent Program Year. Upon re-application and re-scoring, if the project meets the minimum point threshold, it will be added to the waitlist as of the date of the re-application. Application fees will be required for re-application. Once new capacity for the TCS block opens, waitlisted projects from the previous Program Year will take priority. Demonstration of continuous site control will be required to maintain a waitlist position throughout the Program Year and into the next Program Year; the degree to which this is monitored by the Program Administrator, and the manner of that monitoring, will be determined at a later date.

After final scores are posted, the Agency will announce if a random selection process is necessary to break ties between projects that received tied scores and where those scores would impact project selection, or waitlist placement. The 20% developer cap will be applied during this event separately for Group A and Group B. Approved Vendors can swap projects that were selected with projects that were waitlisted via the random selection process within the same Group, as long as they have same score and are the same size and were submitted on the same day. Project substitution will not be allowed outside of this allowance.

At the Part II application, the Program Administrator will conduct a review of the initial submission and points achieved for TCS applications to ensure Approved Vendors abide by the plans submitted in Part I.

## **Community-Driven Community Solar Waitlist Specifics**

Community-Driven Community Solar projects must receive a minimum score of 10 points to receive a spot on the waitlist. Demonstration of continuous site control will be required to maintain a waitlist position throughout the Program Year and into the next Program Year; the degree to which this is monitored by the Program Administrator, and the manner of that monitoring, will be determined at a later date.

Projects that do not meet the minimum threshold score of 10 points to receive a spot on the waitlist may reapply at a later date, either within the same Program Year or in a subsequent Program Year. Upon re-application and re-scoring, if the project meets the minimum point threshold, it will be added to the waitlist as of the date of the re-application. Application fees will be required upon re-application. Once new capacity for the CDCS block opens, waitlisted projects from the previous Program Year will take priority.

After final scores are posted, the Agency will announce if a random selection process is necessary to break ties between projects that received tied scores and where those scores would impact project selection or waitlist placement. Approved Vendors can swap projects that were selected with projects that were waitlisted within the same Group, as long as both projects have same score and are the same size. Project substitution will not be allowed outside of this.



## **Public Schools Waitlist Specifics**

If capacity is reached prior to 180-day prioritization window for this block, projects will be added to waitlist following the prioritization for this block outlined in Section 1.D.

After the 180-day prioritization window closes, projects will be added to the waitlist in order in which they are received regardless of project size/Tier or EJ community location. Waitlists will be maintained separately for Group A and Group B.

Projects will be taken off the waitlist in the ranked waitlist order, as capacity becomes available as noted above during the remainder of the Program Year. Freed capacity for each Group will only utilized to serve projects on that Group's waitlist, thus no cross-Group sharing of capacity will occur and each Group will retain its own waitlist.

Once a new Program Year commences, if a waitlist remains for this block, projects will be taken off the waitlist following the prioritization rules for this block. As such, a reshuffling of the waitlist will occur at the start of each Program Year in order to provide increased opportunities to Tier 1/Tier 2/EJ community-sited schools. Projects will take capacity from their designated sub-block according to the project type, Group, and size.

## **I. Uncontracted Capacity**

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Following the 2022-2023 Program Year, 25% of any uncontracted capacity from the Public Schools category within that category will be rolled over to the following Program Year and the remaining 75% will be allocated to other categories in accordance with the prioritization identified below. The capacity rolled over within the Public Schools Category will be summed and then redistributed across the Public Schools subcategories and Tiers following the prioritizations outlined in this Guidebook.

For the Community-Driven Community Solar category, the Agency will no longer reserve uncontracted capacity across future Program Years. Applications in this category exceeded the allocated capacity in the 2023-24 Program Year and the Agency expects that trend to continue in future Program Years.

The Agency will determine the amount of uncontracted capacity across all program categories (with the caveat related to the Public Schools and Community-Driven Community Solar categories for the 2024-2025 Program Year outlined above, and preserving Equity Eligible Contractor capacity generally) within one week after the closing date of that year's annual blocks. That uncontracted capacity will be summed to a total amount, with distribution of that total amount made according to the prioritization below. For categories without Group A/B distinctions, reallocated capacity will be applied to the category's waitlist in rank order until the waitlist is depleted. For categories that do feature the Group A/B split, capacity will be divided along the 30%/70% split and applied to Group A/B waitlists accordingly. If a category other than Public Schools has subcategories or subdivisions beyond Group, those percentages will be followed within a Group, after the Group A/B percentages are applied to the available capacity. For all prioritizations below, the Agency will endeavor to clear out all waitlists that remain in all Program categories:

- The Agency will first allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Small Distributed Generation category waitlist.
- Second, the Agency will allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Large Distributed Generation category waitlist.

- Third, the Agency will allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Distributed Generation subcategory of the Equity Eligible Contractor category waitlist.
- Fourth, the Agency will allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Distributed Generation subcategory of the Public Schools category waitlist.
- Fifth, the Agency will allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Community-Driven Community Solar waitlist. Eligible waitlisted projects will be required to have met the minimum scoring threshold for waitlist placement.
- Sixth, the Agency will allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Community Solar subcategory of the Equity Eligible Contractor category waitlist.
- Seventh, the Agency will allocate any uncontracted capacity to the Community Solar subcategory of the Public Schools category waitlist.
- If uncontracted capacity remains after the above allocations are made, the Agency will evenly distribute the remaining uncontracted capacity across the remaining Program categories featuring waitlists on a pro rata basis. Should a category's waitlist be satisfied by less capacity than that distribution, then the remaining capacity shall be added to any other category or categories featuring waitlists.

If any or all uncontracted capacity cannot be used to satisfy existing waitlists, then that remaining uncontracted capacity will be distributed across all program categories on a pro rata basis corresponding with those categories Section 1-75(c)(1)(K) percentage allocations.<sup>12</sup>

The Agency will publish its capacity redistribution within one week after determining the sum total of capacity (i.e., within two weeks after the close of that year's annual blocks). Capacity distribution to categories featuring waitlists will result in projects selected off of those waitlists by waitlist order, with the resulting contract price at the price of the next annual block. Published block capacities for that next annual block will be updated to reflect that category's expanded, and now-filled, capacity additions. For waitlisted capacity not met through uncontracted capacity redistribution, Section 1-75(c)(1)(K) also provides that "the waitlist of projects in a given year will carry over to apply to the subsequent year when another block is opened." Thus, those waitlisted projects will be given priority in selection within their category under that new Program Year's capacity allocation to that category.

## **J. REC Pricing**

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### **Background of Incentives via RECs**

Renewable Energy Credits ("RECs") represent the environmental value of the electricity generated from solar panels, but not the electricity itself. A REC is issued when 1 MWh of electricity is generated by a renewable energy source, such as solar power. Utilities purchase RECs to meet their obligation to supply a certain amount of power from renewable energy. Incentives for projects participating in the Illinois Shines program are generated through the purchase of RECs by an Illinois electric utility through a binding contract with an Approved Vendor. Each program year, REC prices are set by the IPA for the block capacity that is made available across project categories. Incentive levels, expressed in REC prices, vary by group and category, and

<sup>12</sup> Small DG – 20%; Large DG – 20%; TCS – 30%; Public Schools – 15%; CDCS – 5%; EEC – 10%

are based upon the project's category, size, and location. The incentive level that an Illinois Shines project will receive is the total of the expected amount of RECs (as verified in the Part II verification) the project will generate over the course of the REC contract it is on (either 15 or 20 years) multiplied by the associated REC price available at the time of project submission.

The process for payment of incentives per REC for a project from the contracting utility to the Approved Vendor is further outlined in Section 6.

## REC Pricing for 2024-25 Program Year

The following tables list the prices for RECs by each identified Group and category for the block of capacity available for the Program's 2024-2025 Program Year. Note that the REC price associated with a project submitted to the EEC project category will follow the REC pricing associated with that project's group, (i.e., Group A or B), project type (Small DG or Large DG), and project size. Community solar projects that are submitted to the EEC category will receive TCS pricing based on the project's Group and size.

Distributed Generation		
	Group A	Group B
0 – 10 kW AC	\$73.71	\$83.87
>10 – 25 kW AC	\$63.53	\$77.53
>25 – 100 kW AC	\$55.89	\$70.23
>100 – 200 kW AC	\$53.63	\$63.34
200 – 500 kW AC	\$46.58	\$54.60
>500 – 2,000 kW AC	\$43.77	\$49.49
>2,000 – 5,000 kW AC	\$33.03	\$37.05

Community-Driven Community Solar		
	Group A	Group B
0 – 25 kW AC	\$73.82	\$91.47
>25 – 100 kW AC	\$75.40	\$92.92
>100 – 200 kW AC	\$73.28	\$89.36
>200 – 500 kW AC	\$67.73	\$82.24
>500 – 2,000 kW AC	\$57.93	\$68.95
>2,000 – 5,000 kW AC	\$41.94	\$49.79

Traditional Community Solar		
	Group A	Group B
0 – 25 kW AC	\$57.49	\$70.91
>25 – 100 kW AC	\$58.84	\$72.15
>100 – 200 kW AC	\$57.50	\$69.58
>200 – 500 kW AC	\$53.46	\$64.20
>500 – 2,000 kW AC	\$46.02	\$54.24
>2,000 – 5,000 kW AC	\$33.99	\$39.98

Public Schools		
	Group A	Group B
0 – 25 kW AC	\$77.17	\$93.17
>25 – 100 kW AC	\$68.57	\$84.96
>100 – 200 kW AC	\$65.81	\$76.91
>200 – 500 kW AC	\$57.72	\$66.88
>500 – 2,000 kW AC	\$54.51	\$61.04
>2,000 – 5,000 kW AC	\$42.15	\$46.74

## Community Solar Rooftop Adder

For Community Solar projects mounted on a rooftop, a \$5/REC adder will be applied to the REC price. To be eligible for the adder, the project design submitted to the Program will need to specify that the system is a roof-mounted system. If after ICC approval of the project, the design of the project changes and it is ultimately built as a ground-mounted system, the adder will not be included in the final REC price.

This adder is extended to rooftop community solar projects in the Traditional Community Solar, Public Schools, and EEC categories. This adder is not extended to Community-Driven Community Solar projects.

## Stranded Customer Adder

The Program continues to see more stranded customers as the Program ages. In order to address this issue, the Agency plans to implement an economic incentive for Approved Vendors that assist stranded customers in the form of a “REC adder”—that is, an increased price in the REC Contract for RECs generated by projects that were stranded and then “unstranded.” Please note this adder is in the is not yet finalized and the Agency intends to use additional stakeholder processes to fully develop the initiative.

**Funding:** The REC adder will be paid out of the general RPS collections held by the public utilities.

**Eligibility:** Projects will be eligible for the REC adder when a new Approved Vendor takes on a customer that had been “stranded”—that is, the original Approved Vendor (and possibly also the Designee) that had contracted with the customer has gone out of business, ceased operations, or there is otherwise no reasonable likelihood that the Approved Vendor will follow through on its contractual obligations to the customer or continue to act as the Approved Vendor for the project. The Program Administrator maintains an internal list of stranded customers and an Approved Vendor or Designee who is considering taking on a customer will be able to ask for a determination from the Program Administrator on whether the customer is “stranded.” The Agency does not intend to restrict the terms of the customer contract with the new Approved Vendor, but will require a new Disclosure Form to be signed if any of the terms of the new contract vary from the customer’s original contract with the initial Approved Vendor and/or Designee.

**Process:** Using a stakeholder process, the IPA and the Illinois Shines Program Administrator will begin by developing categories of stranded customers, based on the specific types of situations in which customers are stranded. The Agency will determine a specific REC “adder” amount for each category of customer, either as a percentage increase or an absolute dollar amount. The REC adder may be very small when the additional risk and work of taking on a type of stranded customer is minimal (such as when the project is built and functioning properly, and the application materials are available, and the customer just needs a new AV to actually submit the application). The REC adder may be much higher when a customer is in a complicated situation or where there could be more risk or work for the new Approved Vendor (and/or Designee), such as when a project is partially installed and the original installer is bankrupt and/or unresponsive.

## Changes in REC Prices

In response to the Program’s shift from a declining block price structure to an annual block structure, and in an effort to eliminate gaming opportunities, projects submitted to the Program will not be permitted to receive a REC price higher than the price available at the time of its initial submission to the Program (i.e., an application cannot be withdrawn and resubmitted in order to receive a higher REC price). In the case where a

project has been continuously waitlisted, it will receive the REC price associated with the block of capacity to which the project is assigned when the project is selected off the waitlist. The only exception to this general rule is the REC adder being offered to Approved Vendors that take on stranded customers as outlined above. The details regarding this new adder will be formalized after a stakeholder feedback process is completed, which is tentatively planned to take place during the 2024-25 Program Year.





## Section 2: Approved Vendors

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B. Equity Eligible Contractor Application .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
C. General AV Attestation and EEC Certification .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
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E. Approved Vendor Application Review, Appeal Procedure and Renewal Process.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
F. Confidentiality .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
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H. Equity Eligible Contractor Designees .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
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## A. Approved Vendor Overview and Requirements

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Participation in the Program takes place through Approved Vendors. By having only Approved Vendors eligible to receive direct payments through the Program—i.e., ensuring that any entity receiving a REC Contract is registered with and vetted by the Agency, and has met conditions predicate—it is possible to monitor compliance with Program requirements, ensure the accuracy and quality of information submitted, and reduce the administrative burden on the contractual counterparties. This model benefits consumers because they will be able to verify that an entity that proposes to develop a photovoltaic system for them or sell them a subscription to a community solar project is a legitimate entity participating in the Program. An Approved Vendor that fails to live up to the requirements of the Program and is a “bad actor” could have a significant negative impact on the entire renewable energy market in Illinois that would extend beyond just its own actions. It is important for the Agency to have the ability to monitor the Program and ensure high quality performance by the Approved Vendors. Approved Vendors are responsible for understanding all Program requirements by reviewing Program documents and are encouraged to increase knowledge of requirements by participating in Program trainings.

An Approved Vendor serves as the contractual counterparty with the utility, and thus the entity that receives payments from the utility for REC deliveries as contract obligations are met. Approved Vendors are therefore the entities responsible for submitting documentation to the Program Administrator (as the responsible party for the information contained in that documentation), maintaining collateral requirements, and providing ongoing information and reporting. As such, Approved Vendors will have to coordinate the downstream information from installers/developers as well as individual system owners (who may provide required information through the installer/developer). **As a result, Approved Vendors may not opt out of Program-related communications, including emails from the IPA or the Program Administrator. It is incumbent on the Approved Vendor to ensure that Program contact information for the AV is up-to-date and reliable.**

The Program does not require a specific delegation of duties between the Approved Vendor, installer/developer, system owner, or other parties. The key consideration is that the Approved Vendor is ultimately responsible for the fulfillment of contractual obligations, including any obligations delegated to subcontractors, in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Long-Term Plan, this Program Guidebook, the Consumer Protection Handbook, and of the Approved Vendor’s contract with the counterparty utility.

Approved Vendors must register and be approved prior to participating in the Illinois Shines program. Approved Vendors must renew their approval once a year. In addition, an Approved Vendor must notify the Program Administrator and promptly submit a renewal application (regardless of when the Approved Vendor’s next annual renewal would normally be due) if any of the below occurs:

- There is a transfer of ownership of the Approved Vendor such that 50% or greater of the ownership of the Approved Vendor changes from what was disclosed in the original application or most recent renewal. For example, if an Approved Vendor is originally 100% owned by Corporation A, and Corporation A sells 50% of the ownership to Corporation B, this would trigger the renewal requirement. As another example, if the Approved Vendor is 20% owned each by 5 different individuals, and 3 of those individuals sell their ownership share to someone else, that would trigger the renewal reporting requirement.
- The Approved Vendor changes its name, including its legal name or its “doing business as” name.

- The Approved Vendor would now have to answer “yes” instead of “no” to any of the questions in the Company and Affiliate History section of the AV application.<sup>13</sup>
- The Approved Vendor previously answered “yes” to a question in the Company and Affiliate History section of the AV application, but there is now another independent set of facts or circumstances that would require the Approved Vendor answer “yes” to that question, which was not previously disclosed.

Failure by an Approved Vendor to follow the requirements of the Program could result in the entity having its status as an Approved Vendor suspended or revoked, thus losing the ability to bring new projects into the Program. Losing that status would not relieve an Approved Vendor of its obligations to ensure that RECs from its projects that have been energized continue to be delivered to the applicable utility; failure to do so could result in having the vendor’s credit collateral drawn upon.

Registration as an Approved Vendor in Illinois Shines is a prerequisite to becoming an Illinois Solar for All Approved Vendor. Approved Vendors barred, suspended, revoked or otherwise limited in their participation with the Illinois Shines program will immediately be barred, suspended, revoked or otherwise limited in their participation in the Illinois Solar for All Program, and vice versa.

The contact information provided to the Program Administrator through the Approved Vendor application is the primary contact used for all Program updates. In the initial Approved Vendor application, an applicant will have the opportunity to provide additional points of contact for contracting, extensions, REC delivery notifications, Annual Reports, and customer support. If the contact information provided in the Approved Vendor application or renewal has changed, it is incumbent on the Approved Vendor to notify the Program Administrator of this and update any and all contact information so that communications from the Program Administrator are not missed.

If an Approved Vendor no longer wishes to act as Approved Vendor for new projects, it may apply to change its Approved Vendor registration status to “Inactive.” An Approved Vendor may become “Inactive” only if:

- The Approved Vendor’s distributed generation projects (if any) have been Part II approved; AND
- The Approved Vendor does not have any community solar projects currently under an Illinois Shines REC contract or that will in the future be under an Illinois Shines REC contract; AND
- The Approved Vendor will not serve as an Approved Vendor or submit Program applications for any additional projects.

Inactive Approved Vendors are responsible for ongoing obligations related to their existing REC contracts but are not authorized to otherwise participate in the Program as an Approved Vendor (for example, by marketing the Program to potential customers). Inactive Approved Vendors do not have to renew their Approved Vendor application each year, and will instead simply have to confirm basic contact information on an annual basis. Inactive Approved Vendors will not be required to file an MES Compliance Plan. An Inactive Approved Vendor will still be required to file an Annual Report if they had any projects delivering RECs and eligible to invoice under a REC Contract in the Program in the previous 12 months. An entity may become an “Inactive” Approved Vendor and still participate as an active Designee if it has properly registered as a Designee.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix G for a description of information collected in the Approved Vendor Application.

If an Approved Vendor no longer wishes to participate at all in Illinois Shines, it may apply to change its Approved Vendor registration status to “Withdrawn.” An Approved Vendor may withdraw only if:

- The Approved Vendor never submitted any project applications; OR
- The Approved Vendor no longer has any projects under an active REC Contract and does not plan to submit any additional projects to the Program.

Approved Vendors who withdraw no longer have any authorization to act as an Approved Vendor in Illinois Shines or Illinois Solar for All. Withdrawn Approved Vendors will not have to renew their Approved Vendor application each year, comply with the MES, or submit an Annual Report. An entity may withdraw as an Approved Vendor and still participate as an active Designee if it has properly registered as a Designee.

An Approved Vendor may **not** simply fail to renew its application. If it wishes to become inactive or withdraw, it must affirmatively apply for the new status. Failure to renew (or, in the alternative, to apply to become inactive or withdrawn) may lead to disciplinary action, **which may also apply to the entity's participation in Illinois Shines as a Designee, if applicable.**

The Program Administrator maintains a public list of Approved Vendors that appears on the Program website. This list is designed to show prospective customers the Approved Vendors that are active in the Program, as well as to provide public transparency into companies participating in the state-administered Program.. Changes in company name and business status, such as bankruptcy or suspension, will be noted on the Approved Vendors list. If an entity changes its registration status to “Inactive” or “Withdrawn,” this will also be noted on the public list. Approved Vendors cannot opt out of being included on the public list of Approved Vendors.

The information noted in Appendix G will be collected from prospective Approved Vendors and evaluated by the Program Administrator.

## **B. Equity Eligible Contractor Application**

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1. Approved Vendors that would like to submit projects into the Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”) category must first apply to be approved as an EEC. They may do so in conjunction with their Approved Vendor application or at any time after submitting their initial Approved Vendor registration. An Equity Eligible Person (EEP) is allowed to serve as the majority-owner of one EEC Designee and one EEC AV, which may be separate legal entities. The only exception to this limitation is the registration of Single-Project Approved Vendors (“SPAVs”). There is no limit on the number of SPAVs which can be registered as EECs by a single EEC. This EEC and their EEC Single-Project Approved Vendors will be considered affiliated and subject to the same Developer Cap should that be triggered for the given Program Year. The following information is required for EEC registration: If the Approved Vendor is organized as a corporation, general partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, or limited partnership, the applicant will be asked to designate which owners, partners, or proprietors meet the EEC eligibility criteria.
2. If the Approved Vendor is organized as a non-profit, the applicant will be asked to provide the board membership of the non-profit and designate which board members meet the EEC eligibility criteria.
3. If the Approved Vendor is a sole proprietor, no additional designations are required.

The applicant will be prompted to select the category(ies) under which the majority-owner(s) qualifies for EEP certification:

- a. 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 Preapprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, or 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;
- b. persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system;
- c. persons who were formerly incarcerated;
- d. persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community.<sup>14</sup>

Persons selecting option 'a' or 'd' above will be required to upload documentation demonstrating qualifying status. The Program Administrator may request documentation for any/all claimed qualifying statuses listed above. All applicants will be required to attest to their answer. If more than one person was designated as an EEP majority-owner, each person must complete the EEP certification steps..

In accordance with the requirements of the IPA Act, the Agency will list EECs with their contact information, types of work performed, and locations worked in on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal.

The Approved Vendor will be asked if it considers any of the information provided to certify as EEC as confidential. A checkbox will be provided for the applicant to acknowledge that it will be listed as an EEC on public project application reports and potential other public reports.<sup>15</sup>

The Program Administrator may follow up with the applicant with additional questions to clarify EEC eligibility and reserves the right to seek additional information or other documents to confirm EEC eligibility.

Notice of approval of an EEC application serves as certification of an EEC Approved Vendor. EEC certified Approved Vendors can then begin submitting projects into the EEC block. EEC certified Approved Vendors may also submit projects into other Program categories and are not limited to only participating in the EEC category.

## **C. General AV Attestation and EEC Certification**

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All Approved Vendors must attest to the attestation in Appendix H of this Guidebook. Approved Vendors that act out of compliance with this attestation could face disciplinary action from the Program Administrator, including possible suspension from the Program.

<sup>14</sup> Equity investment eligible communities include R3 Areas as established pursuant to the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, and Environmental Justice Communities as established through Illinois Solar for All Program. For maps and address lookup tools for these two types of areas see: <https://r3.illinois.gov/eligibility> and <https://www.illinoisfa.com/environmental-justice-communities/> respectively.

<sup>15</sup> The Agency will endeavor to protect confidentiality of information as outlined in Section 2.F of this Guidebook.

## Equity Eligible Contractor Certification

Equity Eligible Contractor applicants will be required to complete the certification in Appendix B of this Guidebook in addition to the Approved Vendor attestation in Appendix H. This document must be completed by each owner or board member in the organization used to establish EEC status. Each certification must be signed by both the certifying owner or board member, and an authorized representative of the Approved Vendor.

## D. Evaluation Criteria for Approved Vendors

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An entity that is applying to become an Approved Vendor or applying to renew its Approved Vendor status must complete the applicable Approved Vendor application in full and submit it to the Program Administrator. Failure to provide required information, providing inaccurate information, or failing to respond to requests for additional information within two weeks, may result in a denial of the application. As part of the application, the Approved Vendor must submit the following<sup>16</sup>:

- Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months;
- Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (if the Approved Vendor will be installing Distributed Generation solar projects)
- Documentation of either PJM-GATS aggregator account or M-RETS account
- A representative sample of the applicant's marketing resources; and
- Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Attestation (if applicable).

The Program Administrator reviews each Approved Vendor application on an individual basis to determine, based on the entirety of the available information, whether the applicant's participation in the Program would pose an unreasonable risk to consumers or the success of the Program as a whole. The Program Administrator may consider any information presented in the application, as well as information from independent investigation, when determining if the entity's application should be approved. This may include the company's history of consumer complaints and/or consumer protection issues in other states, as well as other issues. The Program Administrator may also consider connections, such as common ownership or managers, to Approved Vendors or Designees in the Illinois Shines program that have had Program violations. The Program Administrator may deny an application if it determines that the applicant provided false information. Affirmative answers to questions set out in the section titled "Company and Affiliate History" do not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, the Program Administrator will review the facts, may request additional information, and will make a holistic determination.

The Program Administrator will review renewal applications similarly to initial Approved Vendor applications and may deny a renewal for the same bases that it may deny an initial application. However, in making its determination on a renewal, the Program Administrator will consider the Approved Vendor's history and record with the Program.

<sup>16</sup> Complete set of requirements for the Approved Vendor application are included in Appendix G.



## **E. Approved Vendor Application Review, Appeal Procedure and Renewal Process**

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### **Application Review**

The Program Administrator will review and make approval decisions for all Approved Vendor applications. It is the responsibility of the prospective Approved Vendor to respond to any questions or requests for additional information from the Administrator within 2 weeks of receiving such a request. Failure to respond to requests from the Administrator will constitute grounds for rejection as an Approved Vendor. Similarly, if a prospective Approved Vendor is dishonest within their Approved Vendor application, the Program Administrator reserves the right to grant a conditional approval of an application or outright reject an Approved Vendor application, as detailed below. If an Approved Vendor's dishonesty in its application is not discovered until after the Approved Vendor application is approved, this may be grounds for revocation of the Approved Vendor status.

### **Application Rejection and Appeal**

Any Approved Vendor applications that are rejected will be provided a written explanation with the reasons for the rejection. The Program Administrator's rejection of an Approved Vendor application may be appealed to the IPA within 2 weeks of receiving a determination, and the opportunity to appeal will be communicated by the Program Administrator as part of its notice of rejection. To appeal to the IPA, the Approved Vendor applicant should provide to the Program Administrator an appeal in writing on company letterhead, addressed to the IPA, explaining its rationale for why it believes the Program Administrator's determination is in error, as well as detailing any supporting information, documents, or communications. The IPA may request additional information and materials from the Approved Vendor applicant, and/or schedule a call or informal discussion with the Approved Vendor applicant to learn more about the basis for its position. The IPA will endeavor to issue final determinations on eligibility, including a supporting rationale for its decision, as soon as practicable after the receipt of an appeal and review of relevant information.

### **Conditional Application Approval**

The IPA and the Program Administrator reserve the right to conditionally approve applications from prospective or renewing Approved Vendors that have areas of concern. If conditional approval is warranted, the Program Administrator will develop conditions appropriate to address the concerns that the prospective or renewing Approved Vendor must meet. For example, a conditional approval may require an Approved Vendor to renew their application every six months instead of every year, or may include reporting requirements or regular check-ins with the Program Administrator.

### **Approved Vendor Renewal Process**

Approved Vendors must submit a renewal application once a year and provide updated contact information, current certificate of good standing, current ICC certification if applicable, confirmation of MRETS/GATS registration, and other AV information as requested by the Program Administrator.

EEC Approved Vendors will need to re-certify as an EEC each year alongside the annual Approved Vendor renewal process. As part of that process, Equity Eligible Persons that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC and qualify as an EEP based on residency will be required to re-certify their primary residency in an EIEC. For

EECs that qualify based on one of the other criteria, this re-certification will only require confirmation of continued majority-ownership by the EEP(s).

Any updates to the Equity Investment Eligible Communities (“EIEC”) map used to determine EEP status for residency-based qualification could result in some individuals that previously qualified as EEPs based on residency to no longer live in a qualifying area. For individuals whose EEP status is affected by the map update, their status as an EEP will change at the next recertification - i.e., two years after they first certify for workforce EEPs and at the next registration renewal for EEPs that are majority-owners of EECs. For EECs that may lose the status of EEC due to a majority-owner EEP no longer qualifying as an EEP, any projects already under a REC contract in the EEC Category will not be affected by that loss of status.

## **F. Confidentiality**

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Except where otherwise provided (such as with certain project-specific information being made publicly available, including the identification of projects in the EEC category and the associated Approved Vendor in public project application reports<sup>17</sup>), actual Approved Vendor submittals including quarterly reports, annual reports, Approved Vendor applications, and project applications will not be publicly posted or made publicly available as a matter of course - provided that nothing included herein shall a) prohibit the IPA from reporting information taken from Approved Vendor submittals to appropriate authorities should the IPA have reasonable suspicion of any fraudulent or otherwise illegal behavior, b) prevent the IPA from making aggregated information taken from across Approved Vendor submittals publicly available, or c) prevent the IPA from sharing information received with the Illinois Commerce Commission or public utilities to support the Program’s operation.

Additionally, the IPA and the Program Administrator will provide confidential treatment to any commercially sensitive information submitted by Approved Vendors in connection with participation in the Program. Under Section 1-120 of the IPA Act (20 ILCS 3855), the Illinois Power Agency has a statutory obligation to “provide adequate protection for confidential and proprietary information furnished, delivered, or filed” by any third party. As Section 7(1)(g) of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) (5 ILCS 140/7) exempts from disclosure “[t]rade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person or business where the trade secrets or commercial or financial information are furnished under a claim that they are proprietary, privileged or confidential, and that disclosure of the trade secrets or commercial or financial information would cause competitive harm to the person or business,” the IPA believes that its responsibility under Section 1-120 necessitates the assertion of this FOIA exemption when applicable in response to a FOIA request, and to otherwise protect the confidentiality of commercially sensitive information in response to any discovery request or other request made in connection with formal investigation or litigation.<sup>18</sup> While the IPA will presume that seemingly commercially sensitive or confidential content contained in submittals including quarterly reports, annual reports, Approved Vendor applications, and project applications is indeed commercially sensitive or confidential and thus should be actively protected from disclosure, Approved

<sup>17</sup> Results of the April 10, 2019 project selection lotteries were made publicly available and may be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/#other-resources>. Additionally, on June 19, 2019, the IPA published its Project Information Release Protocols, describing the data that it intends to regularly publish about project applications and selections. That document and the project data disclosure itself may be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/project-application-reports/>.

<sup>18</sup> It may, however, publish non-confidential information deemed subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act to ensure that all parties – and not merely requesting parties under FOIA – have access to any such disclosures.

Vendors will have the opportunity within the application portal to designate project information as “proprietary, privileged, or confidential, the disclosure of which would cause competitive harm” and should otherwise similarly designate any other particularly sensitive information to maximize the likelihood that protection of such information from disclosure would be supported by a reviewing body.

## **G. Designees and Designee Registration**

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As used for purposes for Designee registration, the term “Designee” refers to third-party (i.e., non-Approved Vendor) entities that have direct interaction with end-use customers on behalf of the Approved Vendor or another Designee. This includes installers, entities that perform maintenance and repair, marketing firms, community solar subscriber agents, lead generators, and sales organizations.<sup>19</sup> The Agency reserves the right to add additional categories as needed. Designees must register with the Program and renew their registration once a year. As part of this process, Designees will submit their training materials and certifications showing that their agents have been trained in accordance with Program requirements. Approved Vendors that operate as a Designee of another Approved Vendor must also register as a Designee. Third-party entities that do not have interaction with end-use customers of Illinois Shines are not required to register as a Designee.

The purpose of Designee registration requirement is to increase Program transparency by creating a searchable database of participating organizations on the [Illinois Shines](#) website. Potential customers will be able to verify that an entity representing the Program is indeed a registered participant (and likewise be able to review if the entity is listed on the complaint or disciplinary databases).

The registration of Designees does not change the responsibilities of the Approved Vendor, or the potential for an Approved Vendor to be held accountable for the conduct of its Designees. Approved Vendors will be responsible for ensuring that their Designee(s) register with the program and annually renew their registration, and Approved Vendors who fail to do so may be subject to disciplinary actions. This includes Designees of Designees. For example, if an Approved Vendor works with an installer, and that installer in turn hires a lead generation firm to assist in marketing, the Approved Vendor will be responsible for ensuring that both the installer and the lead generation firm register as Designees with the Program. Approved Vendors remain responsible for ensuring that all Designees – including Designees of Designees – are trained consistent with the requirements of the Consumer Protection Handbook and are informed of changes in Program requirements issued by the Program Administrator. Approved Vendors must maintain records demonstrating that they have communicated Program requirements to their Designee(s). If a Designee cannot or does not comply with Program requirements, an Approved Vendor should rescind its approval for the Designee. The Agency believes that this step will provide additional information and transparency to consumers and to the marketplace generally.

As discussed in the Consumer Protection Handbook, Approved Vendors are responsible for managing and actively supervising their Designees (including nested Designees) and ensuring compliance with all Program requirements. An AV is responsible for a Designee for as long as the Designee is operating on behalf of the

<sup>19</sup> This may also include warranty holders.

Approved Vendor. If a Designee violates Program requirements when it is acting on behalf of another AV, the AV on whose behalf the Designee is acting is responsible for the Designee's conduct.

Designees barred, suspended, revoked or otherwise limited in their participation with Illinois Shines will immediately be barred, suspended, revoked or otherwise limited in their participation in the Illinois Solar for All Program, and vice versa.

Registration shall include the Designee's provision of contact information, acknowledgment of the business relationship with the Approved Vendor, and identification of the categories of the consumer-facing services provided. Designees must also indicate if they are minority-owned, woman-owned, veteran-owned, disability-owned or considered a small business and provide an estimate of the percentage of staff at time of registration who are women, minorities, veterans, or disabled. As part of the registration process, Designees must provide an Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months. Additionally, a Designee is responsible for acknowledging that it will comply with all applicable Program requirements through an attestation. Failure by a Designee to comply with applicable requirements may subject the Designee to suspension or termination from future participation in the Program. If the Designee ignores a suspension decision made by the Program Administrator and continues its Program-related activity, any Approved Vendor that works with the Designee during that period may be subject to discipline. Likewise, Approved Vendors found to be working with entities engaged in customer-facing activities that fail to register with the Program could be subject to discipline.

Because Designees interact with end-use customers, it is important that Designees remain informed about Program developments and changes. As a result, Designees may **not** opt out of Program-related communications, including emails from the IPA or the Program Administrator.

All third-party entities that have direct interaction with end-use customers of Illinois Shines and that operate within the Program must register as a Designee. Once registered, these entities can indicate one or more of the following roles:

- Disclosure Form Designee – An entity that the Approved Vendor has designated that is permitted to generate Disclosure Forms on behalf of the Approved Vendor. A Disclosure Form Designee may create disclosure forms only after it has established an affiliation in the portal in that role with at least one Approved Vendor.
- Community Solar Subscriber Agent Designee – An entity that the Approved Vendor has designated that is permitted to manage the community solar subscription information for an Approved Vendor's community solar projects.
- Marketing or Sales Designee – An entity that the Approved Vendor or Designee has designated to act as a marketing agent and/or customer acquisition agent on behalf of the Approved Vendor or Designee. This includes, among others, entities that engage in solicitations through any channel (in-person, telephone, etc.), as well as entities that perform online lead generation services.
- Installer Designee – An entity that the Approved Vendor or Designee has designated to install systems on the Approved Vendor's or Designee's behalf. All entities that install distributed generation facilities, with the exception of self-installers, must be certified by the Illinois Commerce Commission prior to installing any distributed generation facilities in the State of Illinois, and must provide a Distributed Generation Installer certification during Designee registration and renewal.

As referenced above, any entity that has Program-related direct interaction with end-use customers of Illinois Shines must register as a Designee as well, regardless of whether that entity works directly for an Approved Vendor or a Designee. Designees of Designees are referred to as Nested Designees and can be registered with the Program Administrator, nested underneath the Designee(s) with which they work. It is important that each Designee is registered directly under the Approved Vendor or Designee on whose behalf it is working. As a hypothetical, Designee A and Designee B are both registered as Designees of Approved Vendor Solar Corporation. This means both Designee A and B may interact with end use customers on behalf of Solar Corporation. However, if Designee B wants to operate on behalf of Designee A (for example, as a subcontractor of Designee A that markets projects sold by Designee A), the Designee B also needs to be registered as a Designee of Designee A. The fact that both Designees are registered under Approved Vendor Solar Corporation is not enough to permit Designee B to market projects on behalf of Designee A. Note that an entity will need to register as a Designee under multiple different Approved Vendors and Designees if it interacts with end use customers on behalf of multiple entities.

A Nested Designee may hold only Marketing or Sales Designee or Installer Designee roles. Nested Designees may not hold Disclosure Form Designee or Community Solar Subscriber Agent Designee roles. This requirement exists to prevent a Designee from giving another Designee the ability to generate Disclosure Forms or manage community solar subscribers on behalf of the parent Designee's Approved Vendor. Only Approved Vendors can add Disclosure Form Designees and Community Solar Subscriber Agent Designees directly beneath their Approved Vendor account.

If a Designee does business under multiple names, the Designee must register separate Designee accounts for each name under which it conducts business. This is required so that if an issue ever arises with a company while they are doing business under an alternate name or d/b/a, the Program Administrator will be able to identify that entity's role within the Program.

The Program Administrator maintains a public list of Designees that appears on the Illinois Shines website. If a Designee confirms with the Program Administrator that it is no longer operating within the Program, the Program Administrator reserves the right to remove the Designee's name from the public list of Designees. Changes in business status, such as bankruptcy or suspension, will be noted on the Designees list. This will help ensure that prospective customers are able to reference an up-to-date and transparent list of Program participants. Designees cannot opt out of being included on the public list of Designees.

Designees will be required to attest to the following statements during the registration process in the portal:

- We have reviewed and commit to comply with all Illinois Shines program requirements applicable to our work as a Designee.
- We have read, understand, and will abide by the Consumer Protection Handbook, Program Guidebook, and associated materials, and commit to ensuring that our employees and any agents operating on our behalf are trained to understand and abide by these requirements.
- We acknowledge that, subject to our approval as a Designee by one or more Approved Vendors, we will be listed in a public database of Designees on the Illinois Shines website ([illinoisshines.com](http://illinoisshines.com)).
- We will maintain accurate, current, and comprehensive registration information related to our business relationships with Approved Vendors and acknowledge this information is subject to review, verification, and acceptance by the Approved Vendor.
- We acknowledge and accept that Designees that act in violation of Illinois Shines program requirements are subject to disciplinary action from the IPA which could result in suspension from the

Illinois Shines program of both the Designee and/or any Approved Vendors on whose behalf the Designee ultimately acts.

The Program Administrator reserves the right to request additional information from Designees to confirm the accuracy of their attestation and ongoing compliance with Program requirements. Failure to provide requested information, or to be able to confirm the attestation or demonstrate ongoing compliance, may result in a Designee's suspension from the Program.

## **H. Equity Eligible Contractor Designees**

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Designees may also register as an Equity Eligible Contractor. This registration does not qualify projects from those Designees to be eligible for the Equity Eligible Contractor ("EEC") category. Such Designees need to work with an Approved Vendor that is EEC certified in order for their project to be eligible for the EEC category. EEC certified Designees may also work with an Approved Vendor that is not EEC certified, but this would make projects submitted by that non-EEC certified Approved Vendor ineligible for EEC category. The application process for Designees will be subject to the same eligibility criteria as described in Section 2.B.

EEC Designees will need to re-certify as an EEC each year alongside the annual Designee registration renewal. As part of the process, EEPs that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC and that qualify as an EEP under the primary residence in an equity investment eligible community criterion will be required to re-certify their primary residency in an EIEC. For EEC Designees majority-owned by EEPs that qualify based on one of the other criteria, this re-certification will only require confirmation of continued majority-ownership by EEP(s).. Any projects that have received points in project selection due to contracting with an EEC Designee will not be penalized for a downstream change in the EEC status of that Designee due to an Equity Investment Eligible Communities ("EIEC") map update.

## **I. Equity Eligible Contractor Subcontractors**

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The Program Administrator will be establishing a certification process for businesses that qualify as an Equity Eligible Contractor and seek to participate in the Program but do not yet have a relationship with an Approved Vendor and/or do not have a customer-facing role for projects submitted to the Program. Subcontractors may register as an EEC Subcontractor and will be listed on the program website and the Agency's Energy Workforce Equity Portal for reference. Such subcontractors need to work with an Approved Vendor or registered Designee to participate in the Program. The registration process for EEC Subcontractors will be subject to the same eligibility criteria as described in Section 2.B.

Any subcontractor that intends to interact with end-use customers on behalf of an Approved Vendor must register as a Designee before acting in that capacity. Subcontractors that do not interact with end-use customers are not required to register as Designees. Subcontractors that fail to properly register as Designees, and the Approved Vendors upon whose behalf they are acting, may face disciplinary action.

EEC Subcontractors will need to re-certify as an EEC each year. As part of that process, Equity Eligible Persons that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC Subcontractor and qualify as an EEP based on residency will be required to re-certify their residency in an EIEC. For EEC Subcontractors that qualify based on one of other criteria, this re-certification will only require confirmation of continued majority-ownership by the EEP(s).





## Section 3: Consumer Protection

A. Customer Service and Consumer Complaints.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
B. Process for Consumer Protection Violations and Potential Violations.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
C. Consequences for Violations of Program Requirements .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
D. Stranded Customers.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
E. Additional Consumer Protection Initiatives.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.



On July 14, 2022, in the 2022 Long-Term Plan proceeding, the Illinois Commerce Commission Order approved, with minor modifications, various consumer protection documents. The Agency updated these documents to be consistent with the Commission's Order and has published:

- Consumer Protection Handbook<sup>20</sup>
- Contract Requirements for:
  - Illinois Shines program - Community Solar
  - Illinois Shines program - Distributed Generation

The Consumer Protection Handbook replaced the former Marketing Guidelines.<sup>21</sup> Approved Vendors and Designees were required to comply with any new requirements in the Consumer Protection Handbook and updated Contract Requirements by August 28, 2022. The Consumer Protection Handbook and Contract Requirements will be updated again for the Program Year beginning June 3, 2024. Updated versions of these documents will be published at least 45 days before that date and posted to the Program website.

The Consumer Protection Handbook<sup>22</sup> and Contract Requirements will continue to be updated, as needed, on an ongoing basis, and may post-date the latest version of the Program Guidebook. Notifications will be sent to all Approved Vendors and Designees on any changes to these documents including any dates related to implementation of changes.

A 45-calendar day lead time will be provided to Approved Vendors and Designees in order to prepare for and implement general (non-emergency) changes to the Consumer Protection Handbook and Contract Requirements. Unless otherwise specified, the lead time granted will not prohibit Approved Vendors and Designees from taking earlier steps towards compliance. In situations where the IPA determines that emergency adoption of a new or modified consumer protection is necessary, no lead time will apply; however, the Agency commits to enforce any such requirements with an eye toward the practical challenges inherent in immediate implementation.

## **A. Customer Service and Consumer Complaints**

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Approved Vendors and Designees are expected to be responsive to customers' questions and concerns, whether in relation to the Program or to another aspect of the customer's solar installation or community solar subscription, even in situations where the customer has not filed a formal complaint with the Program Administrator. Approved Vendors and Designees must act professionally towards customers, the Program Administrator, and the IPA at all times.

When a customer files a complaint with the Program Administrator, the Program Administrator will send the Approved Vendor and/or Designee an email notifying them of the complaint and summarizing the information that is needed to address the complaint. Approved Vendors and Designees must meet all deadlines set by

<sup>20</sup> See <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Cover-Letter-Publication-of-CP-Handbook-and-Contract-Requirements.pdf> and <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Consumer-Protection-Handbook-7.14.22.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> An archive of Program guidelines and forms can be found at the following: <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/>

<sup>22</sup> The Consumer Protection Handbook, in which projects in both the Adjustable Block Program and Illinois Solar for All must be in compliance, can be found at the following link: [https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Shines-Program-Guidebook\\_Aug\\_3\\_2023.pdf](https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Shines-Program-Guidebook_Aug_3_2023.pdf)

the Program Administrator during the time that the complaint is open and under investigation. Approved Vendors and Designees may request an extension of a deadline, though the Program Administrator reserves the right to deny such request.

The Program Administrator will inform the Approved Vendor and/or Designee when a complaint is resolved or closed. The status and subject of all complaints received are published on the Illinois Shines website.

The failure of an Approved Vendor or Designee to meet deadlines, respond to the Program Administrator during the investigation of a complaint or consumer protection issue, and/or act professionally towards customers, the Program Administrator, or the IPA could impact that entity's status in the Program, including potential disciplinary action and suspension.

## **B. Process for Consumer Protection Violations and Potential Violations**

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If the Program Administrator believes an Approved Vendor, Designee, or other entity is not acting, or has not acted, in compliance with consumer protection Program requirements in connection with the Program, the Program Administrator will send the entity a Notice of Potential Violation ("NOPV") that:

- Identifies the problematic behavior
- Explains how the behavior is or may be non-compliant with Program requirements
- Requests more information about the issue
- Includes information on possible penalties
  - For Designees, a copy of the NOPV will be sent to the Designee's Approved Vendor(s)
  - For nested Designees, a copy will also be sent to the Designee under which the entity receiving the NOPV is nested.

With the limited exception of emergency situations requiring immediate action (as determined at the discretion of the IPA), the Program Administrator will allow a reasonable time for the entity to respond before determining what response to take. The default time period is five business days, but the Program Administrator may shorten or lengthen this period if appropriate. The Program Administrator may contact an Approved Vendor's or Designee's customers to understand the breadth of a disciplinary issue.

If an Approved Vendors or Designee is not responsive to the Program Administrator during the investigation of a complaint or potential Program violation, or responds unsatisfactorily, the Program Administrator may limit the Approved Vendor or Designee's access to portal functions, including the ability to generate Disclosure Forms or submit Part I applications. Restricted portal access may be lifted once the entity begins responding in a satisfactory manner.

If the Program Administrator determines that the Approved Vendor or Designee has violated a consumer protection Program requirement, the Program Administrator will select the appropriate response from the Program Violation Response Matrix, which is provided in the Consumer Protection Handbook, based on the specific circumstances and facts. The Matrix is intended to be used specifically for consumer protection violations, but the Agency will follow a similar approach for violations of other types of Program violations. Determinations to approve or reject an Approved Vendor application are outside the scope of the Matrix. See Section 2 of this Guidebook for more information on the Approved Vendor application review process and determinations.

All formal warning letters for consumer protection violations will include the following:

- A brief explanation of the infractions for which the entity is being warned;
- A timeline of communications between the offending entity and the Program Administrator;
- Reference to which specific Program requirement(s) the entity violated;
- An explanation regarding how the Approved Vendor and/or Designee can appeal the formal warning to the IPA and the deadline for an appeal.

For Designees, a copy of the warning letter will be sent to the Designee's Approved Vendor(s).

For nested Designees, a copy will also be sent to the Designee under which the entity receiving the warning letter is nested.

All formal disciplinary actions (suspensions or revocation of Approved Vendor/Designee status) taken by the Program Administrator for consumer protection violations will be communicated through a written explanation of the determination that includes the following:

- A brief explanation of the infractions for which the entity is being disciplined;
- A timeline of communications between the offending entity and the Program Administrator;
- Reference to which specific Program requirement(s) the entity violated;
- An explanation of any disciplinary action, including what specific conduct is no longer permitted in connection with the Program through the length of the suspension; and
- An explanation regarding how the Approved Vendor and/or Designee can appeal the disciplinary determination to the IPA and the deadline for an appeal.

A copy of the letter will be sent to all Approved Vendors and Designees that are linked in the Portal, or otherwise registered as acting in partnership with, the entity that is suspended or whose status is revoked.

An Approved Vendor or Designee may appeal a decision or action of the Program Administrator. To appeal to the IPA, an Approved Vendor or Designee should submit a document to the IPA at [IPA.Solar@illinois.gov](mailto:IPA.Solar@illinois.gov) on company letterhead that requests review of the Program Administrator's determination, explains why it believes the determination is in error, and providing any supporting information, documents, or communications. An appealing Approved Vendor or Designee may submit a request to the Agency for a stay of an action or decision pending a resolution of its appeal. The Agency may grant or deny this request and will consider, among other factors, the likelihood of customer harm from such a stay, whether the conduct that resulted in the suspension is ongoing, and the likelihood that the appealing entity may prevail. As part of its appeal, an Approved Vendor or Designee may also suggest alternative resolutions or means to address violations (other than the action that is being appealed).

The IPA may request additional information and materials from the Approved Vendor or Designee, and/or have a discussion with the Approved Vendor or Designee to learn more about the basis for the Approved Vendor's or Designee's position. The IPA will endeavor to issue final determinations on responses to Program violations, including supporting rationale for its decision, as soon as practicable after the receipt of an appeal and review of relevant information.

If an Approved Vendor or Designee receives a formal warning letter, is suspended, or has their Approved Vendor or Designee status revoked, this fact, along with a summary of the Program violations, will be

published on the Illinois Shines website. On a quarterly basis, the Program Administrator will remove warning letter summaries that were issued more than 12 months prior from the Illinois Shines website. In addition, an Approved Vendor or Designee that is issued a warning letter but has addressed the underlying violations may request documentation from the Program Administrator confirming the resolution of the Program violations.

Information about warning letters, suspensions, and revocations are published in the interests of fairness, transparency, and awareness to help ensure that Approved Vendors/Designees do not unknowingly partner with entities that are suspended from the Program and are aware of other disciplinary issues. The report is also designed to provide information to potential customers, project hosts, installers, and other interested parties.

## **C. Consequences for Violations of Program Requirements**

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Illinois Shines is a state-administered incentive program; no entity is entitled to receive or benefit from that state support, and the eligibility to do so depends on following Program requirements. The Agency and Program Administrator may implement consequences for violations of Program requirements. In addition, Approved Vendors or Designees that violate local, state, or federal law may face civil or criminal penalties from other relevant authorities.

The Illinois Power Agency does not regulate solar in the state of Illinois, as such the Illinois Shines program requirements only apply to projects that are intended to be applied to—or are marketed as being eligible for—the Illinois Shines program. Solar companies may choose not to participate in Illinois Shines (and not avail themselves of the Illinois Shines incentive), and may instead operate outside of the Agency's published Consumer Protection Handbook, Contract Requirements, and other Program requirements.

Consequently, the Agency views its disciplinary determinations as a determination of eligibility for state-administered incentives. Suspension or revocation of Approved Vendor or Designee status is not a restriction on general market conduct; upon suspension or revocation of status, the restrictions are limited to the ability of an Approved Vendor or Designee to avail itself of additional incentive funding.

The Program Violation Response Matrix, provided in the Consumer Protection Handbook, lays out the various responses that the Program Administrator may take in response to customer complaints and potential and actual consumer protection Program violations. If there is a consumer complaint but there does not appear to be a Program violation, the Program Administrator will informally mediate the complaint. For less serious consumer protection Program violations, the Program Administrator may direct the Approved Vendor or Designee to take corrective action or to follow a compliance plan. For recurring and more serious violations, the Program Administrator may send a formal Warning Letter. For the most serious violations, the Program Administrator may suspend an Approved Vendor or Designee, and the duration of a suspension may be extended for additional violations. The Program Administrator may also permanently revoke an entity's ability to participate in the Program. In addition, an entity's failure to respond to the Program Administrator may lead to that entity's access to portal functions being restricted and could lead to suspension if nonresponsiveness continues. The Matrix includes information on when each type of response is used, the process provided, communications around the action, publication, appeals, and a non-exhaustive list of factors that the Program Administrator may consider when determining what response is appropriate.

The Agency will generally seek to accommodate any pending applications after a suspension is imposed upon an Approved Vendor or Designee to minimize the impact on the suspended entity's customer(s). However, if the Approved Vendor is suspended for reasons related to bankruptcy, failure to pay customers their portion of the REC incentive payment, or similar concerns, the Agency may prevent an application from moving through the application process if doing otherwise may risk compounding the reason for which the Approved Vendor was suspended.

## **D. Stranded Customers**

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Stranded customers are Illinois Shines distributed generation customers whose Approved Vendor and/or Designee is unable or unwilling to (a) complete the solar project installation and/or (b) act as the Approved Vendor for the project application. This may be because the Approved Vendor and/or Designee:

- has gone out of business or ceased/limited operations,
- is unable to meet Program requirements, or
- is suspended due to disciplinary action and is prohibited from advancing projects through the application process.

As the Program ages, the Agency has seen an increasing number of companies cease operations or become unable to comply with Program requirements, which can leave customers stranded. The IPA is dedicated to ensuring that these stranded customers are able to continue to participate in the Program, so has begun work to provide alternative paths forward to these customers. Further resources and information can be found on the Help for Stranded Customers webpage.<sup>23</sup>

## **E. Additional Consumer Protection Initiatives**

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### **Escrow Process**

Section 9.4.2.1.2 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan describes the Agency's development of an escrow process to be utilized in situations where an Approved Vendor has promised customers that it will pass through part or all of the REC incentive payment, but there is a high likelihood that the Approved Vendor will not comply with its obligation. While the Agency can take disciplinary action against Approved Vendors who fail to comply with contractual requirements and marketing statements, the Agency is not a party to the REC Contract and generally does not have authority to interfere with the flow of money for projects that are under contract between the utility and the Approved Vendor. This means that an Approved Vendor may be suspended from the Program for not passing through promised REC incentives, but may still receive REC incentive payments from the utility for projects under REC Contracts in the Program that predate the Approved Vendor's suspension. As such, the Agency, with approval by the ICC, has determined an escrow process may be used in limited instances to ensure promised incentives are paid to the customer.

<sup>23</sup> See <https://illinoisshines.com/stranded-customer-resources/>.

The escrow process would address a different situation and benefit a different set of customers than the REC adder for stranded projects, as discussed below and in Section 1.I of this Guidebook. The escrow process would complement the restitution program described below by ideally reducing the number of customers who ultimately seek a restitution payment. The Agency will develop the escrow process throughout the 2024-25 Program Year and will post updates to the process finalization on the Program website.

## Restitution Program

As discussed in Section 9.9 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Agency will develop a solar restitution program to provide economic assistance to customers who have been harmed by an Approved Vendor or Designee's violation of Illinois Shines requirements. If an Approved Vendor or Designee's conduct leads to a successful restitution claim by a customer, this may impact the Approved Vendor or Designee's ability to participate in the Program (for example, the suspended entity may be required to reimburse the Program for the amount of the restitution payment made to the customer prior to resuming participation in Illinois Shines). The Agency plans to develop the Restitution Program in the 2024-25 Program Year and will post updates to the process finalization on the Program website.

## Stranded Customer REC Adder

As discussed in Section 9.4 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Agency will implement an economic incentive for Approved Vendors that assist stranded customers in the form of a "REC adder"—that is, an increased price in the REC Contract for RECs generated by projects that were stranded and then "unstranded."

The Agency intends to use additional stakeholder processes to fully develop the initiative. The Agency will further develop the REC adder throughout the 2024-25 Program Year and will post updates to the adder finalization and process to receive the adder on the Program website.

## Rebatching and Reassignment

Pursuant to the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Program will allow for rebatching of projects *after* the execution of the REC Contract in *limited* circumstances. As explained in Section 9.4.2.1.3 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the IPA has observed situations where the ability to rebatch and assign individual projects (or projects that make up a subset of a batch) to a new Approved Vendor after REC Contract execution could help address consumer protection concerns or resolve a customer complaint.

The rebatching of projects after REC Contract execution may be permitted when:

- the Agency, in its discretion, determines that the rebatching of projects would provide material benefits to one or more consumers who have been (or absent the rebatching, will be) harmed through their participation in Illinois Shines or ILSFA;
- the Approved Vendor agrees to the rebatching; and
- the contracting utility agrees to the rebatching.

As of the publishing of this Guidebook, the finalization of the procedures related to rebatching and reassignment is in process and will be further refined during the 2024-25 Program Year.





## Section 4: System Eligibility

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## A. System Location

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All systems must be entirely physically located in Illinois and interconnected to the distribution level electrical grid of an Illinois investor-owned electric utility, rural electric cooperative, or municipal electric system. Systems located in adjacent states are not permitted in the Program. Off-grid systems are not eligible for the Program. All Distributed Generation systems must be located on the customer side of the electric meter and used primarily to offset that customer's electricity load.

Systems must be built at the location specified in the Part I application. Systems must remain at the approved location for the duration of the 15-year or 20-year contract, as applicable, and may not be relocated.

Generally, projects should have a single point of interconnection.

## B. Interconnection Date

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All systems must have a final interconnection approval (or equivalent from rural electric cooperative or municipal electric utility) dated on or after June 1, 2017. An interconnection agreement is defined as an agreement with the utility to interconnect the photovoltaic community solar or distributed generation system to the utility's distribution system. Interconnection agreements must be executed by both the interconnection applicant/requester as well as the interconnecting utility *and* be valid, meaning not expired.

All Distributed Generation systems over 25 kW AC in size must submit an executed interconnection agreement in the Part I application. Community solar systems are not required to submit an interconnection agreement in the Part I application, but are required to provide a Certificate of Completion in the Part II application.

## C. New Equipment

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All systems must use equipment that meets either of the following criteria:

- The equipment is new, that is, none of the equipment has been used prior to the installation of the solar electric generating facility; or
- The age and warranty of the equipment is disclosed to a customer or host whose solar system will use equipment that was previously used in a solar facility.

## D. Installer Requirements

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System installations must meet the following requirements in order to participate in the Program.

1. A system must be installed by an entity certified as a Distributed Generation Installer in good standing with the Illinois Commerce Commission.  
(<https://www.icc.illinois.gov/authority/distributed-generation-installer>).
  - i. Note: Self-installing a system on one's own property is allowed in the Illinois Shines program with the following requirements. Self-installers are exempt from being an ICC Certified DG Installer, but not the requirement to be a qualified person. The self-installer needs to submit one of the following proving that they are a Qualified Person: 1) a notarized attestation that

they have completed at least five solar project installations prior to the application(s) submitted to the Program; or 2) a certificate of completion for one of the training programs noted in the definition of “Qualified Person” below. A self-installed project still needs to meet requirements found in Section 5 on minimum batch size and Approved Vendor submittal for Program participation, exceptions will be granted at the sole discretion of the Program Administrator.

2. A system must be installed by a qualified person(s). The following definitions of “qualified person” and the term “install”, as taken from Title 83, Part 468 of the Illinois Administrative Code, will be used to evaluate compliance with this requirement:

**"Qualified person"** means a person who performs installations on behalf of the certificate holder and who has either satisfactorily completed at least five installations of a specific distributed generation technology or has completed at least one of the following programs requiring lab or field work and received a certification of satisfactory completion: an apprenticeship as a journeyman electrician from a DOL registered electrical apprenticeship and training program; a North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) distributed generation technology certification program; an Underwriters Laboratories (UL) distributed generation technology certification program; an Electronics Technicians Association (ETA) distributed generation technology certification program; or an Associate in Applied Science degree from an Illinois Community College Board approved community college program in the appropriate distributed generation technology. To be considered a "qualified person", the experience and/or training relied upon must be with the same type of distributed generation technology for which the qualification status is sought.

**"Install"** means to complete the electrical wiring and connections necessary to interconnect the new solar project with the electric utility's distribution system at the point of interconnection between the project and the utility. "Install" in this Part specifically does not mean:

- Electrical wiring and connections to interconnect the new solar project performed by utility workers on the utility's distribution system;
- Electrical wiring and connections internal to the new solar project performed by the manufacturer;
- Tasks not associated with electrical interconnection of the new solar project and the utility, including those relating to planning and project management performed by individuals such as an inspector, management planner, consultant, project designer, contractor, or supervisor for the project or their employees.

## E. Expansions

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An expansion to a system that is already under a REC contract in the Program must be independently metered (production meter), with a separate GATS or M-RETS ID, must be enrolled in net metering with the utility, , and will be issued a new contract and/or product order independent from that of the original system. The Program Administrator will process expansion requests only for systems that have been Part II verified. The expansion must comply with all Program requirements in effect at the time the expansion application is submitted. Expansions are subject to the following additional requirements:

1. The expansion will only be compensated up to the maximum 5 MW size limit when added to the original system at that location. For example, if a location already has a 4.9 MW system at that

location and a 200 kW system is added, a new contract will only be granted for the estimated production of a 100 kW system.

2. If an expansion would move the total system size from the Small DG category into the Large DG category, and that category is operating on a waitlist, the expansion would be added to the waitlist in the same manner as a new system in that category while the existing system continues to receive REC payments under the previously contracted terms. Expansion applications submitted prior to the corresponding Group/category reaching full capacity will not be added to the waitlist and instead will be eligible for Part I review.
3. The expansion price will be adjusted to account for the current block price at the size of the combined system minus the price paid to the original system. For example (based on REC prices and the Small DG threshold prior to September 15, 2021), a 10 kW system in Block 1 Group A initially received \$85.10/REC with an estimate that it would produce 100 RECs over the contract period, for a total of \$8,510. A 10 kW addition is planned once the small DG and large DG categories in Group A have moved to Block 2. Because the new system with this addition would total 20 kW, the total system size is now in the >10-25 kW size category; for Block 2, Group A, that price is \$75.55/REC. Assuming the expansion would also produce 100 RECs over the 15 year contract life, a calculation must be performed as if the system were a 20 kW system at the current block price. This value would be  $200 \text{ RECS} * \$75.55/\text{REC} = \$15,110$ . The previous payment of \$8,510 must be subtracted from this value, leaving a total contractual payment of \$6,600 for the new expansion. There will be no pro-rating of the time the original system was in operation when making this calculation. The contract term for the original system will remain the same, and the contract term for the expansion will begin the date the expansion commenced operation.
4. If an expansion is made to an existing system that is not part of the Program and only the expansion is applying to the Program, then the system size used to determine REC price will be solely the expansion size.
5. For Program dashboard and Block capacity calculations, the capacity of an expansion system is taken from the Group/category corresponding to the individual applications, not from the Group/category corresponding to the aggregate system.
6. The systems invoice independently, so the two systems may be on different payment schedules. The original system will remain on the same payment schedule, and the expansion's payment schedule depends on when it is Energized/Part II verified.
7. If the system is expanded within two years, expansion pricing will be applied to the second system. In determining whether expansion pricing applies, the Program Admin will look both at the date of application and the date of the interconnection (CoC or PTO, not the interconnection agreement). If the application date for a to-be-built system or the interconnection date for an already built system is within 2 years of the Part II approval of the original system, the second system will receive the expansion REC price.

## **F. Co-location of Distributed Generation Projects**

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Co-location of distributed generation projects occurs when multiple projects developed by one entity or affiliated entities are located on a single parcel. Additionally, the parcel or parcels may not have been divided into multiple parcels in the two years prior to the project's application to the Program.

The REC price for systems determined by the Agency to be co-located will be based on the size category for the total size of the co-located projects by that single entity or its affiliates. If no consideration is made for co-located projects, these projects could be structured to inappropriately maximize income from incentives, such as by dividing up a larger project into multiple, smaller projects that individually qualify for higher REC incentives.

## **Customers and Affiliation**

Distributed generation projects will be considered co-located if they are located on a single parcel unless retail electric account ownership is confirmed to be unaffiliated and serves distinct electrical loads. To prevent gaming (such as establishing separate utility accounts by parcel for what would otherwise be a single retail customer on a facility spanning multiple parcels), the Agency reserves the right to determine whether systems may be considered co-located across adjacent parcels in the case of systems serving affiliated customers. See: <https://illinoisshines.com/system-design-best-practices-and-considerations/>

## **Size**

The size of projects that are considered to be co-located will be the sum of the two projects' total nameplate capacity. For example, if there are two 10kW AC projects on a single parcel, the total, co-located system size will be 20kW AC. Co-located distributed generation projects participating in the Program cannot have a total nameplate capacity larger than 5 MW AC in size.

## **REC Pricing**

The projects will receive the REC price associated with the total nameplate capacity of both co-located systems. The REC price that the co-located system will receive is the REC price available for the summed system size at the time of the second project's application. For example, two 2,000 kW AC co-located systems would receive a 4, 000 kW AC system price. If a project that is co-located with another project is submitted more than two years after ICC approval of the original system, then this co-located pricing adjustment will not apply. However, if the second co-located project has already been built and interconnected at the time of project application, and the date of interconnection is more than two years after the ICC approval of the original system, it will not be subject to co-location pricing.

## **Affiliations**

"Affiliated" means, with respect to any entity, any other entity that, directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with each other or a third entity. "Control" means the possession, directly or indirectly, of the power to direct the management and policies of an entity, whether through the ownership of voting securities, by contract, or otherwise. Affiliates may not have shared sales or revenue-sharing arrangements, or common debt and equity financing arrangements. The Agency is aware that, in rural areas of Illinois, it is not uncommon for a single parcel to have multiple buildings (and thus distinct load requirements met through distributed generation) that serve separate residential and agricultural uses. The Agency will evaluate requests to consider those uses as non-co-located on a case-by-case basis for the application of this standard. Additionally, family members may be considered affiliated entities for co-location purposes.

## Co-location with Projects Not Participating in Illinois Shines

For program compliance purposes, co-located distributed generation projects may sum to over 5MW in size if the co-located projects that are participating in the Program remain at or under the 5MW AC size requirement.

Approved Vendors should endeavor to note in their Part I application if the system is co-located with another existing project in the Program. If possible, Approved Vendors should provide the Application ID number or the project name for the co-located project.

## G. Co-location of Community Solar Projects

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Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(iii)(3) of the IPA Act prohibits the co-location of community solar projects with an aggregate nameplate capacity above 5,000 kilowatts, and instructs the Agency to define co-location consistent with the requirements of the Agency's Revised Long-Term Plan as approved by the Commission on February 18, 2020. Under those provisions, co-location of community solar projects occurs when projects are developed by the same or affiliated entities sited on the same or contiguous parcels. As with distributed generation projects, a parcel or parcels that have been divided into multiple parcels in the two years prior to the project's application to the Program will be considered the same parcel when determining the co-location of projects. Community solar projects that are owned or developed by separate entities, meaning that they are not affiliates, may be located on adjacent parcels and will not be considered co-located. If there is a naturally good location from an interconnection standpoint, one owner should not be allowed to prevent another owner from developing a project in that location. All affiliated community solar projects must have a separate interconnection point in order to not be considered co-located.

### Parcels

Community solar projects will be considered co-located if they are located on a single parcel. Community solar projects sited on adjacent (i.e., contiguous) parcels will also be considered co-located unless systems are confirmed to be developed by unaffiliated entities. A parcel of land may not have been divided into multiple parcels in the two years prior to the project application in order to circumvent this policy. If a parcel has been divided within that time period, the requirement will apply to the boundaries of the larger parcel prior to its division.

### Size

The size of projects that are considered to be co-located will be the sum of the two projects' total nameplate capacity. For example, if there are two 1 MW AC projects on a single parcel, the total, co-located system size will be 2 MW AC. Alternatively, if there are two 1 MW AC projects on adjacent parcels, the total, co-located system size will be 2 MW AC unless affiliation can be disproved. Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(iii)(3) explains that community solar projects participating in the TCS Category "projects shall not be colocated with one or more other community renewable generation projects, as defined in the Agency's first revised Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan approved by the Commission on February 18, 2020, such that the aggregate nameplate capacity exceeds 5,000 kilowatts." Accordingly, co-located community solar projects participating in the Program cannot have a total nameplate capacity larger than 5 MW AC in size.

## **REC Pricing**

The projects will receive the REC price associated with the total nameplate capacity of both co-located systems. The REC price that the co-located system will receive is the REC price available for the summed system size at the time of the second project's application. If a project that is co-located with another project is submitted more than two years after ICC approval of the original system, then this co-located pricing adjustment will not apply. However, if the second co-located project has already been built and interconnected at the time of project application, the date of interconnection must be more than two years after the ICC approval of the original system. If not, it will be subject to co-location pricing.

## **Affiliations**

"Affiliated" means, with respect to any entity, any other entity that, directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with each other or a third entity. "Control" means the possession, directly or indirectly, of the power to direct the management and policies of an entity, whether through the ownership of voting securities, by contract, or otherwise. Affiliates may not have shared sales or revenue-sharing arrangements, or common debt and equity financing arrangements. Exceptions will be made if it can be demonstrated that two projects on one parcel or two projects on adjacent parcels have separate, nonaffiliated owners. Family members may be considered affiliated entities for the purposes of considering colocation between projects.

## **Specific Rooftop Co-location Considerations**

Community solar projects sited on separate rooftops or structures on adjacent parcels will not be considered co-located unless located on the same building or structure. Multiple community solar projects sited on distinct structures located on a single parcel will be considered co-located and must demonstrate that the projects are unaffiliated in order to not be considered co-located.

## **H. Site Control**

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For each project application, the Approved Vendor must provide a written binding contract, option, or other demonstration of site control acceptable to the Program Administrator for all projects where the Approved Vendor is not also the project owner and the host. In cases where the system owner and host are the same entity, site control can be demonstrated by a statement from the system owner and host that this is the case.

## **I. Site Map**

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The site map must be provided with each application for all systems, showing property boundaries (if ground-mount), any structures on the property or rooftop, and the location of the solar array(s). To avoid a request for additional information, the Program Administrator encourages including clearly labeled surrounding streets names on site maps.

## J. REC Quantity Calculation

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1. The application portal will automatically calculate the PVWatts estimated production for an application as well as the associated contractual REC delivery amount rounded down to the whole REC. The PVWatts capacity factor will be calculated automatically by the portal using PVWatts Version 8 and the following inputs<sup>24</sup>:
  - a. System address as entered by the Approved Vendor
  - b. Module type: Standard
  - c. System losses: 14%
  - d. Array type will be based on Approved Vendor input for system type using the following: Fixed open rack for non-tracking ground mount systems, Fixed roof mount for non-tracking roof mounted systems, 1-Axis for single axis tracking systems, and 2-Axis for dual axis tracking systems
  - e. Tilt angle: Tilt angle entered by Approved Vendor
  - f. Azimuth angle: Azimuth angle entered by Approved Vendor
  - g. DC/AC ratio: Actual ratio based on Approved Vendor inputs for DC and AC capacity
  - h. Inverter Efficiency: As entered by Approved Vendor. If blank a default of 96% will be used.
  - i. Degradation: 0.5% per year. Alternative degradation rates will not be accepted.
2. Applicants can also use an alternative capacity factor, which may be larger than the PVWatts capacity factor, if such a selection was obtained using a custom software tool designed to calculate such capacity factors or calculated by a professional engineer.<sup>25</sup> Approved Vendors can always choose a capacity factor lower than the PVWatts or alternative capacity factor if they determine it is appropriate.
3. Any proposed alternate capacity factor that is calculated using a proprietary third-party software tool may be subject to audit by the Program Administrator. This may include a requirement that the Approved Vendor provide a copy of the third-party software tool with appropriate licenses to the Program Administrator as well as providing all inputs to the tool in a manner which will allow the Program Administrator to replicate the generation claimed. This will only be required on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Program Administrator who will conduct both random and targeted audits of alternate capacity factors.
4. Any capacity factor that results in a REC quantity calculation that differs by more than +/-20% from the PVWatts REC quantity calculation requires the Approved Vendor to confirm that the entered capacity factor is intentional.
5. Any arrays with an azimuth greater than 270 or less than 090, or with a tilt greater than 80 degrees may be subject to further review by the Program Administrator.
6. The Administrator will evaluate systems using non-standard technologies such as bifacial panels or seasonally adjusted tilt on a case-by-case basis.
7. Any capacity factor that is approved for Part I of an application will be the maximum capacity factor that the system may use even if changes to the final as-built system would result in a higher capacity factor. However, any changes to the system between the Part I and Part II approval that would lower the capacity factor will result in a capacity factor reevaluation and the new, lower Part II capacity

<sup>24</sup> PVWatts version utilized may be updated in the portal mid-Program Year, but any changes will be communicated via announcements and the Program website.

<sup>25</sup> Alternative capacity factors should include an assumption of 0.5% annual degradation and be based on the inverter's AC rating.



factor must be used. The Part II capacity factor cannot be greater than the Part I capacity factor. The quantity of RECs used for purposes of calculating payments under the REC Contract and the annual REC delivery obligations under the REC Contract shall be the lesser of the REC quantities calculated based on (1) the Part I system size in AC and the Part I capacity factor and (2) the Part II system size in AC and the Part II capacity factor.

8. At the Part II application, the Approved Vendor will be asked to update system parameters, if needed. As an additional check, photographic evidence and possibly on-site inspections will be used to verify the final system parameters. If PVWatts was used at the Part I application to calculate a capacity factor, then PVWatts will be used again based on the updated Part II system parameters to calculate a Part II capacity factor. If PVWatts calculates a higher capacity factor for Part II relative to Part I, the lower capacity factor from Part I will be used. If a custom capacity factor was used at the Part I application stage, the same custom capacity factor (or lower custom capacity factor, if reduced per above) will be used and applied to the Part II system size. Switching among production estimate calculation methodologies between Part I and Part II is permitted only if accompanied by a decrease in the capacity factor, otherwise such switching is not permitted.
9. Modifications to Part I project parameters may be permitted prior to the Program Administrator's approval of the Part I application, but only if these modifications do not increase the 15-year or 20-year REC quantity.

## K. System Size

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1. All system sizes described in this Guidebook are in AC system size based on the inverter size, i.e., a system with a single 10 kW inverter is considered a 10 kW system even if it has 12 kW of STC DC capacity.
  - a. Inverter capacity shall be measured as the nameplate maximum continuous output.
  - b. An inverter shall be connected to a solar panel in order to be considered as part of the AC system size. In the case of microinverters that contain more than one inverter per unit, only the inverters connected to a panel shall be included in the AC system size.
2. Systems will be limited to a DC capacity of 155% of the AC capacity (for example, a 10 kW AC system can contain only 15.5 kW in STC DC capacity). An Approved Vendor may request an exemption for this requirement, but exemptions will only be granted for good cause and at the discretion of the Agency and its Program Administrator.

## L. Systems with Battery Backup

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All systems that include a battery shall be identified to the Program Administrator.

All systems which include a battery shall be electrically connected in a manner which ensures that any non-solar generated electricity used to charge the battery is not later metered as solar generated power. This can be done in one of three ways:

1. The meter used to report production is electrically located before the battery charger and does not measure any power that is drawn from the battery bank.
2. A net meter is connected to the system that runs in reverse when any non-solar power, including on-site generator power, is used to charge the battery bank.

3. The inverters' software setting is configured to prevent the battery from charging via line power. This software setting may not be changed for the duration of the project's participation in the Illinois Shines program.

If a system contains a battery backup, a battery schematic diagram must be submitted with the application via the Part II application. The diagram should contain the following:

1. Battery Backup ("BB") DC Voltage
2. BB Configuration (AC Coupled or DC Coupled)
3. BB Conductor Size
4. PV Conductor Size
5. BB Fuse/Breaker Size
6. Inverter Contains DC/AC Disconnects
7. Inverter Output Conductor Size
8. Inverter Fuse/Breaker Size
9. BB Contains Transfer Switch or Microgrid Interconnect Device
10. BB, PV, and Standby Loads are Isolated During Grid Outage
11. AC Combiner/Load Center(s) Sized Properly
12. PV Interconnection Type (Supply, Load, or Feeder)
13. Battery Charge Method (PV (DC) or Grid)
14. Battery Discharge Method (PV (DC) or Grid)
15. Battery Output Meter
16. PV Output Meter

All meters used in the battery backup should also satisfy the metering requirements in Section 4.N of the Guidebook. Systems that do not include a battery/storage component will be limited to a DC capacity of 155% of the AC capacity. Beginning June 1, 2024, all systems that include a battery/storage component will be limited to a DC capacity of 200% of the AC capacity.

## **M. Systems that Directly Serve DC Loads**

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The Agency does not wish to inadvertently prohibit participation in the Program by photovoltaic systems that do not convert the DC electricity produced to AC electricity. However, for the reasons addressed below, the Agency is still in the process of developing standards for allowing Illinois Shines program participation from DC-only systems.

Certain difficult questions arise in considering how to structure such systems' participation, particularly, how to estimate the system's 15-year or 20-year REC production for purposes of establishing a contractual delivery obligation. The Plan allows systems to use an alternative capacity factor based upon an analysis using PV Watts or an equivalent tool. This may be challenging, however, given that the alternative capacity factor ordinarily must be multiplied by a system's nameplate capacity (measured based on the inverter size in kilowatts AC), and in a DC-only system, the capacity of solar panels may significantly exceed the inverter size. An alternative approach may be to assume an inverter size equal in size to the DC photovoltaic array: e.g., if such a system has 10 kW DC of panels, the Agency could assume an inverter size of 10 kW AC and then multiply by a standard capacity factor.

After approval of the Initial Long Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan in August 2018, the Agency communicated regularly and deliberately with industry stakeholders who were seeking to coordinate and obtain ANSI approval of a new DC metering standard. However, the Agency has not received any subsequent input from such stakeholders and understands that this standard was finalized in March 2021.<sup>26</sup> The Agency has not reviewed the applicability or relevance of this standard to its programs, nor has it received any expressions of interest in systems metered in this manner. Should the Agency become aware of interest in DC-based metering projects, it will initiate a stakeholder feedback process to establish appropriate DC metering standards.

## N. Metering

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The following metering requirements are identical for systems registered with either GATS or M-RETS:

1. Systems 25 kW and above in size must utilize a new production meter that meets ANSI C.12 standards. Inverters with integrated ANSI C.12 compliant production meters are allowed with a specification sheet showing this standard has been met. The inverter must be UL-certified and must include either a digital or web-based output display.
2. Systems over 10 kW and less than 25 kW in size must utilize a production meter that meets ANSI C.12 standards. Production meters that are refurbished (and certified by the meter supplier) are allowed. Inverters with integrated ANSI C.12 compliant production meters are allowed with a specification sheet showing this standard has been met. The inverter must be UL-certified and must include either a digital or web-based output display.
3. Systems of 10 kW in size and below must utilize either a production meter that is accurate to +/- 5% (including refurbished and certified meters), or an inverter that is specified by the manufacturer to be accurate to +/-5%. The inverter must be UL-certified and must include either a digital or web-based output display.
4. No system is required to have automated or remote meter reporting capability, although such production meters are allowed if they meet the requirements in bullet points 1-3 above.
5. As referenced above, the Agency has not yet adopted a DC metering standard and welcomes continued feedback on the proper approach.

<sup>26</sup> See: <https://energycentral.com/c/gr/ansi-dc-metering-standard-earned-emerge-alliance>.

Registry	System Size	Accuracy	New vs. Refurbished	Meter vs. Inverter
GATS and M-RETS	$\geq 25\text{kW}$	ANSI C.12 revenue grade	New only	Meter or inverter with integrated ANSI C.12 production meter (must be UL-certified with digital or web-based output display)
	$>10\text{kW}$ and $<25\text{kW}$	ANSI C.12 revenue grade	Refurbished ok	Meter or inverter with integrated ANSI C.12 production meter (must be UL-certified with digital or web-based output display)
	$\leq 10\text{kW}$	$\pm 5\%$	Refurbished ok	Inverter ok (must be UL-certified with digital or web-based output display)

## O. Partial Systems

All systems submitted to the Illinois Shines program must include the entire output of the system (recognizing, of course, the REC delivery obligations for community solar projects correspond to only the subscribed shares of those projects). Any capacity of a system which is not part of the Program must be separately metered with a separate inverter.

## P. Rate Recovery

All systems submitted to Illinois Shines are prohibited from recovering the costs of said project through state-regulated rates. Section 1-75(c)(1)(J) of the Illinois Power Agency Act (20 ILCS 3855) contains the following prohibition against recovering the costs of a photovoltaic generating unit whose RECs are used for compliance with Illinois's renewable portfolio standard (20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c)) through state-regulated rates:

- In order to promote the competitive development of renewable energy resources in furtherance of the State's interest in the health, safety, and welfare of its residents, renewable energy credits shall not be eligible to be counted toward the renewable energy requirements of this subsection (c) if they are sourced from a generating unit whose costs were being recovered through rates regulated by this State or any other state or states on or after January 1, 2017. Each contract executed to purchase renewable energy credits under this subsection (c) shall provide for the contract's termination if the costs of the generating unit supplying the renewable energy credits subsequently begin to be recovered through rates regulated by this State or any other state or states; and each contract shall further provide that, in that event, the supplier of the credits must return 110% of all payments received under the contract.

As RECs sold through the Program are used to meet the state's renewable portfolio standard, this prohibition also applies to projects participating in the Program. Consistent with the passage above, Section 4(a) of the Program's REC Delivery Contract Cover Sheet requires that a Seller make the following representation:

- As required by Section 1-75(c)(1)(J) of the IPA Act, each such Designated System is not and will not be a generating unit whose costs are being recovered through rates regulated by Illinois or any other state or states.

Section 4 of the REC Delivery Contract provides that, for a violation of Section 4(a), the project would be removed from the REC Contract, and that “Buyer shall be entitled to payment by Seller in the amount of the greater of: (i) the Collateral Requirement with respect to such Designated System or (ii) one hundred ten percent (110%) of the total payments Seller has received from Buyer associated with RECs from such Designated System.”

If the Program Administrator has reason to believe that the costs of a project participating in the Program may be recovered (currently or in the future) through state-regulated rates, the Program Administrator may request more information from that project’s Approved Vendor and could request that the Approved Vendor sign an attestation that the project’s costs have not been and will not be recovered through state-regulated rates.

## **Q. Prevailing Wage Requirements**

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As outlined in Section 1-75(c)(1)(Q) of the IPA Act, project proposals must comply with Illinois Prevailing Wage Act (“PWA”) requirements unless an exception found in Section 1-75(c)(1)(G)(iv) of the IPA Act applies. Prevailing wage is a minimum compensation level set by the Illinois Department of Labor (“IDOL”) for each county and for all classes of work in construction activities related to public works. Section 1-75(c)(1)(Q) of the IPA Act (20 ILCS 3855) as modified by P.A. 102-0662 now requires that individuals engaged in the construction of applicable projects submitted to the Program are paid not less than the prevailing wage. Additionally, Public Act 102-0673 clarifies that projects receiving incentives under the Program are “public works” subject to the Prevailing Wage Act—which includes notice requirements and related provisions as well.

For Program administration, Illinois law provides an exception only for the following types of projects from prevailing wage requirements:

- Large Distributed Generation projects (greater than 25 kW AC) that were on a waitlist as of the Program’s reopening on December 14, 2021;
- Distributed generation projects (Large or Small) that either:
  - serve a single-family or multi-family residential building, or
  - serve a house of worship and are not greater than 100 kW AC (aggregated with any co-located projects);
- Distributed generation projects (Large or Small) for which construction can be demonstrated to have been completed before September 15, 2021, the effective date of Public Act 102-0662.

For projects that do not fall into one of the above exempted categories, construction activities (including maintenance) that occur after September 15, 2021 will be subject to prevailing wage requirements.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The Prevailing Wage Act defines ‘construction’ to include maintenance, repair, assembly, or disassembly work performed on equipment.

A project application sized between 10-25 kW for which an application was originally received in the Large Distributed Generation category (i.e., on or before November 1, 2021 when the Illinois Shines application portal closed to applications in preparation for Program reopening) will be considered a waitlisted Large Distributed Generation project for prevailing wage purposes, although that project will otherwise be reclassified as a Small Distributed Generation project for processing the project application and that reclassification will be reflected in the REC price and payment terms.

After the enactment of Public Act 102-0673, projects that do not qualify for one of the above exemptions must comply with all provisions of the Prevailing Wage Act (“PWA”). The IDOL oversees the implementation and enforcement of the Prevailing Wage Act and has multiple resources, such as FAQs, available on its website. The Prevailing Wage Act requires that employees engaged in construction activities related to the project be paid the prevailing wage of that location, as determined by the IDOL annually and updated regularly on its website. The Approved Vendor, its contractors and subcontractors must provide written notice to all contractors and subcontractors that the PWA applies to the project, including notice and record keeping requirements; IDOL may impose penalties and fines on upstream contractors for violations if they did not provide proper notice to subcontractors. Employees engaged in construction activities must be given written notice of the applicable prevailing wage rates through posting those rates on the work site, at a central office, or through direct written communication. Each contractor and subcontractor under contract for construction activities for the project must submit a Certified Transcript of Payroll (“CTP”) from the [IDOL Certified Transcript of Payroll Portal](#) on a monthly basis throughout construction activities. Templates for the CTP and additional details on what to include may be found on the IDOL website.<sup>28</sup> Approved Vendors must also submit all CTPs from the relevant project to the Program Administrator via the Part II application.

As described further below in Section 5, Part I of the project application for all projects will require that an Approved Vendor certify its understanding prevailing wage requirements, and the Part I verification will include the Program Administrator’s determination regarding applicability of prevailing wage requirements. In Part II of the project application, the Approved Vendor will be required to certify to and document compliance with prevailing wage requirements, if applicable. If noncompliance with the PWA is discovered by the Program Administrator, the Approved Vendor will need to provide backpay to impacted workers and provide documentation of such backpay to the Program (or demonstrate that backpay was provided through the IDOL process) in order to proceed with Part II application verification.

All projects subject to prevailing wage requirements may be subject to auditing by the Program Administrator to verify compliance. This auditing includes a requirement to admit the Program Administrator or their representatives to work sites for ongoing projects, access to speak to employees who are working or have worked on projects, access to requested documentation demonstrating payment of wages including but not limited to Certified Transcripts of Payroll, and any other information the Program Administrator deems necessary to confirm compliance with this requirement.

Failure to comply with prevailing wage requirements is considered a violation of Program requirements in accordance with Section 3.C of this Guidebook. While the IPA may refer potential violations of the PWA to the IDOL for further investigation and enforcement, the IPA may also take disciplinary action against any Approved

<sup>28</sup> <https://labor.illinois.gov/laws-rules/conmed/prevailing-wage-act.html>

Vendor or Designee found to have violated the PWA on a facility for which there was a REC contract under the Illinois Shines program.

### **Completing Certified Transcripts of Payroll**

Approved Vendors and their Designees should use Illinois Certified Transcripts of Payroll (“CTPs”), rather than CTPs provided by the US Department of Labor. Approved Vendors and their Designees working to complete CTPs will find that there is not currently a labor categorization for solar installers for prevailing wage rates, therefore, it is recommended that Approved Vendors and Designees, their contractors, and subcontractors consult with the IDOL regarding classifications to find the appropriate rates of pay for work performed. Prevailing wage rates change periodically, so Approved Vendors and Designees, their contractors, and subcontractors consult the IDOL website and associated prevailing wage resources regularly to understand current rates.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Find prevailing wage rates here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/CONMED/Pages/Rates.aspx>





## Section 5: Project Applications

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## Application Availability

Applications for the new blocks of capacity made available each Program year across all Program Groups/categories will open on June 1<sup>st</sup><sup>30</sup>. Aside from the Community-Driven Community Solar category, applications may be submitted throughout the Program Year, even when capacity for a Group/category has been filled. Community-Driven Community Solar applications have a distinct 90-day application window that will commence on June 1<sup>st</sup> each Program year.

	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	Public Schools	EEC
<b>Application Opens</b>	Start of each Program Year (June 1 <sup>st</sup> or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 <sup>st</sup> or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 <sup>st</sup> or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 <sup>st</sup> or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 <sup>st</sup> or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 <sup>st</sup> or next business day)
<b>Application Closing Details</b>	Application does not close. Once block capacity is filled, projects will be added to a waitlist. New capacity will open June 1 <sup>st</sup> or the next business day each year.	Application does not close. Once block capacity is filled, projects will be added to a waitlist. New capacity will open June 1 <sup>st</sup> or the next business day each year.	Application does not close. Once block capacity is filled, projects will be added to a waitlist. New capacity will open June 1 <sup>st</sup> or the next business day each year.  <b>Capacity for this category fills quickly, usually on the first day that new capacity is available.</b>	Application window closes 90 days after start of Program Year.  Applications not accepted after close of application window.	First 180 days, project applications are prioritized.  After 180 days , if any of the set priority allocations are not filled, projects located at a public school will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis regardless of Tier, Environmental Justice Community location, or project size.	Application does not close. Once block capacity is filled, projects will be added to a waitlist. New capacity will open June 1 <sup>st</sup> or the next business day each year.  After the category has been open for eleven months, the reserve of capacity for the subcategories will end, and all remaining capacity in the block will be available to both CS and DG projects within the respective Group.

<sup>30</sup> Or the next business day if June 1st is not a business day.

## Application Process Overview

Below is an outline of the steps in the application process for distributed generation projects and community solar projects.

### Application Process – Distributed Generation

	Step in Process	Entity Responsible	Additional Info
1	Disclosure form execution	Approved Vendor or Designee	Disclosure Form needs to be executed by customer prior to the execution of customer contract and commencement of a Part I application
2	Part I application submission (Submission includes batching, submission of batch, and payment of application fee)	Approved Vendor	Requires application verification by Program Administrator in order to move forward in application process
3	Verification of applications in a batch	Program Administrator	
4	Submission of batch to ICC for Approval	Program Administrator	Submission to the ICC is dependent on Part I application verification
5	Execution of REC Contract	Approved Vendor	Approved Vendor must execute REC contract within 7 business days and post the collateral associated with the application within 30 business days
6	Part II application submission	Approved Vendor	Requires application verification by Program Administrator
7	Project verification and invoicing	Program Administrator	REC incentives cannot be invoiced for a project until it is Part II verified

### Application Process – Community Solar

	Step in Process	Responsible	Additional Info
1	Part I application submission (Submission includes batching, submission of batch, and payment of application fee)	Approved Vendor	Requires application verification by Program Administrator
2	Submission of batch to ICC for Approval	Program Administrator	Submission to the ICC is dependent on Part I application verification
3	Execution of REC Contract	Approved Vendor	Approved Vendor must execute REC contract within 7 business days and post the collateral associated with the application within 30 business days
4	Part II application submission	Approved Vendor	Requires the upload of Disclosure Forms for subscribers Requires application verification by Program Administrator
5	Project verification and invoicing	Program Administrator	REC incentives cannot be invoiced for a project until it is Part II verified

## A. Part I Application Process

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### Batches

A batch is a group of applications submitted to the Program that move through the application process together and are contracted together as a single Product Order. All applications will be submitted electronically through the Approved Vendor portal on the Program website. Applications will be completed on a project-by-project basis. A batch, or a group of projects, may include a combination of project types and locations, including project types across Program categories, as long as this group of projects fall under the same REC Contract type. An Approved Vendor may select from their completed project applications to form and submit a batch. **Applications are not considered submitted to the Program until the application is batched and that batch of applications is submitted via the portal, with payment for that batch initiated by the Approved Vendor.** Project applications will only be reviewed once they have been submitted as part of a batch. For Approved Vendors submitting for the first time, the first batch size is required to be at least 100 kW in size. Batches may not exceed 5MW in size.

### Application Fee

An application fee equal to \$20/kW, not to exceed \$15,000, will be required for each project. This application fee will be paid to the Program Administrator at the time the batch is submitted and is non-refundable. The application fee payment will be part of the batch submission process and the fee will be automatically calculated by the application portal. Fees may be paid by wire, check, credit card, or ACH direct deposit initiated by the applicant using a unique tracking code generated by the application portal in the wire or direct deposit notes section to allow matching of deposits to batch submissions by the Administrator. Credit card payments will be subject to an additional fee of 2.9% of the total payment to account for credit card processing fees and will be limited to no more than \$10,000 per month per Approved Vendor. An application will not be considered submitted until the application fee for the project is initiated. If an application fee for a project is not paid within 10 business days of batch submittal, the Program Administrator may consider the application fee unpaid, thus the application not submitted.

For Approved Vendors participating in the proposed training/mentorship program described in Section 7.2 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, as well as all Equity Eligible Contractor qualified Approved Vendors (regardless of their participation in the training and mentorship program), new application fees will be waived if the AV resubmits the project within three months of the withdrawal of the original application.

### Application Parts

Applications consist of a Part I application and a Part II application; each of these parts must be completed for each participating system. The Part I application may be completed when the project is in the planning stage and collects information on a system's planned technical aspects including size, estimated REC production, equipment, and installation company. The Program does not require that an Approved Vendor submit a customer's Part I application prior to construction of the system. However, waiting until after a project is installed to submit an Illinois Shines project application could negatively affect the customer's experience because block capacity (and associated REC price) is not guaranteed, and if a project's specifications are not in conformance with Program requirements, the application may not be approved. Other Program requirements such as prevailing wage requirements will apply even if the project has already been

constructed. To ensure positive customer experiences, Approved Vendors are thus encouraged to submit applications in a timely manner.

Part II of the project application is to be completed only when a project has been completed and energized. Only systems that have a completed and verified Part I application that is subsequently approved as part of a batch by the ICC may submit the Part II application.<sup>31</sup>

## Disclosure Forms<sup>32</sup>

A completed Disclosure Form is required for submission of a Part I application for Distributed Generation projects. Disclosure Forms for subscribers to Community Solar projects will be required at the Part II application. The Disclosure Form must be generated<sup>33</sup> using the portal on the Program website.<sup>34</sup> The portal contains an interactive form that can be completed by either the Approved Vendor or one of its approved Designees which upon generation can either be e-signed using the portal e-signature functionality or printed, signed, scanned, and uploaded. Other e-signature systems may be utilized, as long as they comply with requirements outlined below. The information on the Disclosure Form is automatically transferred to the application portal to start a Part I application for DG systems. The information on a Disclosure Form can be updated within the portal prior to customer signing, if that form has not yet been generated (i.e. finalized for sending to customer for signature). If a change in information on a Disclosure Form that has been generated for signature but is not yet signed must occur, an Approved Vendor or their Designee should re-generate the Disclosure Form in the Illinois Shines portal before it is executed by the customer. Under no circumstance may any entity edit the static or the dynamic elements of a Disclosure Form that was generated inside the portal or via API. After the customer has signed the document (for e-signing) or downloaded the document (for wet signatures), thus finalizing the Disclosure Form, any changes to that completed Disclosure Form require the generation of a new Disclosure Form.<sup>35</sup> Please see <https://illinoisshines.com/vendor-disclosure-form-resources/> for Disclosure Form resources including a list of exceptions to when a new Disclosure Form is required.

Approved Vendors and Designees are prohibited from using their own versions of the Disclosure Form, and expressly prohibited from editing in any way the Disclosure Form generated in the portal. Approved Vendors and Designees may employ commercially available third-party e-signature systems for customer signature of the Disclosure Form but must submit the audit/signature information page with the e-signed Disclosure Form. More information on Disclosure Form requirements can be found in the Consumer Protection Handbook.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>31</sup> For these procedures and other items described in the Program Guidebook but directly addressed through the REC Delivery Contract, to the extent that there may be any unintended inconsistency between descriptions in this Program Guidebook and the Final REC Delivery Contract, the latter is generally controlling.

<sup>32</sup> Disclosure Forms are only required prior to the Part I application for distributed generation projects. For all community solar projects, Subscriber Disclosure Forms are required at the Part II application.

<sup>33</sup> A *generated* Disclosure Form is one that has been finalized and is ready to be sent to a customer for signature but is not yet signed.

<sup>34</sup> CSV upload functionality as well as API functionality are both made available by the Program for Disclosure Form generation.

<sup>35</sup> A *completed* Disclosure Form is one that has been signed by the customer.

<sup>36</sup> All Disclosure Forms submitted to the Program require a customer e-mail address. If the customer does not have an e-mail address, the Program offers a waiver that the customer can sign confirming that they do not have an e-mail address. The Approved Vendor must submit this waiver along with the customer's Disclosure Form.

The Disclosure Form should be completed after system design (for DG systems) and must be delivered to the customer and signed by the customer before the customer signs that project's installation contract or subscription agreement, in the case of community solar. A representative of the Approved Vendor or Designee shall review the Disclosure Form with the customer and provide the customer with an opportunity to ask questions about the Disclosure Form prior to obtaining a signature from the customer. The customer must sign the Disclosure Form prior to signing the installation agreement or subscription agreement. Terms of the underlying contract between a customer and an Approved Vendor or its subcontractor must be consistent with terms of the required Disclosure Form. Any statements made verbally to the customer must be consistent with the contract and the Disclosure Form.<sup>37</sup>

An Approved Vendor or Designee may select the "To Be Determined" option in the Disclosure Form for a Traditional Community Solar offer when the terms of the subscription are set but the specific project for the subscription has not been determined. The "To Be Determined" option cannot be used for Community-Driven Community Solar. That is, a customer who signs a "To Be Determined" Disclosure Form cannot be subscribed to a CDCS project. In order to subscribe a customer to a CDCS project, the specific project must be disclosed in the customer's Disclosure Form. Additional information about the "To Be Determined" option is available in Section V(B) of the Consumer Protection Handbook.

### **Signature Bundling of Community Solar Disclosure Forms**

The Program allows for signature bundling to facilitate e-signatures on Community Solar Disclosure Forms generated for situations where one potential nonresidential subscriber has multiple accounts each requiring a separate Disclosure Form. This is only permitted for nonresidential customers and it allows Approved Vendors and Designees to bundle Community Solar disclosure forms together and need only a single e-signature. To use this option the signer of the Disclosure Form must be a person or a representative of the entity that is the end user of the underlying utility account(s). **Intermediaries such as energy management entities or account management entities may not sign Disclosure Forms on behalf of a potential subscriber.**

Typically, potential subscribers would receive an individual email for each Disclosure Form. Signature bundling allows the potential subscriber to sign once for multiple Disclosure Forms even if the forms are for more than one Community Solar project so long as the disclosure form was created by the same Approved Vendor or Designee.

The potential subscriber will receive one email with a table summary of all Disclosure Forms bundled together for signature. Potential subscribers will still have the option to view each full Disclosure Form before signing.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> If a DG system was energized or went under contract prior to the Agency's finalization of the DG Disclosure Forms on December 27, 2018, the Approved Vendor will be required to complete the Disclosure Form and send it to the customer, but will have an opportunity to attest, in lieu of obtaining the system host's signature on the disclosure, that its diligent, good-faith efforts to contact the customer using all known contact information were either unsuccessful or resulted in the customer refusing to sign the disclosure.

<sup>38</sup> This feature is not currently supported by the Program portal but it is planned for release soon.

## Batching Process<sup>39</sup>

The Program Administrator submits batches to the ICC for approval eight business days prior to the ICC meeting. Four business days prior to the Program Administrator's date of submission to the ICC (the Eligibility Deadline) all Approved Vendors will be permitted to utilize this dashboard to actively manage the batching of their eligible applications. Approved Vendors can access the dashboard until 12:00 PM Central Prevailing Time two business days prior to the Program Administrator's ICC submission date (the Election Deadline).

### Batching Process Infographic



## Batch Management

An automated email will be sent at 9:00 AM Central Prevailing Time on the Eligibility Deadline to all Approved Vendors with applications that are eligible to be submitted to the ICC informing them of the opening of the dashboard. Approved Vendors can navigate to the new dashboard from their Projects tab by clicking the “Rebatch Projects” button. This button will only be visible between the Eligibility Deadline and the Election Deadline. Approved Vendors can actively manage the batching of their project applications two different ways: (1) on a project level or (2) on a batch level.

1. Managing Batches on a Project Level – To manage batches on a project level, click the “Show Rebatching by Project” button. This will bring up a list of all Part I applications that were verified prior to the Eligibility Deadline. From this list, the Approved Vendor can choose to withhold a project from ICC submission, add the project to a new batch, or move the project to an existing batch in the Approved status.
  - a. If the Approved Vendor chooses to withhold a project, the project will not be sent to the ICC. To withhold a project from ICC submission, check the box in the “Withhold Project” column for a given project. Then click “Submit Rebatching Changes” at the bottom of the dashboard. On the next screen, click “Submit Batching Changes” to confirm the change. Note that Approved Vendors may make the election to hold back a Part I verified application from submission to the ICC no more than twice for any given project application. Once an Approved Vendor elects to withhold a project, it will no longer appear in the list of eligible projects to rebatch for that batching window and will be included in the list of eligible projects to rebatch during the subsequent batching window.
  - b. To create a new batch of projects, select 100 kW or more of projects in the “Add to New Batch” column. Once at least 100 kW is elected, the Approved Vendor can click the “Submit

<sup>39</sup> This batching process is still being recreated in the new Program portal; once finalized this part of the Guidebook will be amended to reflect the process in the portal.



- Rebatching Changes” button to create a new batch. The new batch will be assigned a unique batch ID for submission to the ICC. On the next screen, click “Submit Batching Changes” to confirm the change.
- c. To add an eligible project to an existing batch, select the existing batch ID from the dropdown in the “Move to Different Batch” column. Only Batch IDs of Approved Batches will appear in this dropdown menu. Click “Submit Rebatching Changes” at the bottom of the dashboard to complete the change. On the next screen, click “Submit Batching Changes” to confirm the change.
2. Managing Batches on a Batch Level – To manage batches on a batch level, click the “Show Rebatching by Batch” button. This will bring up a list of all Approved Batches (batches in which 100% of Part I applications are verified). Approved Vendors can use this feature to consolidate existing batches into batches of 100 kW or more. To consolidate one batch into another, select the new batch ID in the “Move to Different Batch” column. Click “Submit Rebatching Changes” at the bottom of the dashboard to complete the change. On the next screen, click “Submit Batching Changes” to confirm the change.

The Approved Vendor can download a “Completed Batch Changes” report which provides a historical record of all batching changes made. This report is available on the batching dashboard during the batching window and on the Approved Vendor’s project dashboard at all times.

After the Election Deadline has passed, all of the Approved Vendor’s batches that are over 100 kW and in the Approved status will be included in the Program Administrator’s submission of batches to the ICC. Should an Approved Vendor take one or more of the above elections and still have batches containing less than 100 kW of Part I verified projects the Program Administrator will use its discretion to make batching decisions for those projects on behalf of the Approved Vendor prior to the Program Administrator submitting batches to the ICC.

## **Initial Project Review**

The Program Administrator will review each project’s application in the batch for compliance with program guidelines and request additional information from the Approved Vendor as needed to verify the submitted information and approve the project. An Approved Vendor will be given up to two weeks to cure deficiencies in an application. In the case of continued communication between the Program Administrator and the Approved Vendor, at the Program Administrator’s discretion, the cure period may be extended up to two weeks from the last good faith effort to provide the required information.

Batches will be reviewed in the order that they are received. An Approved Vendor that repeatedly submits batches that are rejected may be subject to having its Approved Vendor status reviewed, and possibly suspended.

After a batch has been reviewed and approved by the Program Administrator, the Program Administrator will then submit information about the batch to the Illinois Commerce Commission for approval. The Program Administrator simultaneously will forward the information to the applicable contracting utility. Note that once a batch has been submitted to the Illinois Commerce Commission for approval, the applications in that batch are no longer eligible to participate in Illinois Solar for All.

## Appeals

If an Approved Vendor or Designee elects to appeal a determination made by the Program Administrator related to application review or any other Program requirement, it must email the appeal to the Program Administrator at [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com). The appeal should be on the Approved Vendor or Designee's letterhead and the appealing entity should make clear that the letter is an appeal. It should be addressed to the Illinois Power Agency, contain the reasons for which the Approved Vendor or Designee believes the appeal should be granted, and be accompanied by any relevant supporting documentation.

Unless otherwise provided, the Approved Vendor or Designee will have no more than two weeks to appeal a determination made by the Program Administrator, after which the determination may no longer be appealed.

## ICC Approval

The Commission meets approximately every two weeks. The Program Administrator will strive to efficiently process approved batches for submittal to the Commission. The Agency understands that Commission practice is that items for consideration by the Commission must be submitted to be placed on its open meeting agenda at least 8 business days prior to each meeting. For an Approved Vendor's first batch (or batches) with a utility, that batch (or batches) will constitute a new REC Contract. Subsequent batches will be included in separate Product Orders under the existing REC Contract.

When the Program Administrator submits contract (or Product Order) information to the Commission for approval, that submittal will include the Program Administrator's recommendation for approval of the batch, with a summary of factors relevant to Plan compliance and pertinent to the Commission's standard of review for batch approval. Once a batch is approved by the Commission, the applicable utility will execute the contract (or Product Order). The Approved Vendor will then be required to sign the contract (or Product Order) as approved by the Commission within seven business days of receiving it. Approved Vendors that do not execute an Illinois Shines contract (or Product Order) after Part I verification, submission to the Commission for approval, the Commission's approval, or the utility's execution may face disciplinary measures impacting their status as an Approved Vendor in the Program moving forward. Any such discipline will be based on the Program Administrator and IPA's review of the circumstances under which the contract (or Product Order) was declined.

Discipline may include a possible suspension or termination of the Approved Vendor's status in the Program. Suspension or termination will not impact an Approved Vendor's rights or obligations under already-executed contracts or product orders, but rather it will impact its ability to submit new project applications. Generally, the Program Administrator and the IPA will review all of the circumstances informing why a contract award was declined before the issuance of any discipline. Approved Vendors should provide a detailed, comprehensive explanation for why they declined to execute any contract or product order. If circumstances genuinely outside of an Approved Vendor's control necessitated non-execution, then discipline may have limited deterrent effect and may not be warranted, and thus the Approved Vendor's explanation may want to emphasize and explain any such circumstances. Neither the IPA nor Program Administrator is able to provide a disciplinary determination in advance of non-execution to "pre-approve" such an action, nor can they provide a timeframe for the issuance of such determination after non-execution.

Within 30 business days of the ICC approving the contract (or Product Order), collateral constituting 5% of the value of a system's REC Contract must be posted with the utility counterparty in the form of cash or a letter

of credit from an underwriter with credit acceptable to the utility. Depending on the circumstances, a failure to provide contractually required collateral may also subject an offending Approved Vendor to discipline as outlined above.

In order to further reduce barriers to Program participation for schools in need, the 2024 Long-Term Plan modifies the terms of the 2024 REC Contract for the Public Schools category by removing the collateral posting requirement for distributed generation projects that are participating in the Tier 1/Tier 2/EJC subcategory of the Public Schools category.

## **Development Timelines**

Once a contract (or Product Order) for a batch has been executed by the Approved Vendor and the utility, projects within that batch must be developed and energized by the following time limits based on the contract execution date:

- Distributed generation projects will be given 18 months to be developed and Energized (Part II verified).
- Community solar projects will be given 24 months to be developed, Energized (Part II verified), and demonstrate that they have sufficient subscribers.

A project that is not completed in the time allowed (plus any extensions granted, as described further below) will be canceled and removed from the schedule on its contract, and the REC volume associated with the project will be eliminated. The Approved Vendor will also forfeit the posted collateral associated with the project.

A project that is not completed in time and deemed canceled may be subsequently included in a future batch submitted by an Approved Vendor, but that project will be treated as a new system rather than a resubmitted system and will receive a REC price applicable to its category and block open at that time.

Specific extension clauses and circumstances in which they are granted are outlined in the REC Delivery Contract itself.

- In the 2019 REC Delivery Contract, information on extensions is found in Section 5(b)
- In the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts, information on extensions is found in Section 2.4(b)

While under the REC contract an extension requested under good cause may be any length, the Agency appreciates extension requests that are between three months to one year in length to ease administration of this contract provision.

## **Withdrawn Applications**

If an Approved Vendor withdraws a project application prior to ICC submission, the AV must email the Program Administrator. Once a project application is withdrawn, this action cannot be undone and the application fee is forfeited. If an application is withdrawn after ICC submission, it will lose its place on a waitlist and the application fee is forfeited.

## **Project Removal from the REC Contract**

After ICC approval of a project and execution of the Product Order, there may be situations when project removal is necessary, which removes a project from the REC contract and relieves the Seller of all contractual requirements for that project. Note that in most cases, project removal results in the forfeiture of collateral. The REC Contract includes specific reason codes for removal that apply to various circumstances. An Approved Vendor may initiate a project removal, or the Contracting Utility may initiate a removal.

For an Approved Vendor to initiate a project removal, they must first request a project removal with the Contracting Utility. The Approved Vendor must specify which Reason for Removal (removal code) they wish to use. The removal code determines what happens to the project's collateral, as well as any REC payments that may have been paid. Reasons for removal can be found in the Schedule D of the REC Contract. Upon confirmation of the removal code, the Contracting Utility will issue a Project Removal Notice (PRN). The PRN must be signed by the Contracting Utility, Approved Vendor and the IPA. In cases where an Approved Vendor is non-responsive to a Contracting Utility's request to sign a Project Removal Notice, the Project Removal can move forward without Approved Vendor signature.

Some of these removal codes are used for systems that are not meeting Program requirements in which case the Contracting Utility can initiate a project removal. For example, failure to Energize on time, or the failure to deliver a first REC by the contractual deadline.

Upon completion of the project removal, new contract documentation – including a revised Schedule A, Schedule C, and if applicable, Schedule B – will be developed by the Program Administrator to reflect the removal. A project removal completely removes the project from the Program, including any contractual requirements, ability to invoice, and is permanent. A project removal cannot be reversed.

## **Multiple Approved Vendors**

In a case where one Approved Vendor submits a Part I application for a project, and then (before the first application is reviewed and verified by the Program Administrator and its batch submitted to the ICC for approval) a second Approved Vendor submits a new Part I application for a project at the same location, the Program Administrator will proceed as follows in attempting to resolve the potential conflict:

The Program Administrator will first investigate (including potentially contacting the site host) whether there is an intent that the multiple project applications be for separate, co-located projects (and if so, whether the co-location would be allowed under Program terms and conditions).

- If co-location is intended and feasible, then the Program Administrator will allow for co-location.
- If co-location is not both intended and feasible (i.e., if the two applications appear to represent the same project), the Agency will review the documents submitted with the Part I applications to determine which Approved Vendor is premising its control of RECs on an earlier-executed site control agreement that has not lapsed (or, if both Approved Vendors rely on the same site control agreement, then which Approved Vendor has an earlier-executed REC control agreement that has not lapsed); this Approved Vendor will be presumed to be the proper representative of the project.
- An Approved Vendor with a later-executed site control or REC control agreement (as applicable) will be given an opportunity to furnish documentation showing that the earlier-executed instrument was properly terminated prior to that Approved Vendor's Part I Illinois Shines application. If acceptable documentation is provided (subject to confirmation with the other Approved Vendor), then the

application from the Approved Vendor with the later-executed agreement would proceed (subject to any other review and approvals of the application).

## **Change of Approved Vendors**

A project that has been waitlisted or otherwise not yet selected for a REC Contract may change its Approved Vendor.<sup>40</sup> This switch of Approved Vendors may be for an individual project that is a subset of a larger batch (although minimum batch size requirements would still apply).

While it is not necessary to seek Program Administrator approval in advance of commencing this transaction, the Approved Vendor transferring the project and the Approved Vendor receiving the project (“Transferee”) must provide the Program Administrator with a binding document wherein both agree that the Transferee shall have rights to the RECs produced by the project and the authorization to represent the project for an Illinois Shines application. The documentation also must show that the project host (and the project owner, if different) consent to the change of Approved Vendor. If a project was submitted under the EEC category, the new Approved Vendor must also be qualified as an EEC.

Please note that if a project was submitted co-located with another project, it will continue to be deemed co-located after any change of Approved Vendors, including if the projects are on different REC Contracts. As a result, any co-located pricing or array layout requirements will still apply after a potential change of Approved Vendor. The transferred project, if community solar, could, if applicable, be newly considered co-located after being taken by the Transferee AV. The co-located pricing provision will only be applicable if the Illinois Commerce Commission’s approval of the second project is within one year or less of the Commission’s approval of the first project. If the first project has not yet received Commission approval at the time of the second project’s approval, then the co-located pricing provision will apply.

The process for assignment of a batch or contract to an Approved Vendor who does not already have the same contract with the Buyer as the batch/contract to be assigned will follow the same process as assignments to Approved Vendors without REC Contracts.<sup>41</sup>

## **Sale of an Approved Vendor**

Additionally, the sale of an Approved Vendor is permissible. A change in ownership of the Approved Vendor (e.g., the sale of an entire entity to a new entity) with no change to the AV/project pairings does not require consent, but does require the Approved Vendor to alert the Program Administrator to the change and provide documentation of the sale.<sup>42</sup> The new owner will need to submit an Approved Vendor application with details specific to its ownership of the entity (see Section 2 for more detail on Approved Vendor requirements). Additionally, the new owner must contact its contracting utility/utilities to update its contact and banking information for the respective REC Contracts with the utility. An EEC-qualified Approved Vendor must maintain its EEC eligibility after the sale in order for any projects that are not yet Part II approved to remain in the Program in the EEC category. If the new owner is not EEC qualified, any Part I projects that are not yet Part II

<sup>40</sup> Projects submitted to the EEC project category must be transferred to an EEC certified Approved Vendor or must utilize capacity from a different project category.

<sup>41</sup> See assignment process outlined in Section 6.B of this Guidebook.

<sup>42</sup> The seller’s Approved Vendor profile and banking information will not be visible to the new owner of the Approved Vendor after a sale.

approved would need to be removed, collateral forfeited, and reapplied to the appropriate non-EEC open block, or placed on a waitlist if applicable.

### **Sale of a Project**

If a project (or a majority equity share in the project) is sold and results in a new system owner but not a new Approved Vendor while the project remains unselected for a REC Contract, the Approved Vendor is expected to contact the Program Administrator to update the ownership data for the project in the Illinois Shines portal. This project ownership change would not change any previous determination that the project was co-located, and it could, if applicable, cause the project to be newly considered co-located. The co-located pricing provision will only be applicable if the Illinois Commerce Commission's approval of the second project is within two years or less of the Commission's approval of the first project. If the first project has not yet received Commission approval at the time of the second project's approval, then the co-located pricing provision will apply.

## **B. Part II Application Process**

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Once a system is completed and energized, and after ICC approval of the system's application for a REC Contract (or Product Order), the Approved Vendor will complete Part II of the application. Part II consists of uploading information verifying completion of the project and confirming that the specifications have not changed from the Part I application. If the final system size is larger than the proposed system size such that it would cause the system to change size category, the payment terms will be adjusted from the full payment on energization to 15% payment on energization and the balance paid over the next six years; the reverse is also true. Additionally, for any increase in system size at the Part II stage, the price per REC will be changed to the applicable REC price for the final system size based on the block open at the time the system is energized. A system that is developed at a size smaller than the original application will not be eligible for additional price adders.

A project's REC payment is based on the quantity of RECs estimated to be produced by the system, and this amount will be considered the lesser of the estimated production in Part I and Part II of the application. In this way, a system that is built smaller than planned will not benefit from excess REC payments that the final system cannot support as a result of its decreased production estimate. On the opposite side, if a project's final size is larger than the planned size, an increase in the REC payment could present unexpected budget management challenges.

If the final AC size differs (whether larger or smaller) from the size submitted in Part I of the project application and the difference exceeds the larger of 5 kW or 25%, then the system will be removed from the contract, with the option to re-apply to Illinois Shines. Changes to the DC size of the system are governed by ensuring that the 155% DC/AC ratio is not exceeded (refer to Section 4.K of this Guidebook for the full requirement). If the size difference at the Part II stage does not exceed those limits, the system will remain validly under contract. In the case of a size *increase* of less than the larger of 5 kW or 25%, or if the Approved Vendor desires to have the system change from a distributed generation project to a community solar project (or vice versa), then the Approved Vendor will have the option of canceling and resubmitting the system, but the REC price will then be that of the Block open at the time of resubmission, not of the original submittal. A new application fee will be required because the Agency will need to review the system design, which would be different from what was originally submitted (e.g., because of the change in system size). In all these cases

described in this paragraph, if a project is removed, then resubmitted and approved within 365 days of the removal, the collateral associated with the original system would be applied to the resubmitted system (and any excess refunded to the Approved Vendor); if not, the original collateral would be forfeited.

If there is a change in the property owner between Part I and Part II of a project application, the Approved Vendor must provide a refreshed, fully executed, and binding site control document with the new property owner concurrent with Part II submittal. A new Disclosure Form is required if the system size has changed more than the greater of 5% or 1 kW from the size noted on the original Disclosure Form. The new Disclosure Form requires the new property owner/host as the signatory.

The Agency reserves the right to request more information on an installation, and/or conduct on-site inspections/audits of projects to verify the quality of the installation and conformance with the project information submitted to the Agency. Projects found not to conform with applicable installation standards and requirements, or projects found not to be consistent with information provided to the Agency, will be subject to removal from the program if the deficiencies cannot be remedied. Likewise, Approved Vendors who repeatedly submit projects that have these problems may be subject to the suspension or termination of their Approved Vendor status.

The Program Administrator will review the Part II application and, upon approval, will provide a confirmation sheet to the Approved Vendor to include with its invoice to the utility with which it has contracted to sell the RECs from that project. The Program Administrator separately will provide information to each utility covering the details of each completed project.

Any changes to a project after it is Part II verified must be communicated to the Program Administrator, and, depending on the nature of those changes, could constitute a violation of the REC Contract.

## **C. Inspections**

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The Agency reserves the right to physically or virtually inspect any project submitted to the Program for any reason, including verification of compliance with prevailing wage requirements. Inspections will be scheduled in advance but may occur at any time during which the project is still participating in the Program. Customers are expected to be informed of the possibility of an inspection by the Approved Vendor and/or Designee. It is the Approved Vendor's responsibility to ensure customer compliance if that Approved Vendor's system is selected for inspection.

If a material deficiency is found during the inspection, the Approved Vendor will be sent a Deficiency Notice, with a copy to the system host. Within 5 business days of its receipt of the Deficiency Notice, the Approved Vendor shall provide an action plan that cures the deficiency within 20 business days. The Approved Vendor shall provide proof of completion of the action plan to cure the deficiency (or deficiencies) no later than the 20 business-day deadline. Failure to complete the action plan may result in (i) removal of the project from the REC Contract, and/or (ii) disciplinary action upon the Approved Vendor. Proof of completion shall include, at minimum:

- A brief explanation of how the issue was corrected
- Before and after photos of the correction, if applicable
- Confirmation of any resulting changes to the system specifications



The Program Administrator shall assess such proof for acceptability on a case-by-case basis dependent upon the nature of the deficiency. The Approved Vendor will be notified (with a CC to the System Host) once the Program Administrator accepts the completion of the action plan. Should the action plan or the completion of the action plan not be accepted by the Program Administrator, the Program Administrator will work with the Approved Vendor to modify the plan and/or the implementation such that it becomes acceptable.

## **D. Energized Systems**

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Only systems energized on or after June 1, 2017, are eligible for application to the Program. An Approved Vendor is allowed to submit a Part I application for an already energized system that meets this requirement; however, the Approved Vendor bears the risk that the system does not meet Program requirements if marketing, sales, installation, and other development activities occurred prior to the Agency's final publication of requirements in the Program Guidebook. Systems that are already energized will complete the same Part I and Part II application process for verification, with the only exception that the irrevocable Standing Order must be initiated but will not be accepted by the utility until after ICC approval and contract signing.

If an Energized (Part II verified) system is offline for more than six months, it is the Approved Vendor's responsibility to notify the Program Administrator within 3 business days after the six-month point. The Approved Vendor is responsible for keeping the Program Administrator up-to-date on system performance and the timeline for when the system will come back online.

## **E. Community Solar Specific Requirements**

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### **Part I Requirements**

Part I of an application for a community solar project requires a description of the proposed subscription model (e.g., typical length and structure of contract, economic terms, marketing channels, etc.) and the expected mix of residential and non-residential subscribers. Applicants may enter their proposed model or enter "unknown" if the model is not yet known. The Agency will assess whether the subscription model will reasonably meet Program terms and conditions.<sup>43</sup>

### **Part II Requirements**

Under Part II of the application, a community solar project will have to demonstrate that it has met a minimum subscription level to be considered energized and eligible to receive payment for RECs. To receive REC payments, at least 50% of the capacity of the project must be subscribed at the time of energization or as outlined in the REC Delivery Contract. Additionally, Traditional Community Solar projects under the 2021 and 2022 REC Delivery Contracts must have a minimum of 50% small subscribers. Such payment will be based upon a project's percentage subscribed as outlined in the applicable REC Contract and will be reviewed and

<sup>43</sup> Previously under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract, the subscriber mix was used to determine which adder, if any, was awarded to the system, but the final adder, if any, depended on the subscription level demonstrated once the system completed Part II of its application

updated per the terms in that REC Contract.<sup>44</sup> The Approved Vendor will report subscription levels on a quarterly basis during a project's first year. The applicable REC Contract outlines the terms of ongoing payments and if/when these payments are updated to reflect subscription levels. As outlined in extension provisions in the REC Contract, a community solar project may request an extension to its scheduled energization date if it needs additional time to acquire subscribers.

If a community solar project fails to attract sufficient subscribers by the time of energization, but also meets the definition of a distributed generation project (i.e., is located on-site, behind a customer's meter, and used primarily to offset a single customer's load), it may request to be recategorized as a distributed generation project and receive a REC payment at the lesser of the original price and the price of the distributed generation block open at the time this determination is made. A community solar project that does not meet the definition of a distributed generation project that fails to attract subscribers will not be eligible for this option. Likewise, a proposed distributed generation system may switch to be recategorized as a community solar project before energization and receive the REC price of the currently open community solar block. In both of these situations, a project may only switch one time.

For the submission of Part II applications following project energization, the Program requires demonstration and confirmation that commitments made in the Part I application were fulfilled throughout project development and installation, including those that resulted in higher project scoring. 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, 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.

### **Community Solar Disclosure Form**

The Community Solar provider must deliver a Community Solar Disclosure Form to the customer before the subscription contract is signed. The customer must sign the Disclosure Form prior to signing a subscription contract. Terms of the underlying subscription between a customer and the Community Solar Provider must be consistent with terms of the required Disclosure Form.

The portal contains an interactive form for Community Solar Providers to generate Community Solar Disclosure Forms, which can then either be e-signed using the portal e-signature functionality or printed, signed, scanned, and uploaded back into the portal. Approved Vendors and their Designees may elect to create a Community Solar Disclosure Form in either English or Spanish either within the portal or using the API (Application Program Interface). The API may be used to generate the document outside the portal only upon receiving written approval from the Program Administrator.<sup>45</sup> The information on a Community Solar Disclosure Form can be updated and edited within the portal prior to customer signing but cannot be edited after the form has been generated and/or the customer has signed the document (for e-signing) or downloaded the document (for wet signatures), thus finalizing the document. Community Solar Providers may

<sup>44</sup> Subscription level will be verified through review of applicable Disclosure Forms and data provided by the interconnecting utility.

<sup>45</sup> The disclosure form API is a technical process that, with advance written permission, allows Approved Vendors and Designees to generate Disclosure Forms outside the portal. If AVs or Designees are interesting in utilizing the API, permission should be sought from the Program Administrator.

employ third-party, commercially available e-signature systems as an alternative to the customer e-signing in the portal or wet signing, in which case, the audit/signature information page must be submitted with the e-signed Community Solar Disclosure Form. This requirement applies whether the Community Solar Disclosure Form is generated within or outside of the portal.

Community Solar Providers may, upon written approval of the Program Administrator, develop an externally generated Community Solar Disclosure Form through the application program interface (API) to the portal. An externally generated Community-Solar Disclosure Form must contain the same content and information as the Community Solar Disclosure Form generated by the portal. This will require the Program Administrator's written approval of the externally generated Community Solar Disclosure Form template and for the Community Solar Provider to use the externally generated Community Solar Disclosure Form API. This API will require uploads of the data used to create each Community Solar Disclosure Form, at which point the API will return information including a unique Community Solar Disclosure Form ID back to the Community Solar Provider that must appear on that Community Solar Disclosure Form. The externally generated Community Solar Disclosure Form must be uploaded to the Illinois Shines portal after it is signed by the subscriber. Each uploaded form must contain the unique ID that was assigned to that form in order to be considered valid by the Program Administrator and may be subject to review by the Program Administrator.

If the AC size of a community solar subscription submitted to the Program Administrator differs by more than the greater of 2 kW or 10% from the subscription size noted in that subscriber's corresponding disclosure form, a new Disclosure Form is required, aside from the limited instance outlined below. If a subscription size change falls within the band but differs from the subscription size noted in the original disclosure form, the Approved Vendor or Designee shall send an email to the subscriber stating 1) the updated size of their Community Solar subscription, and 2) by how much it differs from the size recorded on the original disclosure form the subscriber signed. Any change in the financial impact to the customer shall also be explained in that communication.

In order to facilitate right-sizing of community solar subscriptions, the following is permitted: (1) for subscriptions where the customer pays a set percentage of their community solar bill credits as their subscription fee (guaranteeing a set percentage level of savings), subscriptions may be increased or decreased by up to 5 kW or 25% without requiring a new Disclosure Form; however, the Approved Vendor or Designee must notify the customer for adjustments more than 2 kW or 10%; (2) for all other offer structures, the existing size restrictions (the greater of 2 kW or 10%) will continue to apply and a new Disclosure Form is required if changes to a subscription is outside the greater of 2 kW or 10%.

Additionally, a customer may be moved between community solar projects in limited instances. Specifically, Approved Vendors/Designees may switch a customer from one community solar project to another without the execution of a new Disclosure Form in two situations: (1) when the customer requests the switch, or (2) when the customer requests a subscription size increase that cannot be accommodated by their current project. All other instances where a customer is moved between projects required a new Disclosure Form.

### **Subscription Management Requirements for Community Solar Projects**

A Community Solar Provider, defined under the Consumer Protection Handbook as an entity which works to acquire and/or manage subscribers over the lifetime of a community solar project, may enroll customers for a specific community solar project or for a community solar project to be selected at a future date. A Community Solar Provider can either be the Approved Vendor for the project or a Community Solar Subscriber

Agent Designee that has been approved by the project's Approved Vendor and registered as a Designee with the Program.

For enrollments into a specific community solar project, the Community Solar Provider will specify the project location, size, and other required information to customers at the time the customer signs the subscription agreement.

For a Community Solar Provider that prefers to specify the community solar project at a future date, the customer shall be given the contact information for the Community Solar Provider at the time of enrollment. The Community Solar Provider will be required to send a follow-up communication (by email or hard-copy mail, at the customer's choice) with all project details,<sup>46</sup> no later than two weeks after the customer is subscribed to a community solar project in the utility portal. In the event that a customer is not assigned to a specific community solar project within six months of the execution of the subscription agreement, the Community Solar Provider shall at that point (and every six months thereafter until the customer is assigned to a project) provide the customer with an update on the status of the customer's subscription.

As it may be challenging to secure subscriptions with sizes that add up to the exact AC capacity of a community solar project, if a project is less than 100% subscribed the Approved Vendor may allocate the remaining capacity among any enrolled subscribers. Note that this allocation of capacity and subscription changes will also need to be updated with the interconnecting utility so that subscription sizes match. If, as a result of this process, such a subscription size change triggers the requirement for a new Disclosure Form, the Approved Vendor may make a request to the Program Administrator that a new signed Disclosure Form be provided within 30 days after the subscription change rather than prior to the change.

## F. Required Information

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The following information will be required for each Part I and Part II application:

### Part I

Note: Every completed DG disclosure form can be converted into a Part I application with all of the information from the Disclosure Form already prefilled, eliminating the need for duplicate data entry. Community solar projects will not have completed a Disclosure Form and will therefore be required to enter this data in the Part I application form. All items not marked as "optional item" are required for a Part I application.

- Project location<sup>47</sup> and property owner
- Project Owner (If different than property owner)
- Detail on the relationship between the utility account holder and the property owner/project owner, if they differ (Optional item)

<sup>46</sup> The full list of required details can be found in the Illinois Power Agency Consumer Protection Handbook in Section V(B).

<sup>47</sup> The project's latitude and longitude (in degrees out to 6 decimal places, e.g. 41.881856, -87.631222; this information is easily identified through Google Maps) and/or parcel ID will be requested as *optional* information. Projects in rural locations are strongly encouraged to provide this information. Approved Vendors that submit a significant number of projects with addresses that are difficult to map without latitude/longitude information or parcel ID may be asked by the Program Administrator to provide latitude/longitude for all future project applications.

- During application processing, the Program Administrator may request clarification if the utility account holder and the property/project owner differ.
- Installer name & contact information (May select unknown if not yet known)
- Name of Utility for which the system is interconnected
- Will this project be applying under the EEC category? (Only available for EEC qualified Approved Vendors)
- Project Type (Residential, Non-residential, Government, Non-Profit, House of Worship, Community-Driven Community Solar)
  - If “Residential” is selected and the project is 25 kW AC or less in size, applicant will attest that the project is a residential project with a checkbox if it meets one of the following criteria:
    - Electric bill demonstrates residential rate classification;
    - Property classified as residential for purposes of property tax; or
    - Structure usage is at least 75% residential.
  - If “Residential” is selected and the project is greater than 25 kW AC in size, applicant will provide at least one of the following documents:
    - Electric bill which shows residential classification; or
    - Proof of residential property tax class code; or
    - Documentation demonstrating that at least 75% of the usage of the structure(s) is residential
  - If “House of Worship” is selected and project is 100 kW AC or less in size, applicant will provide both of the following:
    - A signed attestation that states the following:

I certify that my name is [CERTIFIER'S NAME] and that I serve as [RELATION TO THE ORGANIZATION] to/for [ORGANIZATION NAME]. I have direct knowledge of [ORGANIZATION NAME]'s use of the property at [ADDRESS]. As required under Section 1-75(c)(1)(Q)(1) of the Illinois Power Agency Act (20 ILCS 3855) as amended by Public Act 102-0662, I further certify that the property located at the address above, the site of a proposed new photovoltaic project, qualifies as a House of Worship because it is used exclusively by a religious society or body of persons as a place for religious exercise or religious worship and is recognized as exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 15-40 of the Property Tax Code (35 ILCS 200).

I certify that these representations are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that these representations will be used for state government purposes and may be verified at any time by the Illinois Power Agency, and that the Illinois Power Agency has the right to request documents and other evidence to verify this certification. I also understand that making misleading or false statements in an application for the Adjustable Block Program may result in denial of the application or other consequences, including possible Program disciplinary action against an applicant Approved Vendor or its Designee.

- Proof of exemption from taxation pursuant to Section 15-40 of the Property Tax Code (Can utilize a sales tax exemption form for this requirement).

- Projects that do not select a category which meets one of the prevailing wage exemptions will be asked if construction was completed on or before September 15, 2021. Those that answer yes will be required to upload proof of interconnection approval signed by the interconnecting utility on or before September 15, 2021 or other proof that construction was completed on or before September 15, 2021 in order to receive an exemption from the prevailing wage requirements. The Prevailing Wage Act defines 'construction' to include maintenance, repair, assembly, or disassembly work performed on equipment.
- Projects that do not qualify for any of the prevailing wage exemptions listed above will be required to certify the applicant has read and understands the following notice regarding wages paid for construction of the project:

“Each project participating in the Adjustable Block Program and not subject to limited exceptions outlined in P.A. 102-0662 shall comply with the prevailing wage requirements included in the Prevailing Wage Act (820 ILCS 130/1, et seq.). This requirement applies to the wages of laborers, mechanics, and other workers employed in construction activities for any project participating in the Adjustable Block Program, as herein defined. This work includes not only construction, but also any maintenance, repair, assembly, or disassembly work performed on equipment related to the project whether owned, leased, or rented by the applicant or project developer. The Approved Vendor shall ensure that any contractor or subcontractor performing work at the project facility has express notice of this requirement. The Approved Vendor shall require documentation and verification that all construction work performed at, in, or around the facility by the renewable energy credit Delivery Contract holder, its contractors, or its subcontractors relating to construction, maintenance, repair, assembly, or disassembly work is performed by employees receiving an amount equal to or greater than the general prevailing wage rate, as defined in Section 3 of the Prevailing Wage Act. Such documentation and verification includes, but is not limited to, the certified transcripts of payroll required to be filed with the Illinois Department of Labor. Additionally, the Approved Vendor shall ensure that notice of the local prevailing wage rates is posted at the work site or provided to workers in writing and that all contracts and subcontracts contain notice of application of the Prevailing Wage Act.”
- In addition, construction activities for all other projects that occurred before September 15, 2021, will not be subject to prevailing wage requirements. **For projects that do not fall into one of the above exempted categories, construction activities including maintenance, that occur after September 15, 2021 will be subject to prevailing wage requirements.**
- Is the project located on Public School-owned land?
  - If “Yes”:
    - What is the Property Index Number (sometimes called "parcel number" or "permanent index number") of the land the project will be built on?
      - Upload supporting documents for verification including but not limited to deeds, surveys, or other real estate contracts proving ownership (Optional item)
    - The project will be constructed on (a K-12 School, a K-12 District Facility, other K-12 district-owned land, a Public Higher Education Institution) land
    - Is this a Tier 1 or Tier 2 school based on the latest annual evidence based funding distribution process? Funding designation only applies to K-12 schools. (Yes, No, Not Applicable) If “Yes,” the applicant shall submit:

- District ID from the latest FY Evidence-Based Funding calculation spreadsheet
  - District name from the latest FY Evidence-Based Funding calculation spreadsheet
  - Will the project be constructed within an identified Environmental Justice Community, per the criteria contained in Section 8.12.2 of the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan and as shown on the [map](#) published on the Illinois Solar for All website?
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- If “No,” only projects constructed on public school-owned land qualify for the public-school category. Please apply to a suitable project category..
- Financing Structure (Customer-owned, lease, or PPA) (Not asked for community solar)
- Number of graduates of job training programs the developer intends to work on the project (optional item)
- Technical Project Information
  - Ground or Roof Mount
  - Number of tracking axes (fixed tilt, 1-axis tracking, 1-axis backtracking, or 2-axis tracking)
  - Array information (# modules, module power rating, tilt, azimuth, and whether or not the modules are bifacial) for each array
  - Inverter size in continuous AC output which must be equal to or less than nameplate capacity
  - Inverter efficiency
  - Total number and type of each inverter (optional item)
  - System size in DC and AC will be calculated by the portal from the information provided above.
  - If bifacial modules are used, the ratio of rear side efficiency to front side efficiency must be provided. If the AV is unable to provide that, a default value of .7 may be used.
  - Indicate whether the system includes battery storage.
- PV Watts (or similar tool) estimate of REC production during 15-year or 20-year term (auto-calculated by the portal if using PVWatts)
- For Community-Driven Community Solar only<sup>49</sup>
  - Is this project a CDCS project?
  - If “Yes” is selected, the following information must be provided
    - Narrative for primary scoring criteria as outlined in Appendix F
    - Narrative for secondary scoring criteria as outlined in Appendix F
    - In what county is the project located?
      - If the county has a population of less than 50,000, applicant will be asked if the project commits to serve only subscribers in the same county or adjacent counties in which the project is located

<sup>48</sup> See: <https://www.illinoisfa.com/environmental-justice-communities/>.

<sup>49</sup> More information on scoring criteria of Community-Driven Community Solar projects can be found in Appendix F of this Guidebook.



- If the county has a population of 50,000 or more, applicant will be asked if the project commits to serve only subscribers in the same county in which the project is located.
- If the project is in a municipal utility or electric cooperative territory, demonstrate the municipal utility or electric cooperative offers net metering bill credits for community solar projects substantially similar to that offered under Section 16-107.5(l) of the Public Utilities Act as well as purchase of energy from any unsubscribed project shares under the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act of 1978.
- Required Uploads
  - For DG projects:
    - A Disclosure Form must have been completed and signed through the application portal.<sup>50</sup> This can be done prior to the Part I application and will not require a separate upload. A new Disclosure Form will be required if the AC size of a distributed generation system as submitted in Part I differs by more than the greater of 1 kW or 5% from the AC system size noted in that application's disclosure form, A new Disclosure Form will be required for a change in DC system size only if at least one of the following is true: (1) there is also a change in inverter/AC size that triggers a new Disclosure Form based on criteria for changes in inverter/AC size; or (2) the DC size decreases by more than the greater of 5% or 1 kW.<sup>51</sup>
  - For all projects:
    - Proof of site control
    - Plot diagram or site map for all systems
      - Plot diagram/site map must be an aerial view of the installation property and show the location of each individual solar module. If the site map lists array details (tilt, azimuth, orientation, etc.) and inverter details (inverter model, system size, module wattages, number of modules, etc.) it must match what's submitted in the Part I application.
    - Ground-mounted systems larger than 250 kW AC must provide a land use permit from the AHJ (Authority Having Jurisdiction). If a land use permit is not applicable, the Approved Vendor must provide written confirmation from the AHJ that no permit is required. The land use permit is required if more than 250kW of a system is ground-mounted.
  - Additional uploads for Distributed Generation systems over 25 kW<sup>52</sup>:
    - Interconnection Agreement signed by both the interconnection customer and the interconnecting utility prior to the date of Part I application submittal.
  - Requirements for systems already energized prior to application:

<sup>50</sup> There is a limited exception, discussed above, for systems that went under contract or were energized prior to the Agency's finalization of the DG disclosure form on December 27, 2018.

<sup>51</sup> Other instances where new Disclosure Forms are required can be found here: <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Disclosure-Forms-Circumstances-Requiring-New-DF-Issuance-and-Signatures.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> Per the Illinois Commerce Commission's Final Order on the 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, a signed Interconnection Agreement is no longer required for Community Solar projects. The Agency is conducting a stakeholder feedback process to decide how Interconnection Agreements will affect Traditional Community Solar scoring and waitlist process. This document will be updated with those decisions.

- GATS or M-RETS unit ID
- Uploading of
  - Certificate of Completion of Interconnection
  - Net metering application approval letter (if applicable)

Any project that does not meet these requirements will not be considered eligible to receive REC incentive payments; the Approved Vendor will have the option to resubmit the project. However, the resubmittal will be placed at the end of any waitlists that had previously been established for that Group/category, will be at the price of the block open at the time of resubmission, and will require a new application fee.

## **Part II**

Effective September 15, 2021, the IPA Act, as amended by Public Act 102-0662, contains requirements that will necessitate changes to the questions in Part II of the application. Notably, demographic data on employees will be collected on a project-by-project basis during the Part II application in order to accurately and timely capture workforce data. Additionally, at Part II of the project application, Approved Vendors will be required to certify to and document compliance with prevailing wage requirements, if applicable.

**All items not marked as “Optional item” are required for a Part II application.**

- Actual system size in both DC and AC (If different than the size submitted in Part I, please re-supply the array information).
- Final 15 or 20-year REC production estimate (As applicable).
- Modules: manufacturer/make, model, whether or not modules are bifacial.
- Inverter: size, manufacturer/make, model.
- Total number and type of each inverter (Optional item).
- Number of tracking axes (Fixed tilt, 1-axis tracking, 1-axis backtracking, or 2-axis tracking) – must be the same as submitted in Part I.
- Does this project have a battery backup?
- Meter: manufacturer/make, model. Does the meter meet the ANSI C.12 standard if required by the applicable registry?
- As-built project diagram for systems greater than 250 kW AC (Optional item).
- Number of graduates of job training programs who worked on the project (Optional item).
- Provide description of any other changes made to the project between initial application and the completion of the project.
- Interconnection Approval Date and Online Date.
- Registry in which the system is registered (GATS or M-RETS).
  - Provide the GATS or M-RETS unit ID.
  - Provide the name on the GATS and M-RETS account.
  - Provide proof of having initiated an irrevocable Standing Order, such as a screenshot or email confirmation.
- Confirm name and contact information of company performing installation from Part I (Must match the name of a current ICC Certified DG Installer) including the ICC Docket Number for the Certification of the DG Installer of record for the project.
- Name of qualified person(s) who conducted the installation.

- For systems that include a battery, a detailed schematic must be provided showing that either only solar-generated power can be used to charge the battery, that the battery's output does not run through the meter used to measure solar output, or that a password-protected software setting is enabled for the duration of the project's participation in the Program that prevents the battery from charging via line power. Systems that do not include a battery/storage component will be limited to a DC capacity of 155% of the AC capacity. Beginning June 1, 2024, all systems that include a battery/storage component will be limited to a DC capacity of 200% of the AC capacity.
- Attestation of compliance with all requirements in the Consumer Protection Handbook, previously found in the marketing guidelines, published by the Agency, for marketing activity that occurred after November 26, 2018.
- Attestation that the contract with the customer is consistent with the disclosure form provided to the customer.
- Attestation that all construction employees received at least the prevailing wage, for projects subject to prevailing wage requirements.
- Attestation of compliance with all DG installation contract requirements or community solar subscription requirements previously published by the Agency (or an attestation that good-faith, diligent attempts to secure a compliant contract amendment for DG contracts executed before January 23, 2019 were unsuccessful).
- Final system cost including any and all costs related to the following: modules, inverters, other generating equipment, balance of system (BOS), engineering/procurement/construction (EPC), installation, interconnection, origination and development, sales/general/administrative (SG&A) including customer acquisition, financing, legal, permitting/inspection/other soft costs, contingencies, and any other direct or indirect costs attributable to the project. Any and all profit that results from project development should not be included in the total project cost. Upgrades that were necessary in order to complete the installation should be included in the final system cost (including but not limited to roofing and/or electrical upgrades). Optional additions that an installer provides to the customer in concert with the installation that are unrelated to the solar installation, such as the installation of an electric vehicle charging station should not be included.

**Note:** Individual project costs will be protected as confidential and proprietary pursuant to the Agency's obligation under Section 1-120 of the IPA Act. All persons within the Agency or the Program Administrator who have access to this information will be required to submit a signed statement demonstrating a commitment to maintain the confidentiality of the information and appropriate cybersecurity measures will be taken to protect this information. This approach is similar to how the Agency and its Procurement Administrator have handled sensitive commercial information submitted by bidders in competitive procurements for energy, capacity, and renewable energy resources during past years.

Section 7(1)(g) of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act exempts from disclosure "[t]rade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person or business where the trade secrets or commercial or financial information are furnished under a claim that they are proprietary, privileged or confidential, and that disclosure of the trade secrets or commercial or financial information would cause competitive harm to the person or business, and only insofar as the claim directly applies to the records requested." (5 ILCS 140/7(1)(g)). The requested submission of project cost data will have a check box for the Approved Vendor to certify that the predicate conditions of Section 7(1)(g) are met. It is the Agency's position that project cost data would, with such a certification, constitute commercial or financial information that is exempt from public disclosure.

Project cost information will only be disclosed on an aggregated basis no smaller than an entire block.

Variations in the system layout between Part I and Part II are not allowed except in the following cases:

- Change in location of the system on a roof or parcel for any DG system, or any system for a Community Solar project which was the only project on a parcel entered into the initial program lottery, if held.
- Increase in the surface area covered as long as the originally plotted footprint is still entirely covered by the solar array or associated equipment or wiring.
- Decrease in the surface area covered as long as the solar array and any associated equipment or wiring remains entirely in the originally plotted footprint.
- Changes in location on a parcel made to provide access paths through the solar array in order to access an otherwise stranded portion of the parcel.
- Changes in location on a parcel made to account for parcel unsuitability that was not apparent in the Approved Vendor's commercially reasonable investigation of the property when conducting the initial project design.
- Switching between rooftop and ground-mounted.
- Switching between tracking system types and non-tracked systems is allowed; however, the lower of the Part I capacity factor or Part II capacity factor must be used. Switching tracker types by itself is not sufficient to qualify for an exception. At least one additional criterion from the list above must be met to qualify for an exception.
- Approved Vendors may request approval for other changes; such approval will be granted if the Approved Vendor can demonstrate to the Program Administrator that the change was made due to factors that were not apparent in the Approved Vendor's commercially reasonable investigation of the project when conducting the initial project design and which would not constitute gaming of the lottery system or project application process.

#### **Required Uploads:**

- Certificate of Completion (or Permission to Operate) signed by the interconnecting utility.
- Net metering approval letter (if applicable).
- Photograph(s) of the project showing all installed modules. Photograph(s) must show all modules clearly enough to verify the number of modules installed.
- Photograph(s) of the inverter(s). Photographs must clearly show the inverter information panel with the model number. A photograph of just one inverter is acceptable if using microinverters.
- Photograph of the meter (if applicable). Photograph must clearly show current cumulative lifetime meter reading or, if the meter has no physical display, a screenshot of the monitoring portal with the lifetime meter reading.
- Proof that the project has initiated an irrevocable Standing Order without an end date in the REC tracking registry through either a copy of the registry's email acceptance of the irrevocable Standing Order or a screen shot of the irrevocable Standing Order screen showing the registry certification number of the system.<sup>53</sup>
- All Certified Transcripts of Payroll submitted to IDOL for the construction of the project.

<sup>53</sup> At the end of the REC delivery term irrevocable Standing Orders can be cancelled subject to the consent of both the transferor and the transferee.

- Approved Vendors should work to use Illinois CTPs as provided by IDOL for this requirement.
- For Community Solar only:
  - Subscriber information (as of the energization date) including proof that minimum subscriber commitments have been met (50% of capacity must be subscribed).
  - Percentage of small subscribers (as a share of total system capacity).



## Section 6: Renewable Energy Credit Management and Assignments

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## A. REC Delivery

1. All systems must be registered in either the GATS or M-RETS tracking registry. For systems larger than 5 kW, the first REC must be delivered within 90 days of the date the system is Energized/Part II verified. For systems equal to or less than 5 kW, the first REC must be delivered within 180 days of the date the system is Energized/Part II verified. The delivery term will begin on the first day of the month following the first REC delivery and will last 180 months (for projects under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and the 2021 and 2022 15-Year REC Delivery Contracts) and 240 months (for projects under the 2021 and 2022 20-Year REC Delivery Contracts). Any RECs that were created prior to contract signing are not part of the contract and will not be transferred to the utility under the contract or purchased by the utility under the contract.

System Size	≤ 5 kW	> 5 kW
First REC delivery deadline	Within <u>180 days</u> of Part II verification date	Within <u>90 days</u> of Part II verification date

2. Approved Vendors are required to set up an irrevocable Standing Order for the transfer of RECs from the system to the utility.<sup>54</sup>
  - a. Community Solar projects under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and the 2021, 2022, and 2024 15-Year REC Delivery Contracts which are not 100% subscribed must set up a Standing Order for the subscription percentage the project has met. For the unsubscribed portion of a project, RECs will not be transferred to the utility. Community Solar projects shall update this percentage quarterly based on the Community Solar Quarterly Reports that must be submitted during the project's first year of Energization as well as once per year based on their achieved subscription rates for the previous year.
  - b. All other systems, including Community Solar projects under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 20-Year REC Delivery Contracts, must set up an irrevocable Standing Order for 100% of the capacity the system produces.
  - c. Standing Orders must be established without an end date. The applicable contracting utility/Buyer of the RECs will cancel the Standing Order at the end of the REC delivery term.
  - d. Standing Orders must be initiated from an Approved Vendor's own registry account and not from the account of an affiliate or third party.
3. When registering a system in GATS or M-RETS, the Approved Vendor must incorporate the Illinois Shines application ID into the name of the system, the Unit field, and the Note field.
4. For Community Solar projects under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and the 2021, 2022, and 2024 15-Year REC Delivery Contracts, based on any changes to a project's total percentage subscribed, the Standing Order percentage shall be updated in the relevant registry after both Part II verification and Program Administrator review of each of a project's four Community Solar Quarterly Reports. This process is as follows:

<sup>54</sup> See Section 10.2 of the GATS Operating Rules available at <https://www.pjm-eis.com/-/media/pjm-eis/documents/gats-operating-rules.ashx>



If the project is registered in GATS:

- The Program Administrator sends email to the contracting utility and Approved Vendor with a link to the revised Schedule B, highlighting any change in the Standing Order percentage.
- If there is a change to the Standing Order percentage, the Program Administrator sends an email to the contracting utility and the Approved Vendor, requesting removal of the irrevocable flag on the Community Solar project's Standing Order. The email will include at a minimum, the project's Illinois Shines application ID, registry Unit ID, and new Standing Order percentage.
- The utility replies to all documenting its consent. The utility then removes the irrevocable flag and replies to all confirming that the irrevocable flag was removed.
- The Approved Vendor cancels the existing Standing Order and initiates a new irrevocable Standing Order with the new specified percentage.
- The Approved Vendor replies to all confirming the new Standing Order has been initiated.
- The utility confirms the new Standing Order is accurate.

If the project is registered in M-RETS:

- The Program Administrator sends email to the contracting utility and Approved Vendor with a link to the revised Schedule B, highlighting any change in the Standing Order percentage.
- If there is a change to the Standing Order percentage, the Program Administrator sends email to the M-RETS admin, copying the utility and Approved Vendor, requesting a change to the Community Solar project's Standing Order percentage. The email will include at a minimum, the project's Illinois Shines application ID, registry Unit ID, current Standing Order percentage, and new Standing Order percentage.
- The utility and Approved Vendor reply to all confirming their consent to updating the Standing Order percentage.
- M-RETS updates the Standing Order with the new percentage and replies to all confirming that the change is complete.
- Both the utility and Approved Vendor confirm that the Standing Order accurately reflects the new percentage in the registry.

The process of registering with GATS or M-RETS should be completed in no less than 30 calendar days from the Program Administrator's initial email to the registry. Failure to update the Standing Order in a timely fashion may have an impact upon obligations under the REC Contract.

### **Submitting REC Information to Tracking Systems**

Approved Vendors are responsible for entering system production in the tracking registry where the system is registered. This must be done at least annually (and as frequently as monthly) and as necessary to ensure that the delivery of required RECs under contract is complete prior to the annual report submission date. Detailed information about creating RECs in the GATS can be found on the [PJM-EIS Getting Started page](#). Detailed information for M-RETS can be found on the [M-RETS Help page](#).

## **B. Assignment of REC Contracts**

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REC Delivery Contracts entered into for participation in Illinois Shines are assignable, and assignments may be made at either the batch (or “Product Order,” as used in the contract) or Master Agreement level. As required by the Plan, assignments may only be made to entities registered with Illinois Shines as Approved Vendors. If the assignment is to an Approved Vendor that already has a valid REC Contract with the same counterparty utility through Illinois Shines, then the prior written consent of the counterparty utility is not required for that assignment and any batches transferred will constitute new batches under the Approved Vendor’s existing agreement with that utility. The Approved Vendor assignor must notify the IPA and counterparty utility of such an assignment made without the utility’s consent and provide that utility with the assignee’s contact and payment information.

As a result of the approval of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the REC Delivery Contracts required additional updates that are reflected in the 2024 15-Year REC Delivery Contract and the 2024 20-Year REC Delivery Contract. The 2024 REC Delivery Contracts were developed with opportunities for stakeholder feedback. All projects approved by the Commission after June 1, 2024, will use the new 2024 REC Contracts, regardless of application submission date. The Program will also provide an “off-ramp” option for any already-applied projects expecting to receive an award under the 2022 REC Delivery Contract that is unable to be developed under the updated 2024 REC Delivery Contracts.

Assignments by Approved Vendors are subject to an assignment fee of \$1,500 for the first assignment and \$5,000 for any subsequent assignments of the same batch or same master agreement. Assignment fees are payable to the counterparty utility at the time of assignment, with fees made part of that utility’s renewable resources budget for the procurement of renewable energy resources. The first assignment of a product order or contract to an affiliate is not subject to fees, although other assignments and subsequent assignments of the same product order to an affiliate may be. Please consult Section 9.2 of the 2019 REC Contract or Section 13.1 of the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts for additional information.

Assignments may not be made within a) 30 business days of contract execution (or the posting of collateral, whichever is later) or b) 30 business days of a prior assignment of the same batch or same master agreement. In the case of the assignment of an individual batch, any surplus RECs associated with the batch remain with the original master agreement.

On assignment, an Approved Vendor’s ongoing collateral with respect to a transferred batch, if in cash form, may simply be applied to the transferred batch, while letters of credit will remain in place until the assignee posts replacement collateral.

Upon completion of the assignment, new contract documentation – including Exhibit A and associated schedules – will be developed by the Program Administrator to reflect the change in systems subject to the assignor’s original agreement and the assignee’s expanded or new agreement.

### **Collateral Assignment**

Collateral assignment of the REC Contract by an Approved Vendor – i.e. pledging of the accounts, revenues or proceeds in connection with any financing or other financial arrangements for a system or systems, but without relieving itself of performance obligations – is permitted at either the batch or Master Agreement level and does not require prior consent of the counterparty utility. The Approved Vendor must notify the IPA and

counterparty utility of the collateral assignment made without the utility's consent and provide that utility with the identity of and contact information for the financing party.

As financing parties are unlikely to be Approved Vendors but may become assignees due to foreclosure or default under financing arrangements, the requirement that such an assignee be an Approved Vendor will be waived for 180 days following such a transfer. The new assignee would then have 180 days to either a) become an Approved Vendor itself, or b) assign the batch or Agreement to an Approved Vendor.<sup>55</sup> For purposes of calculating assignment fees, both the initial assignment post-default and the second assignment within 180 days constitute a single assignment.

For more information on assignment or collateral assignment, please see Section 9.2 of the 2019 REC Delivery Contract or Section 13.1 of the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts.

### **Steps to Assign Product Order(s) or an Entire REC Contract**

Assignments are governed by Section 9.2 of the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and Section 13.1 of the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts. As explained in the REC Contract, assignments may be subject to fees, and may in certain circumstances require the Buyer's consent to be effectuated.

An entire REC Contract or any product orders/batches under a contract may be assigned in their entirety. It is not possible to assign individual projects within a product order. The only exception to this is in the limited circumstances allowed for by the ICC's approval of the Agency's 2024 Long-Term Plan that will allow for rebatching of projects after the execution of the REC Contract where the ability to rebatch and assign individual projects (or project that make up a subset of a batch) to a new Approved Vendor after REC Contract execution could help address consumer protection concerns or resolve a customer complaint. This is discussed further in Section 3.E.

Following are the steps for assignment. The Assignor is the Approved Vendor that already holds the product order(s) and wishes to initiate assignment, while the Assignee is the Approved Vendor that will receive the product order(s) through the assignment. The Buyer is the contracting utility.

1. Assignor contacts Buyer and Program Administrator to provide informal notice of intent to assign, including the identity of Assignee.
2. Assignee applies to be an Approved Vendor (if not already) on the Program website. (In the case that the Assignee is a foreclosing financing party, the requirement that the Assignee is an Approved Vendor shall be waived for up to 180 days following the transfer.)
3. Program Administrator reviews and approves Approved Vendor application (if the Assignee is not already an Approved Vendor).
4. Assignee and Assignor execute the appropriate form of Acknowledgement. The Acknowledgement without consent form<sup>56</sup> is used if the Assignee already is a valid Approved Vendor with an existing fully executed REC Contract from the same contract version as the Assignor. The Acknowledgement

<sup>55</sup> The same timeline and requirements apply to collateral assignments for EEC-certified Approved Vendors; if the REC Contract is within the first six years, the new assignee must also be EEC-certified.

<sup>56</sup> <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ABP-Acknowledgement-of-Assignment-Combined-2019-and-2021.pdf>. The Acknowledgment of Assignment form is also included as an Exhibit to the 2021 and 2022 REC Contract.

and Consent form<sup>57</sup> is used in all other situations. Thus, one of the two versions of the form is required in all cases.

5. Program Administrator and Buyer collaborate to confirm that Assignor has met all prerequisites for assignment:
  - a. Full collateral has been posted for the subject product order(s).
  - b. Thirty business days have passed since ICC approval of the subject product order(s).
  - c. Buyer has received any applicable assignment fees.
    - i. A fee of \$1,500 is required for the first assignment of a contract or product order. If Assignee and Assignor are affiliates, this fee is waived. Any subsequent assignments of prior-assigned product orders, even between affiliates, carry a fee of \$5,000. All assignment fees are payable directly to Buyer.
  - d. Assignee, Assignor, and Buyer must work out together how collateral will be maintained.
  - e. Assignee and Assignor have met any other requests by Buyer for additional information for Buyer to use in determining whether to grant consent (not applicable if consent is not required).
6. Program Administrator generates shell REC Contract (if needed), Exhibit A, Schedule A(s), and Schedule B(s) (if appropriate) for Assignee. Generates Schedule A(s) for Assignor. All documents are provided directly to Buyer.
7. Buyer signs Acknowledgement, REC Contract (if needed), and Exhibit A. Sends all items to Assignee. Sends Acknowledgement to Assignor.
8. If any irrevocable Standing Orders have been established from Assignor's registry account for projects in the batches being assigned, Assignor must transfer those projects to Assignee's GATS or M-RETS account. Assignor and Assignee must ensure that the irrevocable Standing Orders remain in place during the transfer or are re-established post-transfer.
9. Assignee and Assignor effect the legal assignment. Assignee countersigns REC agreement and Exhibit A. Assignee and Assignor provide copies of fully executed documents to Buyer along with proof that any projects with irrevocable Standing Orders have been transferred to Assignee's registry account and that those irrevocable Standing Orders have been maintained or re-established post-transfer.
10. Buyer notifies Program Administrator that the assignment is complete.
11. Program Administrator updates Illinois Shines database, moving subject product order(s) from Assignor's REC Contract to Assignee's REC Contract.

Note that an Approved Vendor may, without consent, collaterally assign or pledge the revenue stream of a REC Contract or product order(s), or collaterally assign the REC Contract itself, in conjunction with financing or other financial arrangements. The Approved Vendor must provide notice to the Program Administrator and Buyer of such a collateral assignment or pledge, including the identity and contact information of the financing party obtaining collateral rights.

### **Assignment of Waitlisted Projects**

Projects may be selected off a waitlist in any given Group/category combination either when a new block of capacity is opened (and receive the new block's REC price), or when a previously selected and approved

<sup>57</sup> [The assignment forms noted here can be found on the Program Resources page of the Program website, here: https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/](https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/)

project drops out of the Program, thus freeing up Program capacity (with the project selected from the waitlist receiving the most recently available REC price). While projects are on a waitlist and thus not yet under contract, an Approved Vendor may transfer that project to another Approved Vendor, or the project itself may be sold, without penalty or impacting the project's position on the waitlist but must promptly notify the Program Administrator of that transfer and provide appropriate documentation.<sup>58</sup> Projects which have applied under the EEC category must remain under an EEC-qualified Approved Vendor in order to remain on an EEC category waitlist as outlined in Section 1.D of this Guidebook.

## C. Community Solar Under the REC Contract

### Traditional Community Solar under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract

#### Small Subscriber Adder

The 2019 REC Delivery Contract is applicable to community solar projects that were approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission prior to the enactment of Public Act 102-0662. These community solar projects will be provided the following adders based on percentage of small subscribers:

Adder	\$/REC	
	Group A	Group B
Less than 25% small subscriber	No adder	No adder
25% or greater small subscriber and less than 50% small subscriber	\$11.17	\$10.88
50% or greater small subscriber	\$22.34	\$21.77
Greater than 75% small subscriber	\$33.51	\$32.65

The community solar adders of \$33.51 for Group A and \$32.65 for Group B commensurate with a small subscriber level greater than 75% no longer apply to community solar projects selected after the ICC's approval of the IPA's Revised Long-Term Plan on February 18, 2020 (whether selected through being taken off a waitlist, or as part of the opening of new blocks of capacity). This 75% small subscriber adder will continue to apply to community solar projects that were selected prior to that date. For projects selected after this change, the maximum adder for projects with 50% or greater small subscribers will be \$22.34 for projects in Group A and \$21.77 for projects in Group B.

The applicability of a small subscriber adder is determined based on the percentage of the project's generating capacity (measured in kW AC) met through small subscribers' subscriptions, and not the overall number of small subscribers. A community solar project must demonstrate a level of small subscribers corresponding to the adder at the time of energization to receive an adder initially; if it does not meet that level by one year after energization, the project will instead receive the small subscriber adder associated with its actual realized level of small subscribers as of Year 1 (if any). A project would also be subject to a 20%

<sup>58</sup> The ability to transfer or sell a project also applies to non-waitlisted Part I projects that have not yet been selected for a REC contract. See Section 5.A. for more information.

penalty on the contract value if it proposed at least 50% small subscribers in its Part I application but realizes less than 50% small subscribers as of Year 1. Furthermore, the project must maintain the small subscriber subscription levels over time or face payment reductions or collateral drawdowns if the level is not maintained, as discussed further in Section 7 of this Guidebook.

### **Traditional Community Solar Under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts**

For projects approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission after the enactment of Public Act 102-0662, at least 50% of subscribers (on a capacity basis) to the project's nameplate capacity must be residential or small commercial customers with subscriptions below 25kW in size. The subscribed percentage should be submitted to the utility prior to submission to the Program Administrator. Additionally, the small subscriber adder is now incorporated into the base REC price for community solar projects and a distinct small subscriber adder no longer applies for projects under the 2021 and 2022 REC Delivery Contracts.

#### **Community Solar Rooftop Adder (Only available under 2024 REC Contract)**

For Community Solar projects mounted on a rooftop, a \$5/REC adder will be applied to the REC price. To be eligible for the adder, the project design submitted to the Program will need to specify that the system is a roof-mounted system. If after ICC approval of the project, the design of the project changes and it is ultimately built as a ground-mounted system, the adder will not be included in the final REC price. More information on this adder is found in Section 1.I.

### **Traditional Community Solar Under All REC Delivery Contracts**

A small subscriber is defined as a customer on a residential or small commercial rate class with a subscription of less than 25 kW. Eligible small commercial rate classes for the investor-owned utilities are as follows:<sup>59</sup>

- Commonwealth Edison: "watt-hour delivery class" and "small load delivery class"
- Ameren Illinois: "DS-2"

To be considered a small subscriber in the Program, the subscription or sum of multiple subscriptions to each individual Community Solar project under one utility account may not exceed 25 kW AC. For a particular project, a developer may count a residential or small commercial customer with subscriptions not exceeding 25kW at that project, toward the project's 50% minimum requirement. A developer's inclusion of a customer's subscriptions ( $\leq 25$  kW in total) for purposes of counting toward the 50% minimum requirement at one project is not affected by the customer's subscriptions to other projects, where eligibility for the 50% minimum requirement is determined separately..<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> The IPA understands that Section 16-107.5(l)(1) of the Public Utilities Act does not obligate electric utilities serving less than 200,000 customers as of January 1, 2021 to provide net metering for subscriptions to community renewable generation projects, and that MidAmerican Energy Company accordingly no longer provides such services under its tariffs.

<sup>60</sup> As first clarified in the January 13, 2023 Program announcement: <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Jan-13-ABP-Announcement-final-for-publication.pdf>





## Section 7: Annual Reports, Minimum Equity Standard, Collateral, and Performance Evaluation

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## A. Annual Report Requirements

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On an annual basis, each Approved Vendor will submit an Annual Report of the contracts and systems in its portfolio<sup>61</sup>. The Annual Report will serve as the basis for verifying that RECs from projects are being delivered to the applicable utility, and, absent corrective actions taken by the Approved Vendor, can be a tool used to determine what actions may be taken by the utilities to enforce the contractual requirements that RECs are delivered, including, but not limited to, drawing on collateral. Additionally, the Annual Report will be used by the Agency to consider the ongoing eligibility of an Approved Vendor to continue participation in the Program.

On an annual basis, each Approved Vendor is required to submit an Annual Report of the contracts and systems in its portfolio, which serves as the basis for verifying that RECs are being delivered as required. Data required for reporting of subscriber information for the Annual Report must be submitted by June 10<sup>th</sup> each Program Year so that the Program Administrator may prepare the Annual Report in a timely fashion.

The report will include the following information:

- RECs delivered by each of the systems in the portfolio
- Status of all systems that have been approved, but not yet energized, including any extensions requested and granted
- Energized systems that have not delivered RECs in the year
- Balance of collateral held by each utility
- A summary of requests for REC obligation suspensions, reductions, or eliminations, due to force majeure events or other circumstances
- Information on consumer complaints received
- Attestation that any work performed on projects across the Delivery Year conformed with the Prevailing Wage Act, if applicable (820 ILCS 130/0.01)
- Other information related to ongoing Program participation, including use of graduates of job training programs For Approved Vendors with community solar projects, the report will also include:
  - Percentage of each system subscribed on a capacity basis
    - The number and type of subscribers (e.g., residential, small commercial, large commercial/industrial), including capacity allocated to each type
    - Subscriber turn-over rates

The Annual Report will require Approved Vendor's with community solar projects to enter each subscriber, the subscriber's contract start date and end date, whether the subscriber meets the requirements of a small subscriber, and the subscriber's subscription size in kW AC. The portal will automatically prorate all data to determine the average subscription amount and percentage of small subscribers based on this data. A signed disclosure form is required in order for a given subscriber to count towards a community solar project's subscriber tally in either an annual or quarterly report. As with project cost data, the IPA will treat this subscriber information as confidential and proprietary and will provide protection of this information as

<sup>61</sup> Approved Vendors may request confidential treatment of the Annual Report. However, aggregated information from Annual Reports may be publicly disclosed by the Agency to the extent that it does not disclose Approved Vendor-specific confidential information.

required under Section 1-120 of the IPA Act (including asserting any applicable protections in response to FOIA, discovery, or other requests).

Approved Vendors will be given 90 days to cure any deficiencies found by the Agency and/or utilities. Failure to cure deficiencies may result in the contracting utility drawing on collateral or other consequences outlined under the REC Delivery Contracts. In addition, Approved Vendors' program eligibility may be jeopardized by failure to address and cure deficiencies.

Each Approved Vendor will be able to change its point of contact for completing the Annual Report at any time if desired. The Agency will review the annual reports as well as utility-reported information on REC deliveries and community solar subscribers to assess compliance with the requirements of the Adjustable Block Program and, if there are underperformances, coordinate with the applicable utility on drawing on collateral. That process is described in Section 7.C.

## **B. Minimum Equity Standard**

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Public Act 102-0662 directs the Agency to establish an Equity Accountability System consistent with the Minimum Equity Standard ("MES"). The MES requires all applications for renewable energy credit procurements to comply with specific minimum equity commitments. The Equity Accountability System ("EAS") took effect on June 1, 2023, the start of the 2023-2024 Program year. The MES requires that starting June 1, 2023, 10% of the workforce on projects developed for the Program be made up of equity eligible persons, with an increase of this percentage to 30% by 2030. All participants in the Program must comply with the MES on an annual basis. For the 2024-45 Program Year the MES requirement remains at 10%, meaning 10% of the workforce on projects developed for the Program be made up of equity eligible persons.

For the purposes of the MES, "participation" in the Program includes:<sup>62</sup>

- Submitting projects to Illinois Shines.
- Performing construction on any project intended on being submitted to Illinois Shines.
- Conducting any sales or marketing activity for projects that have been or will be submitted to the Program.
- Managing subscriptions for a Community Solar project that holds a Renewable Energy Credit (REC) contract (including projects approved prior to the passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act [CEJA]).
- Maintaining a project on a waitlist.
- Otherwise conducting business on a project seeking or that holds a REC contract.

### **Equity Eligible Persons Certification and Recertification for Purposes of the MES**

EEPs that do not serve as majority owners of an EEC and that qualify based on residence must renew their EEP certification every 2 years. EEPs that that do not serve as majority owners of an EEC and qualify based

<sup>62</sup> This extends to MES Compliance Plans, MES Mid-Year Reports, and MES Year-End Reports.

on one of the other criteria will not be required to renew certification by virtue of the underlying reason for certification being unalterable.

## **MES Compliance Plans**

By the beginning of each Program Year, on or around June 1, Approved Vendors and Designees are required to file an annual Minimum Equity Standard Compliance Plan ("Compliance Plan"). The Compliance Plan will reflect how the Approved Vendor or Designee plans to achieve compliance with the minimum equity standard percentage for work completed in the upcoming Program Year.

If an entity applies to be an Approved Vendor or registers as a Designee or nested Designee during a Program year, the Agency will require a Compliance Plan at the time of the initial application. Only EEC Approved Vendors, EEC Designees, and EEC Nested Designees are exempt from the MES Compliance Plan requirement. Approved Vendors who are Equity Eligible Contractors are, by virtue of their participation in the Program, in full compliance with the Equity Accountability System and thus do not need to submit a Compliance Plan. Approved Vendors that are affiliated with each other may be allowed to submit a combined Compliance Plan where they have a common parent company. The IPA will issue guidance on how to request such permission from the Agency.

### **Compliance Plans must include the following items:<sup>63</sup>**

- A statement of intent to comply with equity accountability standards for the applicable Program year and hire a diverse project workforce including Equity Eligible Persons and Equity Eligible Contractors. This will include a narrative description of how the applicant will meet these commitments.
- 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.
- Plans for the use of Equity Eligible Contractors, if applicable.
- Applicant classification (i.e., Minority-owned, Woman-owned, Disabled-owned, Veteran-owned, Small Business, etc.), if applicable.
- Communication plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of Equity Eligible Persons and Equity Eligible Contractors.

### **Compliance Plan Evaluation, Scoring and Correction Processes:**

- Submitted compliance plans will be reviewed to confirm that all required information has been provided.
- Fully submitted compliance plans are reviewed and either approved or denied.
- If a Compliance Plan is denied, the AV or Designee will have an opportunity to revise and re-submit their compliance plans.

<sup>63</sup> Approved Vendors in the Program will not be required to report on data regarding their Designees but will be required to report which Designees they worked with in the delivery year to allow the Agency to correlate activities and compliance.

## **MES Mid-Year Report**

Halfway through the Program year, each Approved Vendor and Designee must respond to a written inquiry from the Agency or Program Administrator, by submitting a Mid-Year report confirming that their Minimum Equity Standard Compliance Plan is progressing in accordance with MES requirements.

## **MES Year-End Report**

Within 45 days after the end of the Program year, each Approved Vendor or Designee must submit a Year-End Report. If the AV has no activity during the relevant year, that may be indicated on the Year-End Report and compliance obligations will not apply. The Year-End Report will confirm or update information from the original Compliance Plan including data on actual performance. The Year-End Report should reflect any major differences from the Compliance Plan such as changes in project workforce, or innovative ways to provide employment opportunities to Equity Eligible Persons and residents of environmental justice communities. Data and information required to be submitted via the MES Year-End Report includes:

- Approved Vendor and Designee information
- Project workforce total
- Project workforce demographic and geographic information
- EEP workforce totals, including proof of EEP eligibility and any supporting documentation for any EEPs not registered in the IPA's Energy Workforce Equity Portal (e.g., for individuals that qualify based on residency in an Equity Investment Eligible Community [EIEC], submission of proof of primary residence will be required)
- Description of outreach efforts employed by the Approved Vendor or Designee to recruit EEPs
- Job training program graduate hiring data, Illinois-based workforce diversity data
- Other diversity and workforce data previously collected during the Annual Report

## **MES Compliance Schedule**

- Mid-April – MES Compliance Plan for the following Program Year opens for submissions
- May 1 – MES Year-End Report for the current Program Year opens for submissions
- June 1 - Deadline for submission of MES Compliance Plan for the following Program Year
- July 15 – Deadline for submission of MES Year-End Report for the previous Program Year

Note that these dates may vary slightly each Program Year.

	MES Year-End Report	MES Compliance Plan
Submission Deadline	July 15	On or around June 1 (Program Year opening)
Intent	The MES Year-End Report is intended for your organization to document how it implemented and achieved compliance with the MES over the applicable Program Year. For this report, the applicable Program Year is 2023-24, and the MES requirement is 10%.	The MES Compliance Plan is intended for organizations to show how they <i>plan</i> to achieve the MES for the upcoming Program Year. In this Compliance Plan, you will explain your organization's plans to conduct outreach and hire EEPs to reach the 10% MES for the 2024-25 Program Year.
Data Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual project workforce total</li> <li>Actual project workforce demographic information</li> <li>Actual EEP total</li> <li>Description of outreach efforts employed to recruit EEPs</li> <li>Job training program graduate hiring data, Illinois-based workforce diversity data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimated project workforce total</li> <li>Estimated project workforce demographic information</li> <li>Estimated number of EEPs currently in your project workforce</li> <li>Number of EEPs your organization seeks to hire over the Program Year to achieve compliance</li> <li>Communication/outreach plan that will be used to increase the utilization of EEPs</li> </ul>
Who Needs to Submit	All AVs, Designees, and Nested Designees who participated in the applicable Program Year. EECs are exempt from the MES requirement but will need to provide other data.	All AVs, Designees, and Nested Designees who intend to participate in the applicable Program Year. EECs are exempt from this requirement.

### Waiver from Minimum Equity Standards

The Agency may grant a waiver from this requirement in rare cases. The Agency will grant waivers where the applicant provides evidence of significant due diligence toward meeting the Minimum Equity Standard by completing the MES Waiver request and receiving a minimum score of 20 points based on the MES Waiver scoring rubric.

Final waivers can be found in Appendix K and on the Equity Accountability System page on the Program website: <https://illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system/>.

### Failure to Meet the Minimum Equity Standard

If the Agency determines that an Approved Vendor or Designee has failed to comply with any of the requirements set forth by the Agency to ensure compliance with the MES, the entity will be notified and may face disciplinary action. The Agency will impose consequences for violations by Program participants, including but not limited to:

- Notice of Potential Violation
- Suspension of the entity's ability to submit project applications to IPA programs during the remainder of the Program Year.
- Repeated violations could potentially result in the Approved Vendor or Designee becoming suspended from the IPA's programs for an entire Program Year or more.
- Provision of Mid-Year Progress information

## **C. Collateral and Performance Evaluation Mechanics**

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Following Commission approval of a batch, the Approved Vendor must post collateral for all systems in the batch within 30 business days. Initial collateral for any system is 5% of the total REC Contract value for that system,<sup>64</sup> based on the capacity factor and system size proposed in the Part I application. The collateral amount is not adjusted if the final system size and/or capacity factor (and thus resulting quantity of RECs for payment) differs from the approved amount as it relates to the project's Part I size. Collateral may be posted in the form of cash or a Letter of Credit. A Letter of Credit must use standard forms provided with the published REC Contract; minor modifications may be allowed if approved by the counterparty utility. A Letter of Credit must be posted by the Seller.

In order to further reduce barriers to Program participation for schools in need, the 2024 Long-Term Plan modifies the terms of the 2024 REC Contract for the Public Schools category by removing the collateral posting requirement for distributed generation projects that are participating in the Tier 1/Tier 2/EJC subcategory of the Public Schools category.

### **Collateral Adjustments**

Collateral and performance evaluation is generally handled at a portfolio level, i.e., pooled across all batches and systems for a given Approved Vendor. There are two forms of annual evaluation, described further below: REC delivery performance (for all systems) and community solar system parameters. Underperformance by any system in either of those categories can trigger a collateral drawdown for a delivery year. In any delivery year where one or more systems under the REC Contract have a collateral drawdown, the Approved Vendor may elect to pay the total drawdown as cash or have the drawdown taken from posted collateral. If two forms of collateral have been posted (cash and letter(s) of credit), the Approved Vendor may additionally choose which form of collateral shall be drawn upon. These provisions are not applicable to the 2021 nor 2022 20-year REC Delivery Contracts; as those contracts are structured for payment upon delivery of RECs, there is no drawdown mechanism built into the 20-year contracts.

Within 90 days after any collateral draw, the Approved Vendor will be required to post additional collateral to "top up" its total collateral, to equal 5% of total remaining contract value (where each system's contractual value declines by 1/15 each contract year). The Approved Vendor can request the withholding of the next payment(s) due under the contract (if any) in lieu of "topping up" the collateral. When the last system within

<sup>64</sup> For Traditional Community Solar projects on the 2019 REC Contract the value of the system also included small subscriber adders to the REC price.

a batch reaches the end of its delivery term, an Approved Vendor may request a refund of the collateral associated with that batch.

Any failure to post collateral or pay for collateral drawdowns on a timely basis as required shall be an event of default under the REC Contract.

If a system receives an interconnection cost estimate from the interconnecting utility prior to energization that exceeds 30 cents per watt AC (\$300 per kW AC), then within 14 days of having received that estimate, the Approved Vendor shall have the option of withdrawing that system from the REC Contract and receiving a refund of 75% of its previously posted collateral associated with that system.

## REC Delivery Performance Annual Evaluation

At the time of energization, a schedule of annual REC deliveries over the term of the applicable contract (i.e., 15 years under the 2019 REC Contract and the 2021 and 2022 15-year REC Contracts, 20 years under the 2021 and 2022 20-year REC Contracts) will be set, based on the system's approved capacity factor and a 0.5% annual reduction of delivery obligations.<sup>65</sup>

Delivery performance evaluation methodologies vary across the 2019, 2021, and 2022 REC Delivery Contracts based upon the differing payment structures of the contracts. AVs should look to their specific contract terms to determine delivery performance evaluation methodologies, if necessary.

In certain circumstances Approved Vendors may request to have a delivery obligation suspended, reduced, or eliminated without penalty. Specific circumstances that allow for changes in delivery obligations are available under the REC Delivery Contract and AVs should look to their specific contract terms to determine how to reduce delivery obligations, if necessary.

To reduce or suspend delivery obligations under the REC Contract, Approved Vendors must demonstrate attempts to cure the situation and demonstrate that reasonable and timely measures have been taken to cure the situation. In cases of systems not performing at the level expected in absence of force majeure events, Approved Vendors may request a reduction in delivery obligations in exchange for the return to the utility of a payment adjusted to account for all undelivered RECs at the original delivery level as the time of the request.

Under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and the 2021 and 2022 15-year REC Delivery Contracts, at the end of the delivery term for the last system under the Approved Vendor's REC Contract, any unused balance of surplus RECs may be used to receive a refund for prior collateral drawdowns that related to REC underperformance.<sup>66</sup> The lowest-valued underdelivered RECs will first be refunded to the Approved Vendor, moving then to higher-valued underdelivered RECs, until no surplus RECs remain in the surplus REC account. If any surplus RECs remain in the surplus REC account after all prior collateral drawdowns have been refunded, no additional refund will be made for those leftover surplus RECs. Under the 2021 and 2022 20-

<sup>65</sup> An Approved Vendor may request for a system's annual REC delivery obligations to be reduced mid-contract. The Buyer and Seller would then seek to negotiate a settlement payment as part of the reduction in delivery obligations; the Buyer would not be required to ultimately accept the request.

<sup>66</sup> This refund procedure would not apply to prior collateral drawdowns based on annual community solar system parameters.



Year REC Delivery Contracts, at the end of the delivery term for the last system under the Approved Vendor's REC Contract, any unused balance of surplus RECs will be returned to the Approved Vendor.

### **Community Solar System Parameters Evaluation**

Under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and the 2021, 2022, and 2024 15-year REC Delivery Contracts, after each Delivery Year, the Approved Vendor will be required to report subscriber information for each community solar system including subscription amounts, small subscriber status, and subscription start/end dates. The IPA will evaluate the system's share of physical capacity that is (i) subscribed and (ii) subscribed by small subscribers, based on daily averages over the course of the year. Based on the subscription share and the small subscriber mix actually realized for the delivery year, a REC price and REC quantity owed for that delivery year under the terms of the Illinois Shines program will be calculated. This will be compared to the actual contractual payment previously made for that system corresponding to that delivery year, and any negative difference will become a collateral drawdown for that system for that delivery year. Any annual "overperformance" with regard to community solar system parameters will not result in any extra payment, "banking" for future delivery years, or carryback for prior delivery years.

Under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 20-Year REC Delivery Contract, the Approved Vendor also will be required to report subscriber information for each community solar project. The IPA will evaluate the percentage of each community solar project's Actual Nameplate Capacity that has been subscribed as of the first business day of June and the first business day of December. The quantity of RECs eligible for payment for a given community solar project will be based on the larger of these two numbers. This will be compared to the actual payment previously made for that system corresponding to that delivery year, and any negative difference will be trued-up after the conclusion of the delivery year.

### **Community Solar Quarterly Reporting**

Subscriber workbooks and Quarterly Reports must be updated by Approved Vendors by the 10th of the month following the close of the Quarterly Period to support the quarterly subscriber review process. Edits cannot be made to Quarterly Reports after this deadline.

As such, the Quarterly Report due date is the last day to make changes to subscriber information (including subscription sizes, adding new subscribers, or terminating subscribers) for a community solar project's quarterly review.

The subscriber reports due on the 10th of the month should always reflect subscribers to projects *as of the end of the Quarterly Period* (i.e., last day of the preceding month). Community Solar Quarterly Reports are required the first year after Energization/Part II verification for projects on 15-year REC contracts. Subscriber verification for 20-year contracts will occur bi-annually. AVs must provide the Program Administrator updated subscriber records for the purposes of the annual subscriber evaluation on June 10. More information on the subscriber verification process can be found in the applicable REC Contract.



## Section 8: Invoicing and Payments

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B. Invoicing Schedule for Incentives Under the REC Contract .....	109

An Approved Vendor may submit an invoice for payment to the counterparty utility only for systems that have been energized and for which the Program Administrator has verified Part II of the project application.<sup>67</sup> If the Approved Vendor under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract has elected for the 5% collateral under the REC Contract to be withheld from the first REC payment for a system, this balance will be released at the end of the contractual period for the last system in that batch. For all other REC Delivery Contracts upfront collateral is required and cannot be withheld from the first REC payment.<sup>68</sup>

## A. Advance of Capital for EEC Approved Vendors

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As outlined in Section 1.D of this Guidebook, Equity Eligible Contractors can request an advance of up to 50% of the REC Contract value for projects submitted to the EEC category prior to Energization. The option to receive an advance of capital is intended to reduce financial barriers experienced by EECs and ensure access to Illinois Shines for Equity Eligible Contractors.

Requests for advance of capital will be capped to the lesser of \$750,000 or 50% of the REC contract value per project. These are maximums; the Agency may approve less than the amount requested. The size of REC contracts eligible for an advance of capital is capped at \$1.5 million in total REC incentives. This cap will be for a single project – if an EEC or its affiliates requests advances for multiple projects, there will be a cap on the cumulative total of advances awarded to the EEC and its affiliates in a single Program Year of \$5 million.<sup>69</sup> Below outlines the steps for EEC advance of capital. The Seller is the EEC-certified Approved Vendor while the Buyer is the contracting utility. The advance of capital is only offered for projects submitted to the EEC Program category, and is not offered to EEC-submitted projects in other Program categories.

1. During the Part I application process an EEC-certified Approved Vendor may submit a request indicating the advance of capital amount requested. Both the request and the amount to be disbursed is subject to IPA approval.
  - a. The request must be submitted providing the information outlined in Appendix O. Where possible, any claims made in the request should be reinforced with supporting documentation.
2. Upon Part I verification and contract or product order approval by the Commission, the EEC-certified Approved Vendor submits verification of milestone achievement for Agency review and approval for disbursement.
3. If disbursement is approved, the Agency sends the Buyer and Seller written notice of approval, a revised Schedule A indicating the date of approval and the amount approved for disbursement.
4. The EEC-certified Approved Vendor may then invoice the Buyer for the approved disbursement on or after the first day (but no later than the tenth day) of *the month after* the written approval is sent from the IPA to the Approved Vendor.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Details are further outlined in the 2022 REC Delivery Contracts.

<sup>68</sup> There is one exception to this requirement extended to distributed generation projects that are classified as Tier 1/Tier 2/EJC participating in the Public Schools category.

<sup>69</sup> Additional detail can be found in Section 7.4.6.1 of the Agency's 2024 Long-Term Plan.

<sup>70</sup> More details on invoicing after an advance of capital are contained in the 2022 REC Contracts.

Where a project that has received an advance of capital is not completed and the EEC does not return the advanced funds, that EEC and any affiliates will face disciplinary action and will not be eligible to submit additional project applications to the Program until, at minimum, that debt is paid.

## B. Invoicing Schedule for Incentives Under the REC Contract

The payment terms vary based on the REC Delivery Contract as shown in the following table:

Contract	Delivery Term	Category	Payment Structure
2019 REC Delivery Contract	15 years	Small DG	100% upfront payment at Energization
		Large DG	20% upfront payment at Energization and the remainder ratably over 4 years
		Traditional CS	
2021 15-Year REC Delivery Contract	15 years	Small DG	100% upfront payment at Energization
		Large DG on waitlist	20% upfront payment at Energization and the remainder ratably over 4 years
		Large DG not on waitlist	15% upfront payment at Energization and the remainder ratably over 6 years
		Community-Driven CS	
2021 20-Year REC Delivery Contract	20 years	Traditional Community Solar	Pay-as-deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If CS (Traditional or on Public Schools) adjust biannually based on subscription info in bi-annual reports</li> <li>If DG on Public Schools, no biannual adjustment</li> </ul>
		DG or CS on Public Schools	
2022 & 2024 15-Year REC Delivery Contract	15 years	Small DG	100% upfront payment at Energization
		Large DG	15% upfront payment at Energization and the remainder ratably over 6 years
		Community-Driven CS	15% upfront payment at Energization and the remainder ratably over 6 years
2022 & 2024 20-Year REC Delivery Contract	20 years	Traditional Community Solar	Pay-as-deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If CS (Traditional or on Public Schools) adjust biannually based on subscription info in bi-annual reports</li> <li>If DG on Public Schools, no biannual adjustment</li> </ul>
		DG or CS on Public Schools	

The formula for calculating the total REC payment of an energized system under a 15-year REC Delivery Contract is as follows:

*System (inverter) size in MW AC x approved capacity factor x 365 days/year x 24 hours/day x 15 years x 1 REC/MWh x \$/REC.*

For community solar projects, the system size in this formula is only the portion of the system's nameplate capacity that is subscribed.

For projects under a 20-year REC Delivery Contract, REC payments will be based upon actual REC deliveries (adjusted for subscription levels for community solar projects).

Invoices for payment may be submitted to the counterparty utility on a quarterly basis. To facilitate invoicing and payment, at the end of each quarterly period, the IPA and Program Administrator will prepare a quarterly netting statement for each contracting utility applicable to each of its REC Contracts which includes payment-related information. The IPA, through its Program Administrator, expects to issue quarterly netting statements by the dates outlined in the table below. The 2021 and 2022 REC Delivery Contracts have three quarterly payment cycles and quarterly netting statements will be issued by the first day of each month of the respective quarterly payment cycle.

The Program Administrator will make an invoice available to each Approved Vendor that has had projects Part II verified during the prior quarter. Previously energized projects with outstanding payments remaining will also have their payment due included on the invoice. An Approved Vendor may submit its invoice for payment to the applicable counterparty utility no later than the invoice due dates outlined in the table below. An Approved Vendor may submit its invoice for payment to the applicable counterparty utility no later than the 10th day of each month of the respective quarterly payment cycle.

Contract	Production of Quarterly Netting Statements	Invoice Due Dates	Payment Due Dates
2019 REC Delivery Contracts	June 1 September 1 December 1 March 1	June 10 September 10 December 10 March 10	June 30 September 30 December 31 March 31
2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts	Payment Cycle A		
	January 1 April 1 July 1 October 1	January 10 April 10 July 10 October 10	January 31 April 30 July 31 October 31
	Payment Cycle B		
	February 1 May 1 August 1 November 1	February 10 May 10 August 10 November 10	February 28 May 31 August 31 November 30
	Payment Cycle C		
	March 1 June 1 September 1 December 1	March 10 June 10 September 10 December 10	March 31 June 30 September 30 December 31

All timely submitted invoices under a given REC Contract shall be payable and due on the last business day of the month in which the invoice is rendered, or the last business day of the following month if the payment is the first payment made under a given REC Contract.

Each quarterly invoice submitted to the counterparty utility must include the following:

- invoice amount;
- cumulative amount already received by the Approved Vendor under the REC Contract;
- maximum allowable payment; and
- the GATS or M-RETS Unit ID of each system included in the invoice.

In order to allow the Program Administrator sufficient time to verify the application, Approved Vendors should submit distributed generation Part II applications no later than four weeks prior to the opening of an invoicing window. For community solar projects, because of the more complex verification process that includes validating subscriber data, Approved Vendors should submit Part II applications no later than six weeks prior to the opening of an invoicing window.

The Program Administrator will endeavor to review and verify Part II applications that follow this guidance prior to the opening of the relevant invoicing window. Should the Program Administrator have questions and request additional information as part of the review process, Part II verification may be delayed beyond the upcoming invoicing window depending on how long it takes to resolve any open issues an application may have after a preliminary review.





## Section 9: Guidebook Update Process



The Guidebook will be periodically updated both as the program changes and as additional questions and issues arise. Minor updates to the Guidebook will be made by the IPA in consultation with the Program Administrator on a regular basis. Such changes will be announced on the [illinoisshines.com](http://illinoisshines.com) website; the version of the Guidebook published there will always be the latest version.

The Agency may also contemplate more significant changes to the Guidebook that would benefit from stakeholder input. In these cases, a notice of the stakeholder process and a copy of the draft changes will be published on the [illinoisshines.com](http://illinoisshines.com) website. Stakeholders will be provided the opportunity to read the draft changes, attend a stakeholder meeting and/or webinar, and provide written comments on the proposed changes. Those comments will be reviewed by the Agency and its program Administrator prior to adopting more significant changes to the Program Guidebook.

**Program Guidebook Version History:**

[Program Guidebook Draft for Stakeholder Comment \(November 28, 2018\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(December 31, 2018\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(January 31, 2019\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(April 3, 2019\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(May 31, 2019\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(November 18, 2020\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(February 26, 2021\)](#)

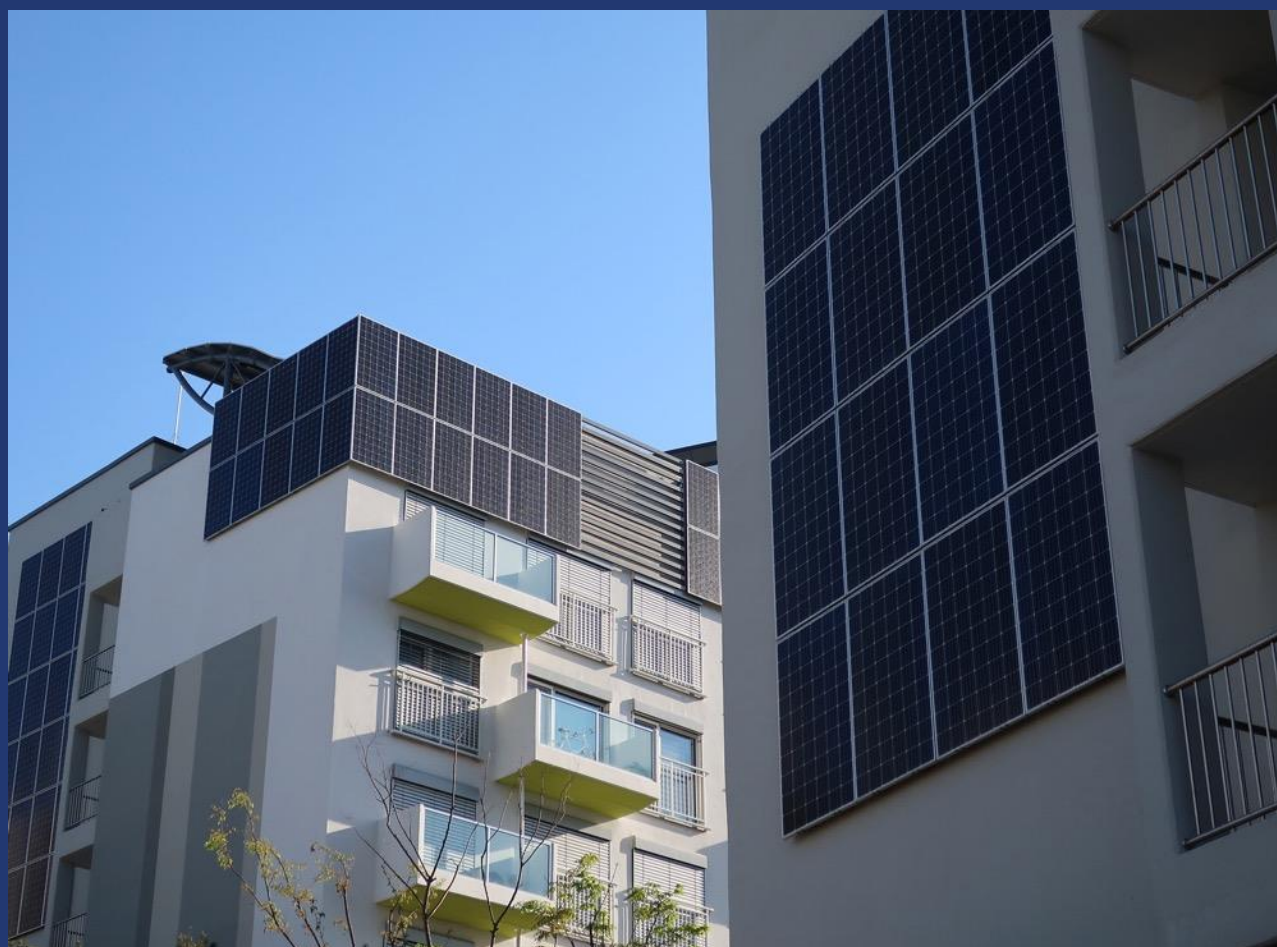
[Program Guidebook \(June 4, 2021\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(December 10, 2021\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(August 22, 2022\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(October 18, 2022\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(February 27, 2024\)](#)



## Section 10: Glossary

**Affiliated/Affiliate:** With respect to any entity, any other entity that, directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with each other or a third entity. “Control” means the possession, directly or indirectly, of the power to direct the management and policies of an entity, whether through the ownership of voting securities, by contract, or otherwise. Affiliates may not have shared sales or revenue-sharing arrangements, or common debt and equity financing arrangements. Family members may be considered affiliates in certain circumstances.

**Agency:** The Illinois Power Agency (See 20 ILCS 3855)

**Agrivoltaics:** A dual-use configuration where solar photovoltaic energy generation and agricultural production (crops, livestock, and livestock products as defined by 505 ILCS 5/3.02) are directly integrated and simultaneously producing within the footprint of the project. For the purposes of this Program, at least 50% of the project footprint must feature agricultural production at the time of project Energization/Part II verification.

**Ameren Illinois:** Ameren Illinois Company<sup>71</sup>

**Approved Vendor:** An entity approved by the Program Administrator to submit project applications to the Adjustable Block Program and act as counterparty to Illinois Shines contracts with the utilities.

**Batch:** A batch is a group of project applications submitted to the Program. The minimum size of a batch submission to the Program is 100 kW and the maximum is 5 MW.

**Block:** A defined size of Program capacity with a defined level of incentives.

**Category:** A classification based on a system size and type. The program has six categories: Small Distributed Generation (DG) for DG systems 25 kW and below, Large Distributed Generation for DG systems above 25 kW up to 5 MW in size, Community Solar, Community-Driven Community Solar, Public Schools, and Equity Eligible Contractors.

**Co-located:** Co-location of distributed generation projects occurs when multiple projects developed by one entity or affiliated entities are located on a single parcel. Co-location of community solar projects occurs when projects developed by the same or affiliated entities sited on the same or contiguous parcels. Additionally, the parcel or parcels may not have been divided into multiple parcels in the two years prior to the project’s application to the Program. More information on co-location can be found in Sections 4.F and 4.G of this Guidebook.

**ComEd:** Commonwealth Edison Company<sup>72</sup>

**Community Solar:** A solar project which (1) is interconnected to an electric utility, a municipal utility, or a rural electric cooperative, and (2) allows subscribers to pay for shares or some other “interest” in the project, receiving bill credits in exchange. Also known as a “photovoltaic community renewable generation project.” (Note: There are two distinct types of Community Solar projects in the Program, *Traditional Community Solar* projects and *Community-Driven Community Solar* projects.)

<sup>71</sup> See: <https://www.ameren.com/illinois/>

<sup>72</sup> See: <https://www.comed.com/Pages/default.aspx>

**Community-Driven Community Solar:** Community solar projects up to 5 MW in size featuring attributes allowing the project to be evaluated for participation in the community-driven community solar category, as established through Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(v) of the IPA Act.

**Community Solar Subscriber:** A person or entity who (i) takes delivery service from an electric utility, municipal utility, or rural electric cooperative, and (ii) has a subscription of no less than 200 watts to a community renewable generation project that is located in the utility's service area.

**Community Solar Subscription:** A portion of a community renewable generation project expressed in kilowatts, which is sized primarily to offset part or all of the subscriber's electricity usage.

**Designee:** Third-party (i.e., non-Approved Vendor) entities that have direct interaction with end-use customers. This includes installers, entities that perform maintenance and repair, warranty holders, marketing firms, lead generators, and sales organizations. The Agency reserves the right to add additional categories of market activities as needed.

**Distributed Generation:** A system which is located on-site, behind a customer's meter, and used primarily to offset a single customer's load; it cannot exceed 5,000 kW AC in size.

**Electric Cooperative:** (a) Any not-for-profit corporation or other person that owns, controls, operates or manages, directly or indirectly, within this State, any plant, equipment or property for the production, transmission, sale, delivery or furnishing of electricity and (b) that either is or has been financed in whole or in part under the federal "Rural Electrification Act of 1936" and the Acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto, or is directly or indirectly caused to be formed by any one or more such not-for-profit corporations or other persons that is or has been so financed.

**Equity Eligible Person/Equity Investment Eligible Person:** 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 Preapprenticeship 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; or Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community.

**Energized System:** A system which is complete, has received a utility permission to operate, and has completed and received approval of Part II of the program application, including having initiated an irrevocable Standing Order for its RECs to the applicable utility buyer in either GATS or M-RETS.

**Equity Accountability System ("EAS"):** The Equity Accountability System is established by P.A. 102-0662 and includes the minimum equity standards for all renewable energy procurements, the equity category of the Adjustable Block Program (Illinois Shines program), and the equity prioritization for noncompetitive procurements. The EAS is to be successful in advancing priority access to the clean energy economy for businesses 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.

**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 a natural person that is an eligible person offering personal services as an independent contractor.

**Equity Investment Eligible Community/Eligible Community:** An eligible community is defined as the following areas (1) R3 Areas as established pursuant to Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, where residents have historically been excluded from economic opportunities, including opportunities in the energy sector; and (2) Environmental justice communities, as defined by the Illinois Power Agency pursuant to the Illinois Power Agency Act, but excluding racial and ethnic indicators, where residents have historically been subject to disproportionate burdens of pollution, including pollution from the energy sector.

**Group:** One of the two Groups used to classify a system in the Program based on location. The Groups are:

- Group A – Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in MISO
- Group B – ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM

**ICC:** Illinois Commerce Commission (see 220 ILCS 5); the State Agency charged with regulating public utilities in Illinois, as well as approving aspects of the Adjustable Block Program.

**IPA:** Illinois Power Agency; the State Agency charged with administering the procurement of renewable energy resources to meet Illinois' renewable energy portfolio standard, in addition to procuring electric power supply for eligible retail customers of electric utilities and other responsibilities.

**House of Worship:** A facility that is used exclusively by a religious society or body of persons as a place for religious exercise or religious worship and that is exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 15-40 of the Property Tax Code.

**Interconnection Agreement:** An agreement with the utility to interconnect the photovoltaic community solar or distributed generation system to the utility's distribution system.

**Large DG:** A distributed generation system larger than 25 kW, up to 5 MW. Prior to the December 14, 2021 reopening, Large DG projects needed to be larger than 10 kW and less than or equal to 2 MW in size.

**M-RETS:** The Midwest Renewable Energy Tracking System. This is an independent entity from the State of Illinois, the IPA, and the Adjustable Block Program. It is one of two tracking registries, which along with PJM-GATS can be used to track creation, transfer, and retirement of RECs. More information can be found at the M-RETS website at <https://www.mrets.org/>.

**MidAmerican:** MidAmerican Energy Company<sup>73</sup>

**Minimal Shading Criteria:** No obstruction is closer than a distance ("D") of twice the height ("H") it extends above the PV array. All obstructions that project above the point on the array that is closest to the obstruction shall meet this criterion for the array to be considered minimally shaded. Any obstruction located north of all

<sup>73</sup> See: <https://www.midamericanenergy.com/home>

points on the array need not be considered as shading obstructions. Obstructions that are subject to these criteria include:

1. Any vent, chimney, architectural feature, mechanical equipment, or other obstruction that is on the roof or any other part of the building.
2. Any part of the neighboring terrain.
3. Any tree that is mature at the time of installation of the PV system.
4. Any tree that is planted on the building lot or neighboring lots or planned to be planted as part of landscaping for the building. (The expected shading shall be based on the mature height of the tree.)
5. Any existing neighboring building or structure.
6. Any planned neighboring building or structure that is known to the applicant or building owner.
7. Any telephone or other utility pole that is closer than 30 feet from the nearest point of the array.

**Mt. Carmel:** Mt. Carmel Public Utility<sup>74</sup>

**Nameplate Capacity:** The aggregate inverter nameplate capacity in kilowatts AC.

**Nested Designee:** Entities that have direct interaction with end-use customers related to the Program or projects intended to be applied to the Program on behalf of Designees. This may include solar installers, marketing firms, lead generators, and sales organizations. Nested Designees must clarify in their registration the Designee under which they are registering.

**Net Metering:** A provision in an electric utility's tariff that allows for crediting a customer's bill for all or some of the production of a distributed generation or community solar facility which has been exported to the distribution grid.

**Part I:** The initial application into the program which contains detailed information on the system and its location. Part I approval results in an ICC approved contract with one of the distribution utilities. A system must be energized within 18 months (24 months for community solar projects) after this contract is approved.

**Part II:** The second part of the application completed after energization, demonstrating completion of the project in accordance with the Part I parameters approved.

**Project Workforce:** Employees, contractors and their employees, and subcontractors and their employees, whose 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 in the IPA-administered programs and procurements under Section 1-75(c) of the IPA Act. This shall include both project installation workforce and workforce in administrative, sales, marketing, and technical roles where those workers' duties are performed in Illinois. For purposes of this definition, 'directly required by or substantially related to' shall be construed to be any direct employee of the Approved Vendor, Designee, or any contractor and its employees whose contract exceeds 5% of the REC Contract value. Employees of contractors below that threshold may be counted on a voluntary basis, but if the Approved Vendor or Designee includes at least one such contractor whose contract is less than 5% of the REC Contract value, then all contractors below the threshold must be included.

<sup>74</sup> See: <https://mtcpu.com/>



**GATS:** The PJM Environmental Information Service Generation Attribute Tracking System. This is an independent entity from the State of Illinois, the IPA, and the Adjustable Block Program. It is one of two tracking registries, which along with M-RETS can be used to track creation, transfer, and retirement of RECs. More information can be found at the PJM-GATS website at <https://www.pjm-eis.com>.

**Prevailing Wage:** A minimum compensation level set by the Illinois Department of Labor by county for construction activities related to public works. Section 1-75(c)(1)(Q) of the IPA Act (20 ILCS 3855) as modified by Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (Public Act 102-0662) requires that individuals engaged in the construction of applicable projects submitted to the Illinois Shines program are paid at least the relevant prevailing wage.

**Program Administrator:** The IPA's consultant responsible for running day-to-day operations of the Adjustable Block Program. Energy Solutions has been designated as the current Program Administrator.

**Project:** A solar photovoltaic array and all associated equipment necessary for its generation of electricity and connection to the distribution grid. (Same as "System")

**Public Schools:** A category for Small and Large Distributed Generation projects and Community Solar projects which are located at a public school in Illinois. A public school is defined as set forth in Section 1-3 of the School Code, which includes any public school, common school, alternative public school, or free school operated by the authority of the Illinois School Code, including Illinois public schools from pre-school through grade 12, and vocational schools over which the State Board of Education has authority, and includes public institutions of higher education, as defined in the Board of Higher Education Act per the enactment of P.A. 103-0580.

**Qualified Person:** "Qualified person" means a person who performs installations on behalf of the certificate holder and who has either satisfactorily completed at least five installations of a specific distributed generation technology or has completed at least one of the following programs requiring lab or field work and received a certification of satisfactory completion: an apprenticeship as a journeyman electrician from a DOL registered electrical apprenticeship and training program; a North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) distributed generation technology certification program; an Underwriters Laboratories (UL) distributed generation technology certification program; an Electronics Technicians Association (ETA) distributed generation technology certification program; or an Associate in Applied Science degree from an Illinois Community College Board approved community college program in the appropriate distributed generation technology. To be considered a "qualified person", the experience and/or training relied upon must be with the same type of distributed generation technology for which the qualification status is sought.

**REC Delivery Contract:** Agreement between an Approved Vendor and a utility counterparty (i.e., Ameren Illinois, ComEd, or MidAmerican) for the delivery of and payment for RECs from Illinois Shines projects. The 2019 REC Delivery Contract, published in January 2019, and the 2021 REC Delivery Contracts (2021 15-Year REC Delivery Contract and 2021 20-Year REC Delivery Contract), published in December 2021, differ in terms, some of which are highlighted in the table below. The 2022 REC Delivery Contracts (2022 15-Year REC Delivery Contract and 2022 20-Year REC Delivery Contract), published in August 2022 have similar terms to the 2021 REC Delivery Contracts.

**Renewable Energy Credit:** The environmental attributes represented by 1 MWh of electricity generated by a renewable generator.



**Renewable Portfolio Standard:** A law which requires a certain portion of the electricity served by investor-owned utilities in a state comes from renewable generation.

**Site map:** A site map is the map of the parcel(s) on which the solar project is sited. A site map should also include number of modules, rated capacities/module wattages, tilt orientation, azimuth angles, mounting locations, tracking type, and if the modules are monofacial or bifacial.

**Small DG:** A distributed generation system less than or equal to 25 kW in size. Prior to the December 14, 2021 reopening, Small DG projects needed to be less than or equal to 10 kW in size.

**Small Subscriber:** A residential or small commercial customer with a subscription below 25 kW. Eligible small commercial rate classes for the investor owned utilities are:

- Commonwealth Edison: “watt-hour delivery class” and “small load delivery class”
- Ameren Illinois: “DS-2”
- MidAmerican: “GE”, “GD”, “GET”, “GDT”, “GER”, and “GDR”
- Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op: There is no rate class applicable to subscribers within Jo-Carroll

**Standard Test Conditions (STC):** The solar irradiation of one kilowatt (kW) per square meter, a module temperature of 25 degrees Celsius, and an air mass 1.5.

**Stranded customer:** Illinois Shines Distributed Generation (on-site solar) customers whose Approved Vendor and/or Designee is unable or unwilling to (a) complete the solar project installation and/or (b) act as the Approved Vendor for the project application. This may be because the Approved Vendor and/or Designee has gone out of business or ceased/limited operations, is unable to meet Program requirements, or is suspended due to disciplinary action and is prohibited from advancing projects through the application process.

**Subscriber:** “Subscriber” is defined in Section 1-10 of the IPA Act as a person who (i) takes delivery service from an electric utility, and (ii) has a subscription of no less than 200 watts to a community renewable generation project that is located in the electric utility's service area. No subscriber's subscriptions may total more than 40% of the nameplate capacity of an individual community renewable generation project. Entities that are affiliated by virtue of a common parent shall not represent multiple subscriptions that total more than 40% of the nameplate capacity of an individual community renewable generation project.

**System:** A solar photovoltaic array and all associated equipment necessary for its generation of electricity and connection to the distribution grid. (Same as “Project”)

**Traditional Community Solar:** A solar project which (1) is interconnected to an electric utility, a municipal utility, or a rural electric cooperative, (2) allows subscribers to pay for shares or some other “interest” in the project, receiving bill credits in exchange; and (3) does not exceed 5,000 kW AC in size, and which is not seeking to participate in the Community-Driven Community Solar project category established through Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(v) of the IPA Act. Also known as a “photovoltaic community renewable generation project.”

## Appendix A – Past REC Prices

### Illinois Shines 2023-2024 REC Prices

2023-2024 Prices			Change from 2022-2023 Prices (\$)		Change from 2022-2023 Prices (%)		2022-2023 Prices				
Distributed Generation											
	Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B			
0 - 10 kW	\$75.21	\$83.75		(\$3.30)	\$1.47		-4.20%	1.79%	\$78.51	\$82.28	
10 - 25 kW	\$64.71	\$76.27		(\$1.68)	\$4.38		-2.54%	6.09%	\$66.39	\$71.89	
25 - 100 kW	\$59.28	\$69.47		\$1.34	\$7.24		2.31%	11.64%	\$57.94	\$62.23	
100 - 200 kW	\$60.44	\$65.96		\$1.59	\$6.94		2.70%	11.76%	\$58.85	\$59.02	
200 - 500 kW	\$53.39	\$58.36		\$1.04	\$5.25		2.00%	9.88%	\$52.35	\$53.11	
500 - 2000 kW	\$50.01	\$52.06		(\$0.41)	\$4.43		-0.81%	9.29%	\$50.42	\$47.63	
2000- 5000 kW	\$40.16	\$39.56		(\$0.74)	\$6.25		-1.82%	18.76%	\$40.90	\$33.31	
Traditional Community Solar											
	Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B
0 - 25 kW	\$55.08	\$63.48		(\$1.15)	\$1.94		-2.05%	3.16%		\$56.23	\$61.54
25 - 100 kW	\$58.94	\$71.92		(\$0.25)	\$7.53		-0.43%	11.70%		\$59.19	\$64.39
100 - 200 kW	\$60.79	\$73.22		(\$0.06)	\$7.99		-0.10%	12.25%		\$60.85	\$65.23
200 - 500 kW	\$56.96	\$65.20		(\$0.26)	\$3.11		-0.46%	5.01%		\$57.22	\$62.09
500 - 2000 kW	\$49.94	\$56.08		(\$1.38)	\$0.58		-2.69%	1.05%		\$51.32	\$55.50
2000- 5000 kW	\$39.27	\$42.39		(\$6.23)	(\$5.39)		-13.68%	-11.29%		\$45.50	\$47.78
Community-Driven Community Solar											
	Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B
0 - 25 kW	\$71.10	\$82.37		(\$0.50)	\$4.10		-0.70%	5.23%		\$71.60	\$78.27
25 - 100 kW	\$76.16	\$93.61		\$0.82	\$11.45		1.09%	13.94%		\$75.34	\$82.16
100 - 200 kW	\$78.33	\$95.12		\$1.06	\$11.70		1.37%	14.03%		\$77.27	\$83.42
200 - 500 kW	\$73.02	\$84.10		\$0.55	\$4.91		0.76%	6.20%		\$72.47	\$79.19
500 - 2000 kW	\$63.72	\$71.80		(\$1.04)	\$1.68		-1.60%	2.40%		\$64.76	\$70.12
2000- 5000 kW	\$49.33	\$53.31		(\$7.52)	(\$6.13)		-13.23%	-10.31%		\$56.85	\$59.44
Public Schools											
	Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B		Group A	Group B
0 - 25 kW	\$74.95	\$81.16		\$0.00	\$0.00		0.00%	0.00%		\$74.95	\$81.16
25 - 100 kW	\$65.57	\$70.42		\$0.00	\$0.00		0.00%	0.00%		\$65.57	\$70.42
100 - 200 kW	\$66.40	\$66.59		\$0.00	\$0.00		0.00%	0.00%		\$66.40	\$66.59
200 - 500 kW	\$58.94	\$59.81		\$0.00	\$0.00		0.00%	0.00%		\$58.94	\$59.81
500 - 2000 kW	\$56.73	\$53.59		\$0.00	\$0.00		0.00%	0.00%		\$56.73	\$53.59
2000- 5000 kW	\$45.72	\$37.23		\$0.00	\$0.00		0.00%	0.00%		\$45.72	\$37.23

## REC Pricing for the 2022-23 Program Year

Block Group	Block Category		2022-2023
Group A (Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives, and Municipal Utilities located in MISO)	Small DG	≤10 kW	\$78.51
		>10 - 25 kW	\$66.39
	Large DG	>25 - 100 kW	\$57.94
		>100 - 200 kW	\$58.85
		>200 - 500 kW	\$52.35
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$50.42
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$40.90
	Traditional Community Solar	≤25 kW	\$56.23
		>25 - 100 kW	\$59.19
		>100 - 200 kW	\$60.85
		>200 - 500 kW	\$57.22
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$51.32
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$45.50
	Community-Driven Community Solar	≤25 kW	\$71.60
		>25 - 100 kW	\$75.34
		>100 - 200 kW	\$77.27
		>200 - 500 kW	\$72.47
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$64.76
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$56.85
	Public Schools	≤25 kW	\$74.95
		>25 - 100 kW	\$65.57
		>100 - 200 kW	\$66.40
		>200 - 500 kW	\$58.94
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$56.73
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$45.72
Group B (ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM)	Small DG	≤10 kW	\$82.28
		>10 - 25 kW	\$71.89
	Large DG	>25 - 100 kW	\$62.23
		>100 - 200 kW	\$59.02
		>200 - 500 kW	\$53.11
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$47.63
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$33.31
	Traditional Community Solar	≤25 kW	\$61.54
		>25 - 100 kW	\$64.39
		>100 - 200 kW	\$65.23
		>200 - 500 kW	\$62.09
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$55.50
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$47.78
	Community-Driven Community Solar	≤25 kW	\$78.27
		>25 - 100 kW	\$82.16
		>100 - 200 kW	\$83.42
		>200 - 500 kW	\$79.19
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$70.12
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$59.44
	Public Schools	≤25 kW	\$81.16
		>25 - 100 kW	\$70.42
		>100 - 200 kW	\$66.59
		>200 - 500 kW	\$59.81
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$53.59
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW	\$37.23

## REC Pricing for Reopening 2021

The following table lists prices for RECs applied between the Program's December 2021 reopening and the Program's June 30, 2022 pause. **These prices are no longer available for applications received on and after September 1, 2022 but are included here for reference.**

Block Group	Block Category		Waitlisted Applications Submitted on or Before 11/1/2021		New Submittals Starting 12/14/21			
			Block 4	Block 5	Block 1	Block 4	Block 5	
Group A (Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives, and Municipal Utilities located in MISO)	Small DG	<=25 kW	\$75.29	-	-	\$75.29	-	
	Large DG	>25-100 kW	-	\$54.71	-	-	\$57.82	
		>100-200 kW	-	\$44.62	-	-	\$47.03	
		>200-500 kW	-	\$39.79	-	-	\$41.48	
		>500-5000 kW	-	\$36.88	-	-	\$38.33	
	Traditional Community Solar	<=10 kW	-	\$98.88	-	-	-	
		>10-25 kW	-	\$91.67	-	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	\$78.83	-	-	-	
		>100-200 kW	-	\$70.49	-	-	-	
		>200-500 kW	-	\$66.50	-	-	-	
		>500-2000 kW	-	\$63.97	-	-	-	
		Co-located systems >2MW in aggregate	-	\$59.79	-	-	-	
	Public Schools (DG Only)	<=25 kW	-	-	\$69.63	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	-	\$56.99	-	-	
		>100-200 kW	-	-	\$46.48	-	-	
		>200-500 kW	-	-	\$41.45	-	-	
	Community Driven Community Solar	>500-5000 kW	-	-	\$38.42	-	-	
		<=10 kW	-	-	\$98.88	-	-	
		>10-25 kW	-	-	\$91.67	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	-	\$78.83	-	-	
		>100-200 kW	-	-	\$70.49	-	-	
	Equity Eligible Contractor Projects (DG Only)	>200-500 kW	-	-	\$66.50	-	-	
		>500-5000 kW	-	-	\$63.97	-	-	
		<=25 kW	-	-	\$75.29	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	-	\$54.71	-	-	
>100-200 kW		-	-	\$44.62	-	-		
Group B (ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM)	Small DG	>200-500 kW	-	-	\$39.79	-	-	
		>500-5000 kW	-	-	\$36.88	-	-	
		Large DG	<=25 kW	\$64.56	-	-	\$64.56	-
			>25-100 kW	-	\$55.73	-	-	\$58.84
	>100-200 kW		-	\$45.66	-	-	\$48.06	
	>200-500 kW		-	\$40.83	-	-	\$42.51	
	Traditional Community Solar	>500-5000 kW	-	\$37.91	-	-	\$39.37	
		<=10 kW	-	\$94.94	-	-	-	
		>10-25 kW	-	\$87.72	-	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	\$74.83	-	-	-	
		>100-200 kW	-	\$66.46	-	-	-	
		>200-500 kW	-	\$62.45	-	-	-	
		>500-2000 kW	-	\$59.89	-	-	-	
	Co-located systems >2MW in aggregate	-	\$55.68	-	-	-		
	Public Schools (DG Only)	<=25 kW	-	-	\$64.79	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	-	\$58.05	-	-	
		>100-200 kW	-	-	\$47.56	-	-	
		>200-500 kW	-	-	\$42.53	-	-	
	Community Driven Community Solar	>500-5000 kW	-	-	\$39.49	-	-	
		<=10 kW	-	-	\$94.94	-	-	
		>10-25 kW	-	-	\$87.72	-	-	
		>25-100 kW	-	-	\$74.83	-	-	
		>100-200 kW	-	-	\$66.46	-	-	
	Equity Eligible Contractor Projects (DG Only)	>200-500 kW	-	-	\$62.45	-	-	
		>500-5000 kW	-	-	\$59.89	-	-	
<=25 kW		-	-	\$64.56	-	-		
>25-100 kW		-	-	\$55.73	-	-		
Public Schools (DG Only)	>100-200 kW	-	-	\$45.66	-	-		
	>200-500 kW	-	-	\$40.83	-	-		
	>500-5000 kW	-	-	\$37.91	-	-		

## REC Pricing for 2019 Initial Program Opening

The following table lists prices for RECs applied prior to the Program's December 2021 reopening. **All cells are shaded, indicating that these prices are no longer available for applications received on and after September 1, 2022 but are included here for reference.**

Block Group	Block Category		Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
<b>Group A</b> (Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives, and Municipal Utilities located in MISO)	Small DG	≤10 kW	\$85.10	\$81.70	\$78.43	
	Large DG	>10 - 25 kW	\$78.70	\$75.55	\$72.53	\$69.63
		>25 - 100 kW	\$64.41	\$61.83	\$59.36	\$56.99
		>100 - 200 kW	\$52.54	\$50.44	\$48.42	\$46.48
		>200 - 500 kW	\$46.85	\$44.98	\$43.18	\$41.45
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$43.42	\$41.68	\$40.02	\$38.42
	Community Solar	≤10 kW	\$96.12	\$92.28	\$88.58	\$85.04
		>10 - 25 kW	\$87.07	\$83.59	\$80.24	\$77.03
		>25 - 100 kW	\$70.95	\$68.11	\$65.39	\$62.77
		>100 - 200 kW	\$60.47	\$58.05	\$55.73	\$53.50
		>200 - 500 kW	\$55.46	\$53.24	\$51.11	\$49.07
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$52.28	\$50.19	\$48.18	\$46.25
		Co-located systems exceeding 2 MW in aggregate size	\$47.03	\$45.15	\$43.34	\$41.61
<b>Group B</b> (ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM)	Small DG	≤10 kW	\$72.97	\$70.05	\$67.25	
	Large DG	>10 - 25 kW	\$73.23	\$70.30	\$67.49	\$64.79
		>25 - 100 kW	\$65.61	\$62.99	\$60.47	\$58.05
		>100 - 200 kW	\$53.75	\$51.60	\$49.54	\$47.56
		>200 - 500 kW	\$48.07	\$46.15	\$44.30	\$42.53
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$44.64	\$42.85	\$41.14	\$39.49
	Community Solar	≤10 kW	\$91.89	\$88.21	\$84.69	\$81.30
		>10 - 25 kW	\$82.82	\$79.51	\$76.33	\$73.28
		>25 - 100 kW	\$66.65	\$63.98	\$61.42	\$58.96
		>100 - 200 kW	\$56.12	\$53.88	\$51.72	\$49.65
		>200 - 500 kW	\$51.09	\$49.05	\$47.08	\$45.20
		>500 - 2,000 kW	\$47.88	\$45.96	\$44.13	\$42.36
		Co-located systems exceeding 2 MW in aggregate size	\$42.59	\$40.89	\$39.25	\$37.68

## Appendix B – EEC Certification

### Certification of Qualification for Equity Eligible Contractor Status

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Organization/Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select the option that best describes your association with the organization/entity:

- ☐ Sole Owner
- ☐ Joint Owner or Partner
- ☐ Independent contractor offering professional services
- ☐ Shareholder
- ☐ Board member with voting rights and other legal, financial and/or policy decision-making capabilities

This certification will be used to determine the whether the above-listed individual, organization, or entity qualifies as an equity eligible contractor under Section 1-10 of the Illinois Power Agency Act (20 ILCS 3855/1-10) as amended by Public Act 102-0662. Under this provision, a business that is majority-owned by eligible persons or a non-profit or cooperative organization that is majority-governed by eligible persons qualifies as an equity eligible contractor. Persons identifying as one of the following qualify as an eligible person offering personal services as an independent contractor.

By checking a box and signing below, you certify that the information provided is true and complete and that you understand that this document will be used for state government purposes. Please select the category for which you qualify:

- ☐ I have graduated from or am a current or former participant 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, o 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.
- ☐ I am a graduate of or am currently enrolled in the foster care system.
- ☐ I have been convicted of a crime and was incarcerated for that conviction.
- ☐ My primary residence is located in an equity investment eligible community, as defined by Section 1-10 of the Illinois Power Agency Act (20 ILCS 3855/1-10) and amended by Public Act 102-0662.

If you would like the Illinois Power Agency to treat this attestation and the information therein as confidential, please check the box below.

- ☐ Please keep the information attested to above confidential and do not release it without my written permission.

I certify that I have personal knowledge of the above information and that it is true and correct.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPROVED VENDOR

As the applying Approved Vendor seeking certification as an equity eligible contractor, I attest to understanding that this information will be used for state government purposes and that knowingly providing false or misleading information may result in denial of the application or other consequences, including possible Program disciplinary action against an applicant Approved Vendor.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Vendor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## Appendix C – Agrivoltaics Requirements

### A. Definition of Agrivoltaics

The definition of agrivoltaics written by the Agency in the original strawman proposal was generally supported by stakeholder feedback. Therefore, the definition will be as follows:

The IPA proposes to define agrivoltaics as “[a] dual-use configuration where solar photovoltaic energy generation and agricultural production (crops, livestock, and livestock products as defined by 505 ILCS 5/3.02) are directly integrated and simultaneously producing within the footprint of the project. At least 50% of the project footprint must feature agricultural production at the time of project energization.”

The Agency is implementing an initial 50% project footprint requirement, which may be reevaluated in the drafting of the Agency’s next Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, if needed.

### B. Livestock Grazing

The majority of stakeholder comments supported the inclusion of grazing in the definition of agrivoltaics projects. As such, livestock grazing will be included as a type of permissible agriculture uses under agrivoltaics, as it supports the spirit of agricultural production coinciding with solar energy production.

### C. Bee Keeping

The Agency has determined that beekeeping will not qualify for agrivoltaics scoring. Given the ability to relocate bees, the IPA is concerned that the opportunities for gaming the scoring rubric outweigh the benefits. Furthermore, additional points are available for pollinator-friendly siting, which would allow and support beekeeping efforts.

### D. Requirements for Successful Agrivoltaics Plans

In order to achieve the point available for scoring criterion *Built Environment - Agrivoltaics*, projects must comply with the requirements listed below. These requirements outline the types of projects and activities that qualify as agrivoltaics within the Program. These standards were utilizing American Farmland Trust’s stakeholder feedback comments and standards established by the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target Program.<sup>75</sup>

The Part I application must include a description demonstrating the planned agricultural use of the site, and explanation of the viability of that use, and an accompanying attestation of the intent to utilize agrivoltaics throughout the lifetime of the REC contract. Firm demonstration of active agricultural use is required at Part II.

<sup>75</sup> “Guideline Regarding the Definition of Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units,” Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, last modified April 26, 2018, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/agricultural-solar-tariff-generation-units-guideline-final/download>

Agrivoltaics plans submitted in the Part I application should include documentation of the following:

1. Solar panels do not interfere with the continued use of land beneath the canopy for agricultural purposes;
2. The solar panels optimize a balance between electricity generation and agricultural production;
3. The system:
  - a. Accommodates continuous growth of crops underneath or between the solar photovoltaic modules, with height enough for labor and/or machinery as it relates to tilling, cultivating, soil amendments, harvesting, etc. and grazing animals;
  - b. Maintains or enhances the agricultural productivity of the land and soil health throughout the lifetime of the system;
4. Crop(s) are compatible with the design of the agricultural solar system accounting for such factors as crop selection, sunlight percentage, etc.;
5. Commitment to the annual reporting of the productivity of the crop(s) and herd, including pounds harvested and/or grazed, herd size growth, success of the crop, potential changes, etc., shall be provided one year after project implementation and throughout the project's lifetime;
6. The system design information, shall include, but is not limited to:
  - a. dual-use type, e.g., ground mount racking, pole towers, tracking, etc.;
  - b. total gross acres of open farmland to be integrated with the project;
  - c. type of crop(s) to be grown, including grazing crops;
  - d. pounds of crop(s) projected to be grown and harvested, or grazed;
  - e. animals to be grazed with herd size(s); and
  - f. design drawing including mounting system type (fixed, tracking), panel tilt, panel row spacing, individual panel spacing, for pole towers tower spacing and mounting height, etc.;
7. The system is designed and maintained with provisions for decommissioning to preserve the land's agricultural resources and utility during and after the project's lifetime; and
8. The land is continuously used for agrivoltaics purposes through the duration of the REC Delivery Contract, while seasonally appropriate.

## **Appendix D – Brownfield Requirements**

The requirements of this appendix apply only to projects seeking points under Traditional Community Solar scoring criterion 1.b due to location on a brownfield site.

### **A. Location Information**

A brownfield site photovoltaic project must be located in Illinois and must be entirely contained within the brownfield site. An Approved Vendor must provide the following information about the location of the project:

- A complete address for the Project; and
- A map of the Project site clearly showing the site location.

The Program Administrator may request additional information regarding the Project site and the Approved Vendor will be required to respond to any such request for additional information. If the project is co-located with another facility on a greenfield site, the Approved Vendor must disclose this fact and the Program Administrator may request additional information, which the Approved Vendor will be required to provide with its Part I application.

### **B. Project Site**

The Approved Vendor must indicate whether the project site is an area that is regulated by one the following entities under the following “Programs”: (1) the United States Environmental Protection Agency under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended (“CERCLA”); (2) the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“U.S. EPA”) under the Corrective Action Program of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, as amended (“RCRA”); (3) the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (“IEPA”) under the Illinois Solid Waste Program; or (4) the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency under the Illinois Site Remediation Program (“SRP”). Or the Approved Vendor must indicate that the project site is located at the site of a coal mine that has permanently ceased coal production, permanently halted any re-mining operations, and is no longer accepting any coal combustion residues.

### **C. Supporting Documentation for Projects Regulated by One of the Programs**

The Approved Vendor must submit sufficient documentation, dated no earlier than 25 years prior to the application date, to demonstrate that the project site is regulated by the Program named in the immediately previous item. Sufficient documentation means: (i) for CERCLA, a site assessment, remedy decision, cleanup plan, or similar document; (ii) for RCRA, a demonstration of the U.S. EPA requiring corrective action such as a permit application, administrative order, court order, or equivalent document; (iii) for the IEPA Solid Waste Program, a solid waste permit; and (iv) for the IEPA Site Remediation Program, the Bidder must provide a Site Investigation Report, or a Remedial Action Plan, or a Remedial Action Completion Report, or a No Further Remediation Letter. The Program Administrator may consider other forms of documentation provided by the Approved Vendor to demonstrate regulation under the above Programs if appropriate.

### **D. Additional Documentation for Projects Regulated by the IEPA SRP**

The requirements of this item apply only to sites regulated by the IEPA Site Remediation Program (“IEPA SRP”). In such a case, the Approved Vendor must demonstrate actual blight or contamination of the site by providing

one of the following in the Part I application: (i) proof that the project site is also regulated by another Program referenced in Section 1-10 of the IPA Act (if documentation from another Program could not be submitted instead of the documentation from the IEPA Site Remediation Program because it was dated before a date 25 years prior to the Bid Date); or (ii) demonstration of contamination at the Project site and determination of the need for remediation activities through a site assessment from the U.S. EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment; or (iii) additional documents from the IEPA Site Remediation Program. If the Approved Vendor is electing to provide additional documents from the IEPA Site Remediation Program, the Bidder must: (a) if the Approved Vendor has not already done so, provide a Remedial Action Plan and such document must demonstrate that concentrations of contaminants at the project site exceeded the remediation objectives established for the project site and require remediation activities; and (b) if the Approved Vendor has not already done so, provide the Remedial Action Completion Report and a No Further Remediation Letter, or certify that such documents have not been issued. If the Remedial Action Completion Report has been issued, it must be provided; it must state that remediation was indeed conducted at the Project site, and it must be dated later than the Remedial Action Plan. If a No Further Remediation Letter is provided, it must cover the entirety of the Project site.

#### **E. Supporting Documentation for Projects Located at the Site of a Permanently Closed Coal Mine**

The requirements of this item apply only to sites located at the site of a coal mine that has permanently ceased coal production, permanently halted any re-mining operations, and is no longer accepting any coal combustion residues. The Approved Vendor must provide a certification that as of the submission of the Part I application, the coal mine at which the project is located has permanently ceased coal production, permanently halted any re-mining operations, and is no longer accepting any coal combustion residues. The Approved Vendor must also submit sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the Project site has both completed all clean-up and remediation obligations under the federal Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1977 and all applicable Illinois rules and any other clean-up, remediation, or ongoing monitoring to safeguard the health and well-being of the people of the State of Illinois, as well as demonstrated compliance with all applicable federal and State environmental rules and regulations, including, but not limited, to 35 Ill. Adm. Code Part 845 and any rules for historic fill of coal combustion residuals, including any rules finalized in Subdocket A of Illinois Pollution Control Board docket R2020-019. Sufficient documentation means all of: (1) a copy of the permit(s) for coal mining operation/operations including a copy of the reclamation plan approved by the Department of Natural Resources; (2) a copy of the Department of Natural Resources decision approving the permit(s); and (3) documented confirmation that reclamation Phases I, II, and III have been completed for the project site by providing evidence that the entirety of the performance bond for the project site has been released. Sufficient evidence of performance bond release at the completion of Phase III includes, but is not limited to, a screenshot from the Illinois Mine Permits map showing the Phase 3 Status is "Released" or other documentation, if appropriate. The permit(s) must cover the project site, which may be a portion of the coal mine. The Program Administrator may consider other forms of supporting documentation provided by the Approved Vendor if appropriate.

#### **Status of Remediation**

The Approved Vendor must provide describe the status of remediation of the project site.

## Appendix E - Scoring Criteria for Traditional Community Solar Projects

The Agency will begin accepting Traditional Community Solar applications on the first day of each program year with that “first day” application window ending at 11:59:59 PM CT each June 1st. Should first day project applications *not* exceed category capacity, then all applicant projects otherwise qualifying shall be deemed acceptable and may qualify for a REC Delivery Contract. Should category capacity fill later in the Program year, then from that point forward, only projects meeting this scoring threshold of 5 points may be considered for an eligible spot on the waitlist for the Traditional Community Solar category. If, in the Program Administrator’s review of an application, it is discovered that a project qualifies for points that an Approved vendor did not claim in the relevant application, those points will be awarded to the project. Still, Approved Vendors should be diligent in their applications, working to claim all relevant points for a project at the time of application.

### 1. Built Environment (Maximum of 4 points permitted)

- a. Sited on “disturbed land” as defined by United States Geological Survey,<sup>76</sup> “contaminated lands” as defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency,<sup>77</sup> or rooftops or other structures as outlined in the Commission’s Final Order. (Add 2 points)
- b. Sited on a brownfield, as defined in Section 1-10 of the IPA Act and further clarified in Section 5.4.2 of the Plan.<sup>78</sup> (Add 2 points)

<sup>76</sup> The USGS further defines disturbed lands between mechanically and non-mechanically disturbed lands, both which fall under the larger umbrella of disturbed lands used in this Plan.

Mechanically disturbed - Land in an altered and often non-vegetated state that, due to disturbances by mechanical means, is in transition from one cover type to another. Mechanical disturbances include forest clear-cutting, earthmoving, scraping, chaining, reservoir drawdown, and other similar human-induced changes.

Non-mechanically disturbed - Land in an altered and often non-vegetated state that, due to disturbances by nonmechanical means, is in transition from one cover type to another. Nonmechanical disturbances are caused by wind, floods, fire, animals, and other similar phenomenon.

Given that USGS no longer utilizes these classifications as land cover categories and does not have an available mapping tool and the Agency considers this definition to have been approved by the Commission through its Final Order in Docket No. 22-0231, compliance will be demonstrated through supporting documentation (which could include government records, financial records, other land use records, news stories, attestations from local officials, and other records demonstrating that the site meets the disturbed land criterion) and an accompanying certification from the applicant.

<sup>77</sup> See U.S. EPA definition for [contaminated lands](https://isgs.illinois.edu/illinois-coal-mines-ilmines). Use this resource to verify the location of abandoned and inactive mines: <https://isgs.illinois.edu/illinois-coal-mines-ilmines>.

<sup>78</sup> The Agency recognizes that there may be overlap between projects defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) as a brownfield that also meet the definition of contaminated lands. The Agency believes that allowing a contaminated project that qualifies as a brownfield site under Section 1-10 of the IPA Act to receive points in both categories fits within the spirit of this scoring criteria. Therefore, if a project is sited on a location that independently qualifies as both contaminated lands defined by the U.S. EPA *and* as a brownfield under Section 1-10 of the IPA Act, the project may receive points under both (a) and (b) of the Built Environment scoring. The site must “independently qualify” for each distinction (meaning projects may not “double dip” with a single determinant for both scoring criteria, as any brownfield site would necessarily, by definition of a brownfield, be contaminated).

In order to qualify as a brownfield under Section 1-10 of the IPA Act, the project must be able to demonstrate that it is sited in an area that is either (1) located at the site of a coal mine that has permanently ceased coal production, permanently halted any re-mining operations, and is no longer accepting any coal combustion residues, *or* (2) is regulated by one of the following entities under the following programs: (a) the U.S. EPA under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response,

- c. Commitment to utilize agrivoltaics.<sup>79</sup> (Add 1 point)
- d. Commitment to pollinator friendly habitat, as defined in the Pollinator Friendly Solar Site Act (525 ILCS 55).<sup>80</sup> (Add 1 point)

## 2. Siting (Maximum of 4 points permitted)

- a. Sited in an Environmental Justice Community<sup>81</sup> or an R3 area.<sup>82</sup> (Add 2 points)
- b. Sited on land owned by a non-profit or public entity. (Add 2 points)
- c. Sited in a county (or a township within Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County) that does not currently have a community solar project that was approved by the ICC for a REC contract under the Adjustable Block Program at the time of application.<sup>83</sup> (Add 2 points)

## 3. Equity Eligible Contractors (Maximum 4 points permitted)<sup>84, 85</sup>

- a. Project is developed by an EEC certified Approved Vendor and can demonstrate contractual commitments for all project development work to be performed by EEC certified subcontractor(s) and/or Designee(s). (Add 4 points)
- b. Project is developed by an EEC certified Approved Vendor or a non-EEC certified Approved Vendor and the contractual commitments for EEC certified subcontractor(s) and/or Designee(s) that all project development work represents at least 75% or more of the project's REC Contract value. (Add 3 points)

Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended ("CERCLA"); (b) the U.S. EPA under the corrective Action Program of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, as amended ("RCRA"); (c) the Illinois EPA under the Illinois Solid Waste Program; or (d) the Illinois EPA under the Illinois Site Remediation Program ("ISRP"). Approved Vendors must submit sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the project is located at the site of a permanently closed coal mine or a site regulated by the identified program above.

To demonstrate brownfield qualification, the IPA will use the same qualification and evidentiary standards as utilized in its most recent Indexed REC procurement event; those can be found in Appendix C – Brownfield Requirements.

<sup>79</sup> The definition of agrivoltaics and requirements for this scoring criterion are found in Appendix B – Agrivoltaics Requirements.

<sup>80</sup> Resources for how to successfully certify as pollinator friendly here:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/pollinatorscorecard/pages/default.aspx> ; The pollinator friendly distinction is limited to ground mounted solar sites per 525 ILCS 55 and the pollinator friendly aspect of the project must exist on the same parcel as the solar project.

<sup>81</sup> A map of Environmental Justice Communities as defined by the IPA through its Illinois Solar for all Program can be found here: <https://elevate.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=cfd020c99ed844668450c6b77eacb411>

<sup>82</sup> R3 Areas established pursuant to Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, are defined as areas where residents have historically been excluded from economic opportunities, including opportunities in the energy sector; For a map see: <https://r3.illinois.gov/eligibility>

<sup>83</sup> Multiple projects in a given county or township that does not presently feature a community solar project either under contract or part of developers' March 2022 reopening portfolios may receive points in this category for the current program year. Project application reports will be used to verify this information. Program Application reports can be found here: <https://illinoisshines.com/project-application-reports/>

<sup>84</sup> For purposes of this scoring category, Designees that have submitted an application but are not yet certified as Equity Eligible Contractors by the Program Administrator will be permitted to be utilized as EEC Designees. If a Designee's EEC application is not approved by the Program Administrator, a substitution will need to be made for a qualifying EEC Designee. EEC Designees will need to be certified by the application scoring cure period. This allowance will only be made in the initial scoring of Day 1 applications. After such time, all EEC Designees must be certified at the time of Part I application submission to achieve points for the EEC scoring criteria.

<sup>85</sup> Per ICC's Final Order on the 2024 Long-Term Plan, TCS projects that receive points for EEC commitments in Part I applications may not subcontract out work to non-EEC firms.

- c. Project is developed by an EEC certified Approved Vendor or a non-EEC certified Approved Vendor and the contractual commitments for EEC certified subcontractor (s) and/or Designee(s) that all project development work represents at least 50% and up to 75% of the project's REC Contract value. (Add 2 points)

Project is developed by an EEC certified Approved Vendor or a non-EEC certified Approved Vendor and the contractual commitments for EEC certified subcontractor(s) and/or Designee(s) that all project development work represents at least 25% and up to 50% of the project's REC Contract value (Add 1 point)

#### 4. Interconnection Status – Maximum of 4 points permitted

- a. Project has a valid interconnection agreement at the time of application (Add 1 point)<sup>86</sup>
- b. Project has a top-two queue position among community solar projects on a substation on the date of the application (Add 2 points)<sup>87</sup>
- c. Recency of project having obtained a valid interconnection agreement (Add up to 1 point)
  - i. Should project applications received on the first day exceed category capacity, the project with the earliest interconnection agreement effective date will receive a full 1 point. If there are multiple projects that share the earliest interconnection agreement effective date, they will each receive 1 point.<sup>88</sup>
  - ii. The project with the latest (i.e., most recent) interconnection agreement effective date will receive 0.25 points. If there are multiple projects that share the latest interconnection agreement effective date, they will each receive 0.25 points.
  - iii. Projects applying on November 1, 2022, with an interconnection agreement effective date between the earliest and latest dates as established in i. and ii. directly above, will be assigned points based on a sliding scale between 1 and 0.25 points based upon their rank-order from the earliest effective interconnection date to the latest effective interconnection date. Each independent effective interconnection date within this rank-order will be assigned an independent fractional score between 1 point and 0.25 points. As such, projects that have the same effective interconnection agreement date will receive the same number of points.
  - iv. If a project lacks an effective interconnection agreement, no points will be awarded to that project under this category for that project.
  - v. For projects submitted *after* the first day of category opening (i.e., on or after 12:00:00 AM CT November 2, 2022), will be assigned points based upon the recency of the agreement on a sliding scale based upon their rank-order from earliest effective interconnection date to the latest effective interconnection date; the maximum available points for recency of

<sup>86</sup> Pursuant to Article 3 of the Interconnection Contract (see 83 Ill. Adm. Code Part 467, Appx. C), the interconnection agreement will be considered "valid" if it is fully executed by both parties and the effective of the contract date (i.e., the date noted in the first paragraph of the agreement, pursuant to 3.1 of the contract) falls before the date of the application.

<sup>87</sup> Demonstration of queue position among other community solar projects can be accomplished through a snapshot of the interconnection queue (taken after interconnection agreement execution), verification from interconnecting utility, or other supporting materials, if applicable, submitted with a project application and accompanying certification. The IPA will also endeavor to work with the utilities to verify the accuracy of queue position submittals and reserves the right to take disciplinary action against firms found to have knowingly submitted a false queue position.

<sup>88</sup> As noted above, Section 3.1 of the contract defines the effective date of the interconnection agreement as the date noted in the first paragraph of the agreement. (83 Ill. Adm. Code Part 467, Appx. C).



interconnection agreement shall be .25 points (for the earliest interconnection date), and the minimum points available shall be .10 points (for the latest interconnection date).

## Developer Cap

A 20% developer cap will be applied across megawatts awarded, rather than the number of contracts awarded (that is, if the capacity for the Traditional Community Solar category were to be 100 MW in a program year, a single developer could be awarded at most 20 MW; the number of contracts awarded is unrelated to the developer cap).

Contract awards for established projects should not be made to a firm who would then hold over 20% of contract awards made for that program year (non-inclusive of transfers or assignments) through the waitlisted project contract award. Thus, while an entity that was awarded the maximum of 20% of REC Delivery Contract awards could have the highest ranked projects on an ordinal waitlist (and that ranking would not change, including for use in the next program year), those projects would only be awarded REC Delivery Contracts in the current program year in the case of a removal of one (or more) of that entity's projects already having received a contract award so as to ensure that the 20% developer cap would not be exceeded.

## Qualification and Demonstration

Each criterion carries different challenges with verifying qualification for preference in scoring. While some criteria are binary and compliance can be demonstrated through an address or cross-referencing a map, in other cases, robust documentation will be required to demonstrate qualification. In general, qualification will be demonstrated through supporting materials demonstrating that the criterion is met and an accompanying attestation, and the Program Administrator will assess the sufficiency of a submittal and request additional information where appropriate. Supporting documentation for each criterion the Approved Vendor seeks to score points for will need to be submitted in the portal at the time of application.

Demonstration of compliance with EEC scoring adds timing challenges: while demonstration that the *applicant Approved Vendor* is an EEC is straightforward—either that entity has qualified as an EEC, or it has not—demonstrating qualification of subcontractor Designees may not be possible at the time of Part I application. Therefore, while an applicant need not demonstrate contractual relationships with an EEC sufficient to cover all or up to half of project development work at the time of Part I application, the Part I application must include identification of an applicable EEC and an attestation from an EEC of its interest and capacity to perform project development work.

## Verification

In the event that the capacity for the Traditional Community Solar block is exceeded on Day 1, the Program Administrator's application review team will first seek to review all submitted Day 1 applications for any deficiencies. In order for applications to be considered fully submitted, they must be batched and payment of the application fee should be initiated. This review process will assess only project specifications and requirements, not any attributes of the project submitted for scoring purposes. This application review process will take place prior to any application scoring to ensure that the universe of applications being scored is viable. After the project specifications for these applications are reviewed and deficiencies cured, the application scoring will commence. After scores are determined by the Program Administrator's scoring team, those scores will be shared individually with each Approved Vendor for review. After review of scores is

completed and capacity is filled, all scores will be made public and the ranked ordinal list will be posted publicly. Any subsequent Traditional Community Solar applications submitted to the Program will be added to a waitlist, so long as the applications meet the minimum point threshold for waitlist acceptance.

### **Proposed Schedule for Application Review and Scoring<sup>89</sup>**

1. Application Review Period
  - a. Applications undergo initial review by Program Administrator – Approximately 4 weeks
2. Application Cure Period
  - a. Approved Vendors cure deficiencies identified by Program Administrator – Approximately 2 weeks
3. Application Scoring Period
  - a. Program Administrator begins scoring process for all relevant applications (those submitted without deficiencies and those that successfully cure deficiencies during the 2 week cure period) – Approximately 3 weeks
4. Scoring Cure Period
  - a. Approved Vendors are offered a chance to review initial score and dispute and resolve any discrepancies – Approximately 2 weeks

Final scores will be posted publicly after the scoring cure period closes.

### **Compliance**

Approved Vendors will be asked to submit proper documentation for each scoring criterion sought based on the following table.

#### **1. Submissions at Part I Application**

<sup>89</sup> Please note this schedule is tentative for each program year and will be dependent on both the quality and quantity of applications received.

Scoring Criterion	Topic	What Should Be Submitted
1.a	Built Environment – Disturbed/Contaminated Land	Provide documentation of qualifications per definition
1.b	Built Environment – Brownfield	Provide documentation of qualifications per definition
1.c	Built Environment – Agrivoltaics	Agrivoltaics development plan with all required items outlined in Appendix A
1.d	Built Environment – Pollinator Friendly Habitat	Pollinator Friendly Habitat development plan that aligns with IDNR's Illinois Planned Pollinator Habitat on Solar Sites Scorecard <sup>90</sup>
2.a	Siting – Environmental Justice Community and R3 area	Statement that this scoring criterion is sought after (Yes/No)
2.b	Siting – Land owned by non-profit or public entity	Site control documentation that proves ownership
2.c	Siting – County without Community Solar (both TCS and CDCS) project	Statement that this scoring criterion is sought after (Yes/No)
3.a	Equity Eligible Contractor – EEC AV and EEC Designee(s)	Provide name of EEC Designee(s) that AV is partnering with and date of EEC certification.
3.b	Equity Eligible Contractor – Non-EEC AV and EEC Designee(s)	Provide name of EEC Designee(s) that AV is partnering with and date of EEC certification,  AND  Attestation from EEC Designee(s) of its interest and capacity to perform project development including the specific project development work that will be completed by the EEC Designee.
3.c	Equity Eligible Contractor – EEC AV and 50% of development work performed by EEC Designee(s)	Provide name of EEC Designee(s) that AV is partnering with and date of EEC certification,  AND  Attestation from EEC Designee(s) of its interest and capacity to perform project development work.
3.d	Equity Eligible Contractor – Non-EEC AV and 50% of development work performed by EEC Designee(s)	Provide name of EEC Designee(s) that AV is partnering with and date of EEC certification,  AND  Attestation from EEC Designee(s) of its interest and capacity to perform project development.

<sup>90</sup> See: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/pollinatorscorecard/pages/default.aspx>

Scoring Criterion	Topic	What Should Be Submitted
4.a	Interconnection Status – Valid Interconnection Agreement <sup>91</sup>	Copy of agreement and date noted in the first paragraph of the agreement.  If not applicable, please state “N/A” or “No interconnection agreement available.”
4.b	Interconnection Status – Top 2 Queue Position	Identifier of relevant substation and queue position (if available).  If not applicable, please state “N/A” or “No queue position available.”
4.c	Interconnection Status – Recency of Interconnection Agreement	No submission of information required, can be determined from information provided via item 4.a.

## 2. Changes between Part I and Part II

- Failure to meet any criteria which resulted in more favorable scoring (and thus a higher likelihood of contract award) would be considered an event of default under the REC Delivery Contract resulting in the full forfeiture of collateral, with the system unable to be Part II verified. For example, if a project did not use sufficient levels of EEC Designees as submitted in the Part I application or failed to leverage the project site for agricultural use as stated in an agrivoltaics plan submitted in the Part I application, the Program Administrator would not Part II verify the project. Approved Vendors would have the right to appeal Program Administrator determinations of non-compliance with scoring criteria to the IPA. A demonstrated pattern of such defaults could result in disciplinary action, including ineligibility for future contract awards.
  - a. Permitted Changes Between Part I and Part II Application
    - i. Agrivoltaics
      - 1.Changes to an agrivoltaics plan, such as a change in crop utilization or footprint size (above the required 50% outlined in Appendix A), are permitted. Any changes to an agrivoltaics plan that occur between the Part I and Part II application must be made in writing via an updated plan to the Program Administrator.
    - ii. Pollinator Friendly Habitat
      - 1.Changes to a Pollinator Friendly Habitat plan, such as a change in crop utilization, are permitted. Any changes to a Pollinator Friendly Habitat plan that occur between the Part I and Part II application must be made in writing via an updated plan to the Program Administrator.
    - iii. EEC Designee Substitution
      - 1.Substitution of the EEC Designee(s) that will support a project due to unforeseen circumstances can be made between the Part I and Part II

<sup>91</sup> A valid interconnection agreement is an agreement signed by both the interconnecting utility and the customer. Partially executed agreements will not be accepted.

application. Any substitutions must be made in writing to the Program Administrator, and are subject to review and verification.

### **3. Part II Verification of Commitments Made at Part I**

- The Program Administrator will request confirmation that any commitments made in the Part I application were fulfilled throughout project development, including but not limited to:
  - a. Built Environment – Agrivoltaics
  - b. Built Environment – Pollinator Friendly Habitat
  - c. EEC Designee commitments
- As noted above, any changes to commitments made in the Part I application submission which resulted in more favorable scoring (and thus a higher likelihood of contract award) would be considered an event of default under the REC Delivery Contract resulting in the full forfeiture of collateral, with the system unable to be Part II verified.

### **4. After Part II Verification**

- As most of the scoring criteria for Traditional Community Solar project will take place during the project development cycle (thus take place across the Part I and Part II application process), there is a limited scope of criteria that the Agency will need to monitor after Part II verification. Two commitments that, if applicable, the Program Administrator will seek to monitor throughout the life of the REC Delivery Contract are scoring criterion Built Environment – Agrivoltaics (1.c) and Built Environment – Pollinator Friendly Habitat (1.d). As both of these criteria are commitments that are to be continued throughout the life of the REC contract, the Program Administrator will request updated reporting at the Annual Report each July and will also seek to ensure that projects that have made these commitments are in compliance via random project inspections. Failure to uphold these commitments may result in an Event of Default under the REC Contract.

## Appendix F – Community-Driven Community Solar Scoring Criteria

Community-Driven Community Solar projects will be selected based on the following criteria.

**Primary Selection Criteria - Maximum of 20 points available**

Criteria	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points
A. Community ownership or community wealth-building through having a minimum of 50% of the ownership of the project held by community residents or non-profit organizations which directly serve the community where the project is located. This would include having members of the community being able to participate in decisions regarding the governance, operation, maintenance, and upgrades of and to the project; and members of that community benefiting from the project through subscriptions to the project.	50% ownership	60% ownership	70% ownership	80% and up ownership
<p>B. Additional direct and indirect benefits, beyond project participation as a subscriber, including, but not limited to, economic, environmental, social, cultural, and physical benefits. The application must quantify the value of these benefits and they must represent at least 20% of the REC contract value.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct benefits can include, but are not limited to, financial benefits for the owner(s) and subscribers, such as bill savings, revenues from project ownership, tax credits, and the financial value of the project, as well as job creation, direct income, and increased economic activity in the defined geographic community.</li> <li>• Indirect benefits can include, but are not limited to, demonstration of environmental, educational, and cultural benefits.</li> </ul>	20% of REC contract value	25% of REC contract value	30% of REC contract value	More than 35% of REC contract value



<p>C. Meaningful involvement in project organization and development by community members, non-profit organizations, or public entities located in or serving the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaningful involvement in project organization as used herein can mean, but is not limited to, a process that consists of public input, participation and engagement in the program design process, including workshops, webinars, and public comment periods all of which afford stakeholders (those who have an interest or stake in an issue, such as individuals, interest groups, and communities) the opportunity to influence decisions that impact their community.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3 or fewer</b> community members or organizations engaged in <b>Moderate</b> project organization and development</p>	<p><b>3 or fewer</b> community members or organizations engaged in <b>Substantial</b> project organization and development</p>	<p><b>4 or more</b> community members or organizations engaged in <b>Moderate</b> project organization and development</p>	<p><b>4 or more</b> community members or organizations engaged in <b>Substantial</b> project organization and development</p>
<p>D. Engagement in project operations and management by nonprofit organizations, public entities, or community members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement as used herein can mean, but is not limited to, continuous community participation and consultation as projects are built, operated, and maintained in a way that affords opportunities for the community to weigh in on and make decisions regarding the project.</li> </ul>	<p>Minimal community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management.</p>	<p>Moderate community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management.</p>	<p>Substantial community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management</p>	<p>Extensive or more community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management</p>
<p>E. Whether the project is developed in response to a site-specific RFP developed by community members, or a non-profit organization or public entity located in or serving the community.</p>	-	-	-	<p>Was indeed developed in response to site-specific RFP</p>

**Secondary Selection Criteria - Maximum of 16 points available**

Criteria	1 Point	2 Points
<p>A. Projects that are developed in collaboration with or to provide complementary opportunities for the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, the Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complementary opportunities as used herein can mean, but is not limited to: utilizing graduates of job training programs in project development; hiring job training graduates permanently for future projects, not just the applicant project; an expansion of the goals of the job training programs to include 'business training,' on how to develop a project, get financing, recruit customers, etc.</li> </ul>	Provide complementary opportunities to listed programs	Developed in collaboration w/listed programs
B. Projects that increase the diversity of locations of community solar projects in Illinois, including by locating in urban areas and population centers.	<p>Population of locality is 50,000 – 69,999</p> <p>(Locality meaning city, town, or village)</p>	<p>Population of locality is 70,000 or more</p> <p>(Locality meaning city, town, or village)</p>
C. Projects that are located in Equity Investment Eligible Communities.	-	Whole project needs to be sited in EIEC; projects that are only partially in an EIEC will be reviewed on case-by-case basis.
D. Projects that are not greenfield projects.	-	<p><b>Definition of greenfield:</b> Greenfield project means a project proposed at a site that is either previously undeveloped land or agricultural land <u>and</u> that does not meet the definition of a brownfield site</p>
E. Projects that serve only local subscribers. Local subscribers are subscribers in the same county as the project, or if that project's county population is below 50,000, then also in adjacent counties.	-	Need to serve local subscribers for the length of REC contract.
F. Projects that have a nameplate capacity that does not exceed 500 kW.	-	Nameplate capacity (project AC size) is 500 kW or less.

G. Projects that are developed by an equity eligible contractor.	-	All development work is done by the EEC. <sup>1</sup>
H. Projects that otherwise meaningfully advance the goals of providing more direct and tangible connection and benefits to the communities which they serve or in which they operate and increasing the variety of community solar locations, models, and options in Illinois.	Need to both provide connection/benefits <u>OR</u> increase variety of locations/models/options	Need to both provide connection/benefits <u>AND</u> increase variety of locations/models/options

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this category, “project development work” refers to all construction and electrical work on a project, and project-specific site assessment work such as permitting, legal, and other site-specific development work, including work that may have already been undertaken prior to project application. Non-site specific development functions (such as general sales and marketing activities) will not be considered as project development work. This definition also differs from the “project workforce” definition utilized for the Minimum Equity Standards as outlined in P.A. 102-0662, for which a firm’s Illinois-based employees are included in the “project workforce” regardless of function.

The Community-Driven Community Solar category intends to provide more direct and tangible connection and benefits to the communities which CDCS projects serve or in which they operate and, additionally, to increase the variety of community solar locations, models, and options in Illinois. The IPA Act defines “Community” as a social unit in which people come together regularly to effect change; a social unit in which participants are marked by a cooperative spirit, a common purpose, or shared interests or characteristics; or a space understood by its residents to be delineated through geographic boundaries or landmarks.

Using this consistent interpretation of “community” was used across all projects. In Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties, “community” will be limited to township as these are the most populated counties in the state. In all other counties, community will be considered the whole county.

After the Scoring Cure Period concludes, projects will be selected from the application pool in the order of highest to lowest score until the block is fully allocated. A minimum score of 6 points must be achieved to be eligible for a REC contract via the CDCS category. Random selection will be utilized as a tiebreaker only for equally scored projects to fill available capacity, if any. However, should the capacity available be so small as to only accommodate one or more projects below a certain size, then the Agency may only consider those projects small enough to not exceed that remaining capacity. After project selection, projects that have a minimum score of 10 points will be placed on a waitlist for the 2023-2024 Program year. The following rubric has been developed for this CDCS scoring process.

## Compliance

### Changes Between Part I and Part II

At Part II application review, the Program Administrator will request confirmation that any commitments made in the Part I application were fulfilled throughout project development and installation. The Program Administrator will only enforce completion of items proposed in the Part I narrative application and awarded points in the Community Driven Community Solar (CDCS) Part I scoring process.

Any changes to commitments made in the Part I application submission which resulted in more favorable scoring (and thus a higher likelihood of contract award) would be considered an event of default under the REC Delivery Contract resulting in the full forfeiture of collateral, with the system unable to be Part II verified.

#### **After Part II Verification**

As most of the scoring criteria for Community Driven Community Solar projects will take place during the project development cycle (thus take place across the Part I and Part II application process), there is a limited scope of criteria that the Agency will need to monitor after Part II verification. If applicable, the Program Administrator will seek to monitor some requirements throughout the life of the REC Delivery Contract. The Program Administrator will request updated reporting at the Annual Report each July for such commitments and will also seek to ensure that projects that have made these commitments are in compliance via random project inspections. Failure to uphold these commitments may result in an Event of Default under the REC Contract.

## Appendix G - Approved Vendor Application

### Illinois Shines Program – Approved Vendor Application Updated for 2024-25 Program Year

**Thank you for your interest in registering as an Approved Vendor in the Illinois Shines Program!**

The following application is to be completed by 1) entities applying to become new Approved Vendors and 2) existing Approved Vendors applying to become an Equity Eligible Contractor (<https://illinoisabp.com/become-an-equity-eligible-contractor/>). The application takes about 30 minutes to complete and must be finished in one sitting as progress cannot be saved. Once an application is submitted, it will be reviewed by the Program Administrator within 4 to 6 weeks, and you will be contacted if any further information is required. Please know that you are required to respond to any requests for additional or clarifying information by the Program Administrator within 14 days. Any failure to respond within this timeframe may result in the rejection of your AV application and prevent you from re-applying for a period of six (6) months.

**In order to complete this application, you will need information in the following categories:**

- Company background (ownership structure, contacts, EIN, shareholder list, service territories)
- Vendor classification and project types (affiliations with other Approved Vendors, Designees, application types)
- Legal and regulatory information and customer complaints (history of sanctions, bankruptcy, audit findings, fraud, customer complaints)
- Equity Eligible Contractor *if applicable* (contact info, criteria under which you seek EEC Certification)

**Additionally, you will need to submit the following documents:**

- Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months
- Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (if the entity will install Distributed Generation solar projects)
- Documentation of either PJM-GATS aggregator account or M-RETS account
- A representative sample of your company's marketing resources (print, website, social media, etc.)
- Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Attestation (if applicable)

You will also need to have submitted a Minimum Equity Standard Compliance Plan (<https://forms.office.com/r/58Z370sEz4>).

Please reach out to [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com) with any questions.

## Background and Contact Information

### What type of Approved Vendor Application is this?

- Application to become a new Approved Vendor
- Application to become a new Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendor
- Application for an existing Approved Vendor to become an Equity Eligible Contractor

Existing Approved Vendor ID: \_\_\_\_\_

If this is an application for an existing Approved Vendor to become an Equity Eligible Contractor, please enter your Approved Vendor ID. The value must be a number.

Legal Business Entity Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The approved vendor name must match the entity's legal name as reflected on its W-9 form.

Does the company operate under another name? Enter the Doing Business As ("DBA") name. If this does not apply, enter N/A: \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary place of business

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apartment or Suite (If this does not apply, please use N/A) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Company phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Points of Contact Responsible for the company's day-to-day interaction with the Program Administrator

Primary Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Title \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_

Additional points of contact are not required but are helpful for the Program Administrator's ability to communicate any issues to the Approved Vendor.

**Please provide contact information for up to three additional business representatives.**

Secondary Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Title \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Third Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Third Contact Title \_\_\_\_\_

Third Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_

Third Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth Contact Title \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for contracting questions? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for extensions? An extension refers to the extension of the Scheduled Energization Date under the REC Contract. Extensions are required if a project fails to energize within a certain amount of time after the REC Contracted is executed. More information can be found within each specific REC Contract: <https://illinoisabp.com/rec-contract/>. Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number.

\_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for REC delivery notifications? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for Annual Reports? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for customer support? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_



Who should we contact for Community Solar subscriber verification (if applicable)? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for potential Program violations and disciplinary-related communications? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

Who should we contact for project batching notifications? Please enter an email address. If this email address is not connected to a contact identified above, please also include the employee's full name, title, and work phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

### Company Information

Company ownership structure, including any affiliated businesses owned or partially owned by the company, and any businesses that have ownership of all or part of the company. Please detail the ownership structure as far as needed to show ownership by natural persons. \_\_\_\_\_

**Employer Identification Number (EIN):** \_\_\_\_\_

Enter a numerical response only.

**Is the company a legal entity?**

- Yes
- No

### Company Type

- Corporation
- General Partnership
- LLC
- LLP
- LP
- Non-profit
- Sole Proprietor

**Current number of employees:** \_\_\_\_\_

A list of company shareholders, owners, partners or proprietors with ownership interests equal to or greater than 10% and the amount of their respective ownership interests. Please provide a home address for any natural person whose ownership stake is equal to or exceeds 10%. \_\_\_\_\_

As required by Section 1-75(c-20) of the Illinois Power Agency Act, please provide the demographic information of all owners of the company.

**For each of the following categories, please state the number of owners who identify as such:**

- White: \_\_\_\_\_
- Black or African American: \_\_\_\_\_
- American Indian or Alaska Native: \_\_\_\_\_
- Asian American: \_\_\_\_\_
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: \_\_\_\_\_
- Hispanic or Latino: \_\_\_\_\_
- Multiracial: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 Enterprise
- Veteran-owned Business
- Small Business (based on the size standards used by the U.S. Small Business Administration; please visit <https://www.sba.gov/size-standards/index.html> for a web tool to determine eligibility)
- None
- Other (type a response): \_\_\_\_\_

**Company State of Registration:** \_\_\_\_\_

Other states where company is registered to do business: \_\_\_\_\_

Company's date of organization/incorporation in home state: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is the company authorized to do business in Illinois?**

- Yes
- No

**Does the company install (or intend to install) distributed generation projects in Illinois?**

- Yes
- No

**Does the company install (or intend to install) community solar projects in Illinois?**

- Yes
- No

**In which regions of Illinois do you primarily work/install projects?**

- Northern
- Central
- Southern

**Please identify the counties in your service area.**

*[drop down menu with all Illinois counties as options/ can select multiple counties]*

Company Website (Parent company website if applicant is a special purpose entity): \_\_\_\_\_

Please list all social media accounts associated with the proposed Approved Vendor: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Vendor Classification And Project Types**

**Will the company act as an Approved Vendor for more than one project?**

- Yes
- No (we plan to be a Single Project Approved Vendor)

**Are you or have you ever been a Designee registered with the Illinois Shines program?**

- Yes
- No

**Is the company affiliated with any other current or prospective Approved Vendor or Designee? Please select "yes" if there is a current or prospective Approved Vendor or Designee:**

- That has a 10% or more ownership in the applicant company
- That the applicant company has a 10% or more ownership interest in
- That has a partner, officer, director, member or manager in common with the applicant company
- That has a common parent company with the applicant company

If yes, provide a thorough explanation of the affiliate relationship including, but not limited to, the name(s) of the affiliated company, the relevant ownership percentages; and the full names, addresses and phone numbers of any partner, officer, director, manager or member in common. If any, include the Approved Vendor ID number and Designee ID number for any affiliated businesses.

- Yes: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

### Company And Affiliate History

During the past seven (7) years, has the applicant business , or any affiliate (using the criteria above) of the applicant business engaged in operations in the U.S. related to energy, or any current or former owner (not including public shareholders), partner, director, officer, principal, or any person in a position involved in the administration of funds, or currently or formerly having the authority to sign, execute or approve contracts for the applicant business:

- Been sanctioned, disciplined or fined (or are currently under investigation by a regulatory body) related to any business or professional permit or license?
- Been suspended, disqualified, or involuntarily removed from any local, state or federal governmental program? For the sake of this question, a governmental program is any program, fund, scheme, or benefit administered by or on behalf of any governmental authority.
- Been suspended, cancelled, terminated or found non-responsible on any contract awarded by a state, local, or federal government or governmental body or on a subcontract related to such a contract?
- Had a surety called upon to complete an awarded contract?
- Been the subject of an investigation, whether open or closed, by any government entity for a civil or criminal violation for any business-related conduct?
- Been charged with a misdemeanor or felony, been indicted, been granted immunity, been convicted of a crime, been subject to a judgment, taken a plea bargain, or entered into a settlement, related to alleged:
  - Misappropriation (including theft or embezzlement) of funds or property; or
  - Fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.

Note: The above does not include actions taken by former employees after leaving the employ of your company. Answering yes to the above question does not automatically disqualify an applicant from becoming an Approved Vendor. The Program Administrator will consider the relevant information on a case-by-case basis.

- None of these apply
- Yes at least one of these applies: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please provide an explanation of the issue(s), relevant dates, the entity or person(s) involved, any remedial or corrective action(s) taken, and the current status of the issue(s).

Within the last seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates that are or were engaged in energy-related operations in the U.S. had any judgments filed against it that remain undischarged?

- Yes: \_\_\_\_\_

- No

If yes, provide an explanation of the issue(s), relevant dates, the claimant's name, the amount of the judgment, and the current status of the issue(s).

Within the last seven (7) years, whether pending or closed, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates initiated or been the subject of any bankruptcy proceedings?

- Yes: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

If yes, provide the Bankruptcy Code chapter number, the court name, and the docket number. Indicate the current status of the proceedings as "initiated," "pending," or "closed."

Within the last seven (7) years, has any owner with greater than 10% ownership or principal of the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates been the owner (with greater than 10% ownership) or a principal in a company subject to any bankruptcy proceedings, whether or not closed, or that is currently in any bankruptcy proceeding pending?

- Yes
- No

If yes, provide the Bankruptcy Code chapter number, the court name, and the docket number. Indicate the current status of the proceedings as "initiated", "pending", or "closed."

During the past seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates failed to file a tax return or fully pay taxes according to deadlines required by federal, state, or local laws in the amount of \$10,000 or more?

- Yes
- No

If yes, provide the taxing jurisdiction, the type of tax, the liability year(s), the tax liability amount the proposed Approved Vendor failed to file/pay, and the current status of the tax liability.

During the past seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates that are or were engaged in operations in the U.S. related to energy been audited by any government entity resulting in a negative audit finding or requirement for remedial action?

- Yes
- No

If yes, provide an explanation of the issue(s) under investigation, relevant dates, the government entity involved, any remedial or corrective action(s) taken, and the current status of the issue(s).

During the past seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates that are or were engaged in operations in the U.S. related to energy been the subject of any judgments or settlement as the result of any investigation or action brought by a public consumer protection authority (including but not

limited to a federal/local attorney general's office, consumer protection bureau, or other consumer protection entity) in any jurisdiction?

- Yes
- No

If yes, provide any remedial or corrective action(s) taken and current status of the issue(s).

During the past seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates failed to resolve any Better Business Bureau complaints in any jurisdiction?

- Yes
- No

If yes, provide a summary of the complaint, a copy of the complaint, any remedial or corrective action(s) taken, and current status of the issue(s).

During the past seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates that are or were engaged in operations in the U.S. related to energy:

- been the subject of any judgment or settlement as the result of a lawsuit filed in a court of law, or
- been the subject of a complaint filed in a court of law or with a regulatory or administrative agency concerning alleged fraud, deception or unfair marketing practices?

If yes, please identify the name, case number, and jurisdiction of each such lawsuit or complaint, any remedial or corrective action(s) taken, and the current status of the lawsuit or complaint.

- Yes: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

During the past seven (7) years, has the proposed Approved Vendor or any of its affiliates that are or were engaged in operations in the U.S. related to energy been suspended from participation or denied the ability to participate in a government or utility-administered renewable energy incentive program?

If yes, provide the name of the program and jurisdiction, an explanation of the issue(s), and the current status of the issue(s).

- Yes: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

## **Required Documents**

Please email all of the required documents below to [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com). If documents are not received, the application cannot move forward.

- Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months
- Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (if the entity will install Distributed Generation solar projects)
- Documentation of either PJM-GATS aggregator account or M-RETS account
- Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Attestation (if applicable)
- Samples of marketing materials: A representative sample related to solar installed under the Illinois Shines Program for each channel of marketing the company is engaged in (including, but not limited to: print, website, direct mail, direct email, web ads, social media, radio, telemarketing, billboards). If no marketing material is used, please upload a document on company letterhead stating that no marketing material is used with a brief explanation of customer acquisition methods absent the use of marketing.

Beginning in Program Year 2023-2024, at least 10% of the project workforce for each entity participating in the Illinois Shines/Adjustable Block Program must be composed of Equity Eligible Persons. With the exception of Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs), all Approved Vendors (AVs) and Designees participating in the 2023-2024 Illinois Shines program are required to submit a **Minimum Equity Standard Compliance Plan**. Please visit the Equity Accountability System Hub on our website that provides helpful resources and tips for MES Compliance Plan submissions, along with a link to the submission form: <https://illinoisabp.com/equity-accountability-system/>.

## **Additional Questions**

**Utility service territory(ies) in which you seek to operate (select all that apply)**

- Ameren Illinois
- ComEd
- MidAmerican
- Mt. Carmel
- Municipal Utilities in MISO
- Municipal Utilities in PJM
- Rural Electric Cooperatives in MISO
- Rural Electric Cooperatives in PJM

**Type of Approved Vendor (select all that apply)**

- DG Installer
- DG Project Developer
- Community Solar Project Developer
- SREC Broker/Aggregator
- Non-profit
- Other

Illinois Shines offers incentives across six (6) categories and the Program offers support through each of these categories broken out into the below Sectors. As an AV, you will be assigned a Sector Strategist who will act as your main point of contact for any Program questions or needs. Your Strategist will also provide



proactive Program updates, process guides, and training relevant to your sector to support your team with the resources necessary to succeed in the Program.

**Please select the Sector most relevant to your team, or the Sector you anticipate participating in the most.**

- Small Distributed Generation
- Large Distributed Generation
- Community Solar (both Traditional and Community-Driven)
- Public Schools
- Equity Eligible Contractors

**Do you intend to participate in the Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) Program?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you consent to being contacted about solar job training programs in Illinois?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you have corporate hiring policies in place which do not allow for the hiring of individuals who have been convicted of a crime?**

- Yes
- No

### **Attestations**

I am the owner (for sole proprietorship), partner (for partnership) or the authorized agent (for corporation, LLC, or non-profit) of the proposed Approved Vendor and have the authority to make the following attestations on behalf of the company applying herein to serve as an Approved Vendor in the Illinois Shines Program.

#### **I agree**

The information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

#### **I agree**

I agree to participate in Program-related registration and any initial or recurrent required training.

#### **I agree**

I agree to maintain registration to do business in Illinois and will notify the Program Administrator without delay if the Approved Vendor's registration status with the Illinois Secretary of State changes.

#### **I agree**

I agree to provide the Program Administrator with 30 days' advance notice of closing down my company's business operations in Illinois.

**I agree**

I agree to provide the Program Administrator with updated information (on existing) and information on any new complaints, lawsuits, legal or regulatory action, bankruptcy, or any other material adverse changes in business condition when it becomes available.

**I agree**

I agree to provide copies of any marketing material used by the Approved Vendor and/or its Designees related to the sale, financing, or installation of solar photovoltaic systems that will apply to or are related to the Illinois Shines Program whenever requested by the IPA or Program Administrator. I furthermore agree to make changes to marketing materials requested by the IPA or Program Administrator in their efforts to ensure that such materials are not deceptive, confusing, or misleading, and to further ensure that such materials do not misrepresent our relationship to the Illinois Power Agency or the Illinois Shines Program.

**I agree**

I agree to comply with all Program requirements including, but not limited to, consumer protection requirements published by the Program Administrator and acknowledge that a failure to do so may jeopardize my ability to serve as an Approved Vendor in the program.

**I agree**

I agree to provide and maintain credit and collateral requirements pursuant to the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan.

**I agree**

I agree to complete annual reports by the report deadline; disclose names and other information regarding installers and projects; document that all installers and other subcontractors comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations including ICC registration as Distributed Generation Installers; provide the current status of unfinished projects and Renewable Energy Credits generated and delivered by completed projects; and comply with any other annual report requirements as determined by the Program Administrator.

**I agree**

I agree to comply with all community solar subscriber reporting requirements including providing updated and accurate subscriber data.

**I agree**

I agree that all information obtained related to a community solar subscriber's utility account that is confidential, proprietary, or generally non-public, including the subscriber's utility account number, utility account name, and meter number, shall be maintained in a secure and confidential manner. I further agree that I will not release such information to any other person or entity, other than as required for purposes of subscription enrollment and program administration, without the customer's written consent.

**I agree**

As required by Section 1-75(c)(1)(7) of the Illinois Power Agency Act (20 ILCS 3855), I agree that any photovoltaic projects submitted for program approval were or will be installed by a qualified person in compliance with Section 16-128A of the Public Utilities Act (220 ILCS 5) and any rules or regulations adopted thereunder, including Title 83, Section 468.20 of the Illinois Administrative Code.

**I agree**

I agree to provide company financial statements and/or project references upon request of the Program Administrator.

**I agree**

I will comply with ongoing Program requirements, terms and conditions, and timely respond to Program Administrator requests.

**I agree**

I agree to promptly provide updated contact information to the Program Administrator if any of the contact information included in this application changes.

**I agree**

I agree to promptly provide the Program Administrator with written notice if the ownership of the company changes by 50% or more after the filing of this application.

**I agree**

I agree to promptly provide the Program Administrator with written notice if the name of the Approved Vendor, including the legal name or the “doing business as” name, changes.

**I agree**

I agree to promptly provide the Program Administrator with written notice if there are any material changes to written answers in the Company and Affiliate History sections of this application.

**I agree**

If any requirements are implemented by the Illinois Power Agency or Program Administrator that I am unable to comply with, I agree to immediately request to withdraw my qualification to act as an Approved Vendor for any projects not already under contract with the utilities and cease all new Approved Vendor activities.

**I agree**

I agree to respond within fourteen (14) days to any requests for information or clarification from the Program Administrator related to my AV Application. I agree that if I fail to respond to any Program Administrator inquiry within 14 days, I will be deemed non-responsive which may result in the rejection of my application by the Program Administrator. I further agree that any such rejection for non-responsiveness may prevent me from being eligible to resubmit another AV Application for a period of six (6) months.

**I agree**

Please type the name of the individual agreeing to the above attestations: \_\_\_\_\_

### Equity Eligible Contractor Application and Required Document

EEC certification for Approved Vendors occurs at the ownership/partner/proprietor level of a company (or board level in the case of non-profit organizations). This means that one or more owners of a company must qualify as an EEC under one of the qualifications listed below.

#### There are several ways to qualify as an EEC:

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 Preapprenticeship 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;
2. Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system;
3. Persons who were formerly incarcerated; or
4. Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community. Eligible communities can be found on the maps linked here: <https://illinoisshines.com/become-anequity-eligible-contractor-eec-approved-vendor-or-designee/>

Please submit the form below and e-mail a signed attestation to [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com) and our team will begin processing your application. Please also send proof of eligibility if you are applying for the following categories:

- Persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community. Examples of proof of eligibility include a driver's license, utility bill, lease agreement, etc.
- 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 Preapprenticeship 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;

EEPs that currently serve as the majority-owner of an Equity Eligible Contractor may not submit additional requests to certify Equity Eligible Contractors for which they serve as the majority-owner EEP. However, this policy does not apply to Single-Project AVs, as the Agency recognizes the important role Single-Project AVs can play in successful financing of projects, and does not want to limit an EEP's ability to employ business practices available to non EEPs.

#### Link to required attestation:

[https://illinoisshines.com/wpcontent/uploads/2023/07/ABP\\_Attestation\\_for\\_Eligible\\_Persons-1.pdf](https://illinoisshines.com/wpcontent/uploads/2023/07/ABP_Attestation_for_Eligible_Persons-1.pdf)

Are you applying to become an EEC?

- Yes
- No

(If yes, the following questions are required)

**Please designate which Owners, Partners, or Proprietors meet the EEC eligibility criteria.**

Name of 1st person: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of 2nd person: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of 3rd person: \_\_\_\_\_

**Select one or more of the following categories under which you seek Equity Eligible Contractor Certification.**

- 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

**Do you wish to be identified as an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) in the list of Approved Vendors on the program website, [illinoisshines.com](http://illinoisshines.com)?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you consider any information you provided confidential?**

- Yes
- No

## Appendix H - Approved Vendor Attestation

All Approved Vendors must e-sign the following attestation:

**I declare that:**

1. I am the owner (for sole proprietorship), partner (for partnership) or the authorized agent (for corporation, LLC, or non-profit) of the proposed Approved Vendor and have the authority to make the following attestations on behalf of the company applying herein to serve as an Approved Vendor in the Illinois Shines Program.
2. The information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge;
3. I agree to participate in registration and any initial or recurrent required training.
4. I agree to abide by the ongoing Program terms and conditions.
5. I agree to maintain registration to do business in Illinois and will notify the Program Administrator without delay if the Approved Vendor's registration status with the Illinois Secretary of State changes.
6. I agree to provide the Program Administrator with 30 days' advance notice of closing down my company's business operations in Illinois.
7. I agree to provide the Program Administrator updated information (on existing) and information on any new complaints, lawsuits, legal or regulatory action, bankruptcy, or any other material adverse changes in business condition when it becomes available.
8. *I agree to provide copies of any marketing materials or content used by the Approved Vendor and/or its Designees related to the sale, financing, or installation of solar photovoltaic systems that will apply or are related to the Illinois Shines program, whenever requested by the IPA or Program Administrator. I furthermore agree to make changes to marketing materials requested by the IPA or Program Administrator in their efforts to ensure that such materials are not deceptive, confusing, or misleading, and to further ensure that such materials do not misrepresent our relationship to the Illinois Power Agency or the Illinois Shines program.*
9. *I agree to comply with all Program requirements including, but not limited to, consumer protection requirements published by the Program Administrator and acknowledge that a failure to do so may jeopardize my ability to serve as an Approved Vendor in the Program.*
10. I agree to provide and maintain credit and collateral requirements pursuant to the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan.
11. I agree to complete annual reports by the report deadline; disclose names and other information regarding installers and projects; and document that all installers and other subcontractors comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations including ICC registration as Distributed Generation Installers; provide the current status of unfinished projects and Renewable Energy Credits generated and delivered by completed projects; and any comply with other annual report requirements as determined by the Program Administrator.
12. I agree to comply with all community solar subscriber reporting requirements including providing updated and accurate subscriber data.
13. I agree that all information obtained related to a community solar subscriber's utility account that is confidential, proprietary or generally non-public, including the subscriber's utility account number, utility account name, and meter number, shall be maintained in a secure and confidential manner. I further agree that I will not release such information to any other person or entity, other than as

required for purposes of subscription enrollment and program administration, without the customer's written consent.

14. As required by Section 1-75(c)(1)(7) of the Illinois Power Agency Act (20 ILCS 3855), I agree that any photovoltaic projects submitted for program approval were or will be installed by a qualified person in compliance with Section 16-128A of the Public Utilities Act (220 ILCS 5) and any rules or regulations adopted thereunder, including Title 83, Section 468.20 of the Illinois Administrative Code.
15. I agree to provide company financial statements and/or project references upon request of the Program Administrator.
16. I will comply with all ongoing Program requirements, terms and conditions, and timely respond to Program Administrator requests.
17. I agree to promptly provide updated contact information to the Program Administrator if any of the contact information included in this application changes.
18. I agree to promptly provide the Program Administrator with written notice if the ownership of the company changes by 50% or more after the filing of this application.
19. I agree to promptly provide the Program Administrator with written notice if the name of the Approved Vendor, including the legal name or the "doing business as" name, changes.
20. I agree to promptly provide the Program Administrator with written notice if there are any material changes to written answers in the Company and Affiliate History sections of this application.
21. If any requirements are implemented by the Illinois Power Agency or Program Administrator that I am unable to comply with, I agree to immediately request to withdraw my qualification to act as an Approved Vendor for any projects not already under contract with the utilities and cease all new Approved Vendor activities.
22. I agree to respond within fourteen (14) days to any requests for information or clarification from the Program Administrator related to my AV Application. I agree that if I fail to respond to any Program Administrator inquiry within 14 days, I will be deemed non-responsive which may result in the rejection of my application by the Program Administrator. I further agree that any such rejection for non-responsiveness may prevent me from being eligible to resubmit another AV Application for a period of six (6) months.

I attest that the statements above are true and correct.

Type Name

(automatically stamped with username, time and IP address)



## **Appendix I – Part I Application Requirements**

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part I Section 1	Property Owner	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 1	Company Name (If Applicable)	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 1	Street	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 1	Apartment or Suite	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 1	City	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 1	State	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 1	Zip Code	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 1	Latitude	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 1	Longitude	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 1	Parcel Number	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 2	Project Name	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Project Type	Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 2	Financing Structure	Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 2	Have you already completed a project application on the same parcel of land?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Existing Project Application ID	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required for co-located applications that answer yes to prior question
Part I Section 2	Is this an expansion of an existing facility?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Application ID Existing Facility	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required for expansion applications that answer yes to prior question
Part I Section 2	In what county is the project located?	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part I Section 2	Was this project developed in response to a site-specific bidding process issued by a municipality or community group?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	For TCS and CDCS you don't need to click any option in order to move forward.
Part I Section 2	Is the project located at a Public School?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Would you like to request an advance of capital for this project?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	This option is only available to EEC applications.
Part I Section 2	Is this a Tier 1 or Tier 2 school based on the latest annual evidence based funding distribution process?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	District ID	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	District Name	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Is the school is located in an Illinois Environmental Justice Community per the criteria contained in Section 8.12 of the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan and as shown on the map published on the Illinois Solar for All website?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Please select a Project Category	Required (If prior question is yes)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Would you like to request the advance of capital for this project?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 3 Owner	Name of Owner or Point of Contact	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	Company Name	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	Street	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	Apartment or Suite	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	City	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	State	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	Zip Code	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	Phone	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Owner</b>	Email	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Installer</b>	Is the system installer known at this time?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I Section 3 Installer</b>	Legal Business Name	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
<b>Part I Section 3 Installer</b>	Street	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
<b>Part I Section 3 Installer</b>	Apartment or Suite	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
<b>Part I Section 3 Installer</b>	City	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
<b>Part I Section 3 Installer</b>	State	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part I Section 3 Installer	Zip Code	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
Part I Section 3 Installer	Phone	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
Part I Section 3 Installer	Email	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
Part I Section 3 Installer	Has this installer received Distributed Generation Installer certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required if the installer is known at Part I
Part I Section 3 Installer	Number of Graduates of Job Training Programs the Developer intends to work on the Project	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 4	Inverter Size (AC Watts)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Inverter Efficiency (%)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Ground Cover Ratio	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Does the system meet the Minimal Shading Criteria?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Number of Orientations	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Module Power Rating (Orientation #1)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Number of Modules #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	System Tilt #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	System Azimuth #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Mounting Location #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Tracking Type #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part I Section 4	Are you using Bifacial Panels for Array #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 4	Does your system have battery backup?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 5	REC Estimate Methodology	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Approved Vendor chooses PVWatts or Custom Capacity Factor
Part I Section 5	Explanation of Custom Capacity Factor	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for applications using Custom Capacity Factor
Part I Section 5	PVWatts Capacity Factor (%)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Portal will calculate a PVWatts capacity factor for every application
Part I Section 5	Custom Capacity Factor (%)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Using a Custom Capacity Factor is optional
Part I Section 5	Compare Custom Estimate Amount to PV Watts Estimate (%)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Calculated by Portal for applications using Custom Capacity Factor
Part I Section 5	REC Estimate	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Calculated by the portal based on contract length and capacity factor used
Part I Section 5	Compare Custom Estimate Amount to PV Watts Estimate (%)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	For applications using Custom Capacity Factor, portal will calculate the % difference between PV Watts and Custom Capacity Factor.

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part I Section 5	Compare Custom Estimate Amount to PV Watts Estimate (%) - Attestation	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required only for applications where Compare Custom Estimate is more than 20% from PV Watts
Part I Section 6	Interconnecting utility name	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Populates based on Disclosure Form for DG projects. Input by Approved Vendor for CS projects
Part I Section 6	Was your project completed on or before September 15th, 2021?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 6	Final Interconnection Approval Date (Actual or Estimated)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	If application was interconnected prior to Part I application submission, Certificate of Completion document upload will be required
Part I Section 6	REC Tracking System	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for systems that are interconnected prior to Part I application submission.
Part I Section 6	PJM GATS or M-RETS Unit ID	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for systems that are interconnected prior to Part I application submission.

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part I Section 6	Do you have a Net Metering Application Approval Letter?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for systems that are interconnected prior to Part I application submission. If the answer to this question is yes, it will also be required to upload the net metering application approval letter
Part I Section 6	Please provide an explanation of the relationship between the Utility Account Holder and the Property Owner, if they differ	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 6	Inverter Details	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 6	Utility Interconnection Queue Project ID	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 7 (Community Solar)	Describe the proposal subscription model *	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	
Part I Section 7 (Community Solar)	Describe the expected mix of residential and non-residential subscribers *	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	
Part I Section 7 (Community Solar)	Does the project commit to only serve the subscribers in the same county in which the project is located?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Part I Section 8 (Community Solar)	TCS Scoring Criteria (See Appendix E - Scoring Criteria for Traditional Community Solar Projects of Guidebook)	N/A	N/A	Not Required*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*To receive points for scoring for TCS select all that apply but these items are NOT REQUIRED to complete a TCS application.



Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Proof of Site Control	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Plot diagram or site map for all systems	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Signed Interconnection Agreement	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required (if over 25kW)	Not Required	Required (if over 25kW)	Not Required	Required for all systems greater than 25 kW AC
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Disclosure Form	Required	Required	Not required; Required at Part II*	Not required; Required at Part II*	Required	Not required; Required at Part II*	Required	Not required; Required at Part II*	*Disclosures are required for all projects. For DG projects each project requires a DF and for CS projects, all subscribers require a DF in Part II application.
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Land Use Permit	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for ground-mounted systems larger than 250 kW AC
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Certificate of Completion of Interconnection	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required for systems interconnected prior to Part I application submission
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Net metering application approval letter (if applicable)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required for systems interconnected prior to Part I application submission that answer yes to having a net metering application approval letter

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Residential >25kW (AC) - proof of residential project	Not Required	Required for residential systems greater than 25 kW AC	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for residential systems greater than 25 kW AC
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	House of Worship Certification	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for House of Worship only
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Proof of interconnection on or before Sept 15, 2021 - Prevailing Wage Exempt Doc	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for applications that were interconnected prior to September 15, 2021
<b>Part I - Required Documents</b>	Proof of exemption from taxation pursuant to Section 15-40 of the Property Tax Code	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for House of Worship only
<b>Part I - Attestation (Confidentiality)</b>	Part I Information to be proprietary, privileged or confidential, and the disclosure of which would cause competitive harm	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part I - Attestation (Prevailing Wage)</b>	By checking this box, I certify that I have read and understand the notice below regarding wages paid for the construction of the project.	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	

## **Appendix J – Part II Application Requirements**

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Section 1	Does your system still match the array information submitted in Part I?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Number of Orientations	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Module Power Rating (Orientation #1)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Number of Modules #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	System Tilt #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	System Azimuth #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Mounting Location #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Tracking Type #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Are you using Bifacial Panels for Array #1	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Total Array Output (DC Watts)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Automatically calculated by the portal
Section 1	Inverter Size (AC Watts)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Inverter Efficiency (%)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Ground Cover Ratio	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Does the system meet the Minimal Shading Criteria?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	REC Estimate Methodology	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 1	Explanation of Other Capacity Factor	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for applications using Custom Capacity Factor

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Section 1	PVWatts Capacity Factor (%)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Portal will calculate a PVWatts capacity factor for every application
Section 1	Custom Capacity Factor (%)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Using a Custom Capacity Factor is optional
Section 1	Compare Custom Estimate Amount to PV Watts Estimate (%)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Calculated by Portal for applications using Custom Capacity Factor
Section 1	REC Estimate	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Calculated by the portal based on contract length and capacity factor used
Section 1	PV Watts First year output	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	
Section 1	Disclosure form first year output	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	
Section 1	Final REC Price	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	Provided by portal	
Section 2	Interconnection Approval Date	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 2	Project Online Date	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 2	Date of Project's Certificate of Completion or PTO	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 2	Date on which Construction Activities for Project were Completed	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 2	REC Tracking System	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 2	PJM GATS or M-RETS Unit ID	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 2	Name on REC Tracking System Account	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Section 2</b>	Do you have a Net Metering Application Approval Letter?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Legal Business Name	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Street	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Apartment or Suite	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
<b>Section 3</b>	City	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	State	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Zip Code	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Phone	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Email	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Name of Qualified Person who conducted installation	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Has this installer received Distributed Generation Installer certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	ICC Docket Number for the Certification of the DG Installer of record	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Is the system owner the installer?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3</b>	Installation Contract Execution Date	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - White	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - Black or African American	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - American Indian or Alaskan Native	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - Asian	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - More Than One Race	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - Some Other Race	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by race - Employee declines to identify	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Total Hours by Race	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Automatically calculated by the portal
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by Ethnicity - Hispanic or Latino	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by Ethnicity - Not Hispanic or Latino	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by Ethnicity - Employee Declines to Identify Ethnicity	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Total Hours by Ethnicity	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Automatically calculated by the portal
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Do you have any employees who live in Illinois who have worked on this project?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Hours by Zip code of residence as of the date of employment	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Solar Training Pipeline Program	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Craft Apprenticeship Program (FEJA program)	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Multi-Cultural Job Training Program (FEJA program)	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Other job training programs yes/no	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Total number of program hours	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Automatically calculated by the portal
<b>Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data</b>	Total number of graduates of Job Training programs who worked on the project	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	Required as Applicable	



Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Section 4	Does this system still match the information submitted in Part 1?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Module Manufacturer/Make	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Module Model	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Inverter Manufacturer/Make	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Inverter Model	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Inverter Details	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Section 4	What Metering Standard does this project meet?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Meter Manufacturer/Make	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Meter Model	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Inverter Manufacturer/Make	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Inverter Model	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Inverter Details	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	
Section 4	What Metering Standard does this project meet?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Meter Manufacturer/Make	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Meter Model	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Does your system have battery backup?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 4	Total Project Cost (\$)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Section 4</b>	What is the percentage of small subscribers as a share of total project capacity ( & )	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	
<b>Section 4</b>	Is at least 50%	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Certificate of Completion of Interconnection	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Photograph of the project showing all installed modules	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Photograph of the inverter	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Photograph of the meter	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Proof of irrevocable transfer	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Net metering application approval letter	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for systems that answered yes to having a net metering application approval letter
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Detailed Battery Schematic	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required for systems that have a battery backup
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	All Certified Transcripts of Payroll submitted to DOL for the construction of the project	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required for projects subject to prevailing wage
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Exhibit I - Community Renewable Energy Generation Project Subscription Information Access Authorization	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Only required for Community Solar projects on the 2019 REC Delivery Contract

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
<b>Part II - Required Documents</b>	Subscriber information	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Required for Community Solar projects. Please reach out to Program Administrator to coordinate a subscriber verification.
<b>Part II Attestations</b>	With respect to this project, any and all marketing activity that occurred after the IPA released its initial Marketing Guidelines on November 27, 2018 was fully compliant with the operative version of either the Marketing Guidelines or the Consumer Protection Handbook (approved July 14, 2022).	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II Attestations</b>	The installation contract signed between the Approved Vendor (or its agent) and the system host is fully consistent with information in the Standard Disclosure Form provided to the system host and Program Administrator.	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II Attestations</b>	Confirm compliance that all construction employees received at least the prevailing wage rate for the applicable county in the State of Illinois, for projects subject to prevailing wage requirements.	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II Attestations</b>	Confirm compliance with all DG installation contract requirements or community solar subscription contract requirements approved on July 14, 2022.	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
<b>Part II Attestations</b>	The installation contract signed between the Approved Vendor (or its agent) and the system host is fully compliant with all minimum contract requirements approved on July 14, 2022.	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required for applications where installation contract was signed before updated contract requirements were released in 2022.

Application Section	Data Point from App	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part II Attestations	The Approved Vendor (or its agent) has executed a signed contract amendment with the system host that brings the contract into full compliance with all current minimum contract requirements.	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	If the installation contract was signed after the release of new contract requirements in 2022, the Approved Vendor is required to attest to one of these five attestations.
Part II Attestations	The original installation contract was already fully compliant with the current contract requirements.	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	
Part II Attestations	The Approved Vendor's (or its agent) diligent, good-faith efforts to contract the system host using all known contact information, following the release of the IPA's current installation contract requirements, were unsuccessful.	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	
Part II Attestations	The system host refused to sign the contract amendment that would bring the contract into compliance with current contract requirements.	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	
Part II Attestations	Other (Please explain)	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	Required as applicable	

## Appendix K – Minimum Equity Standard Waivers

### 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. Did the entity advertise any available positions on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal? Or review the list of EEPs looking for employment opportunities posted on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal? If so, did the applicant contact these available EEPs? 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 on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal to verify job postings.
5. Please provide a brief narrative describing the entity’s effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons (“EEPs”) 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.
  - d. Direct outreach to EECs listed on the Illinois Shines program website (where applicable – if the entity did not work with any subcontractors, please include this information and this point category will not be included when evaluating the waiver request) **(4 points)**
  - e. For each of the items in 4.a.-d., please include the dates associated with the event, meeting, or contact, and the names and titles of the contacted individuals, where available.
6. Engagement in direct and extensive outreach to trade associations or other relevant organizations to notify them of opportunities.
- a. Efforts to contact organized labor unions **(2 points)**
  - b. Efforts to contact community colleges **(2 points)**
  - c. Efforts to contact community-based organizations **(2 points)**
7. Please provide documentation of the platforms used to announce or publicize available employment opportunities, such as employment websites, alumni listservs, union halls, social media, etc. **(2 points)**
8. Please list any state-sponsored platforms on which the applicant announced or publicized available employment opportunities for EEPs, such as Illinois WorkNet ([www.illinoisworknet.com](http://www.illinoisworknet.com)) or Illinois Job Link ([illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov](http://illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov)) **(2 points)**
9. Please provide documentation of employment offers that were made to equity eligible persons but that were not accepted. **(2 points)**
10. Please describe any other efforts outside of the scope of the above criteria to recruit equity eligible persons. **(3 points)**

## Non-Union Scoring Table

Criterion	Total Points Possible	Points Awarded
Posting employment or contract opportunities on and contacting EEPs via the Energy Workforce Equity Portal	3	
Collaboration with qualifying workforce training programs	6	-
Maintaining a list of EEPs for future employment opportunities	2	-
Participation in job fairs	5	-
Evidence of outreach to EECs listed on Illinois Shines program website	4	-
Efforts to contact unions, community colleges, and/or community-based organizations	2	-
Efforts to contact community colleges	2	-
Efforts to contact community-based organizations	2	-
Posting employment or contract opportunities on different platforms	2	-
Utilization of WorkNet or other state-run employment sites	2	-
Offers made to EEPs that were not accepted	2	
Number of similarly situated AVs that are able to meet MES	-5	-
Extraordinary efforts made outside of the above criteria	3	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-</b>

## Organized Labor Union Waiver Request Form

### Minimum Equity Standard Waiver Request

#### Program 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 Adjustable Block/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 applicant’s effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons (“EEPs”) prior to the start of project construction. Recruitment efforts may include the following:
  - a. A signed letter from at least two qualifying workforce training programs in the area stating that no candidates that meet the criteria are available. **(6 points)**
  - b. Maintaining applications and contact information of individuals who were not selected 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) **(4 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 EEPs looking for employment opportunities posted on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal? If so, did the applicant contact these available EEPs? 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 EEPs in order to meet demand in response to the Minimum Equity Standard, such as the efforts listed in this waiver request. **(7 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)**
8. Please list any state-sponsored platforms on which the applicant announced or publicized available employment opportunities for EEPs, such as Illinois WorkNet ([www.illinoisworknet.com](http://www.illinoisworknet.com)) or Illinois Job Link ([illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov](http://illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov)) **(2 points)**
9. Please provide documentation of employment offers that were made to equity eligible persons but that were not accepted. **(2 points)**
10. Please describe any other efforts outside of the scope of the above criteria to recruit equity eligible individuals. **(3 points)**



## Scoring Table for Project Waivers Using Organized Labor

Criterion	Total Points Possible	Points Awarded
Signed letter from at least two qualifying workforce training programs in the area stating that no candidates are available that meet the criteria	6	-
Maintaining a list of EEPs for future employment opportunities	2	-
Evidence of outreach to EECs listed on Illinois Shines program website	4	-
Posting positions or contract opportunities on and contacting EEPs via the Energy Workforce Equity Portal	3	-
Signed letter from the trade union stating no apprentices or journey worker is available that meets the criteria. The letter demonstrates the union's efforts to recruit EEPs.	7	-
Efforts to contact community colleges	2	-
Efforts to contact community-based organizations	2	-
Utilization of WorkNet or other state-run employment site	2	-
Posting employment or contract opportunities on different platforms	2	
Offers made to EEPs that were not accepted	2	
Number of similarly situated AVs that are able to meet MES	-5	-
Extraordinary efforts made outside of the above criteria	3	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-</b>

## Appendix L – Extension Request Process

Each Scheduled Energized Date extension request under Section 5(b) [2019 REC contract] or Section 2.4(b) [2021 and 2022 REC contracts] of the REC contract should reference the specific contract clause under which an extension is sought (i.e., which subparagraph of Section 5(b)/Section 2.4(b) is being relied upon) and should avoid referencing multiple clauses in a single request (as multiple clauses may implicate multiple distinct processes and decision-makers for the request). A request for a “good cause” extension granted at the IPA’s discretion under Section 5(b)(v)/Section 2.4(b)(iii) of the REC contract rather than the declaration of a force majeure event or reliance on a separate subparagraph of Section 5(b)/Section 2.4(b).

Each extension request should include, at minimum, a brief narrative outlining the justification for the request. This narrative should clearly explain the situation under which the Approved Vendor believes an extension is warranted for the referenced systems. If extensions are being requested for multiple systems and the narrative is similar, a single extension request may be made for multiple systems (although please provide separate requests for each contracting utility).

The IPA also strongly encourages that each of the following be included in an extension request:

1. Approved Vendor Name (as listed in your Approved Vendor application/Program portal)
2. Approved Vendor ID #
3. Designated System ID #
4. Project Name
5. Project Type
6. Contract ID #
7. Batch ID #
8. Trade Date
9. Contracting Utility
10. REC Contract Clause Referenced (e.g., Section 5.b.v)
11. Length of Extension Requested
12. Original Scheduled Energization Date
13. Requested New Scheduled Energization Date (Rounded to the last business day of the month for Section 5(b)(v)/Section 2.4(b)(iii) requests)

For requests covering multiple systems, please include this information for each project in a spreadsheet attached to the request.

Lastly, please double-check the accuracy of all extension request information, including whether a given system is still under contract, prior to submitting an extension request. Requests under Section 5(b)(v)/Section 2.4(b)(iii) must be “made in writing by Seller to Buyer and the IPA prior to the Scheduled Energized Date.” Buyer contact information is contained in the REC Contract and requests to the IPA should be sent to [IPA.solar@illinois.gov](mailto:IPA.solar@illinois.gov).

## Appendix M – Clarifications for Public Schools Category

Originally Released October 7, 2022

The passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (Public Act 102-0662) introduced several new project categories within the Adjustable Block Program, including the Public Schools category. The IPA has drafted the following clarifications in response to stakeholder questions regarding the Public Schools category.

### Group A and B Allocation

- The IPA regrets that due to an error, the Program Guidebook incorrectly states that capacity for the Public Schools category will not be allocated by Group. This is inconsistent with the Commission-approved 2022 Long-Term Plan. The prioritization for project selection by Tier and location in an environmental justice community will be applied to projects within the allocations to Groups A and B for this category, as outlined in the 2022 Long-Term Plan. The next version of the Program Guidebook, to be released this month, will be revised to reflect this requirement from the Long-Term Plan.

### Land Ownership

- Leased vs. Owned Land
  - A school/district must own the land on which a project submitted to the Public Schools category is sited, which may include district-owned land.<sup>92</sup> Projects developed on land leased by a school/district are not permitted for submission to this category, unless a public school is sited on the same parcel of leased land.
- Date of Land Ownership
  - A school district must own the land on which the prospective project is sited at the time of application to the Program. Schools/districts are not permitted to enter into agreements that would be contingent on receiving a REC Contract from the Program in order to qualify for this Program category.
  - A school district must continue to own the land the project is sited on for the entire lifetime of the REC Contract (20 years).

### Project Location

- A community solar project submitted to the Public Schools category must be site on district- or school-owned land, in accordance with the Commission’s Order. That public school or district-owned land may be adjacent to a school or district building or facility, but adjacency is not required.

<sup>92</sup> This requirement was confirmed by HB 3445, which explicitly modified the text of Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(iv) to require that projects in the Public School category must be “installed on public school land.”

- Distributed generation projects submitted to the Public Schools category must be located at the public school (or school district facility) the project is serving.

### **Community Solar Specifics for Public School Projects**

- Anchor Tenant Requirements
  - Anchor tenants must subscribe to 10% of a community solar project and may not subscribe to more than 40% of the project.
  - As the REC Contract for Public Schools projects is 20 years in length, the school must commit to being an anchor tenant for the Community Solar project for the life of the REC Contract.
  - In order to comply with anchor tenant requirements, the Approved Vendor will need to submit a letter of intent in the Part I application from the school/school district serving as the anchor tenant. When subscription levels for the project are reviewed by the Program Administrator during the Part II application review, the school/school district must be subscribed to between 10-40% of the project's capacity.
- Anchor Tenant Waiver & Stakeholder Feedback Process
  - Per the Illinois Commerce Commission's Final Order approving the Agency's 2022 Long-Term Plan, a stakeholder feedback process will take place to finalize a process around the offering of a waiver from the Program requirement of the school where the project is sited acting as an anchor tenant to a community solar project that is submitted to the Public Schools category. The Agency intends to hold this feedback process in the first quarter of 2023. Applicants to the Program should not act in reliance on the existence of this waiver process until all relevant details are finalized and the feedback process has concluded.
  - As the waiver process is intended to be used in limited instances when a school can no longer serve as an anchor tenant due to unforeseen circumstances that may arise over a 20-year period, a school and/or district may not request a waiver in advance of a demonstrated need or at the time of the project application. The requirements around waiver application and approval will be further determined via the stakeholder feedback process noted above.
- Subscriber Mix for Rest of Project – Small Subscribers
  - Per requirements for community solar projects under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, community solar projects submitted to the Public Schools category will be required to retain a subscription mix of at least 50% small subscribers.
- Subscriber Mix for Rest of Project – Other Schools/Districts as Subscribers
- As noted above, the school/school district hosting the project must act as the anchor tenant and the 50% small subscriber commitment must be met; remaining capacity of the project after fulfillment of these two requirements can be filled with any type of subscriber.

## Appendix N – Traditional Community Solar Clarifications Published in 2022

Traditional community solar clarifications published October 21, 2022

### Minimum Point Threshold for Waitlist

1. Is a Traditional Community Solar project required to meet the minimum waitlist threshold score to secure capacity within the Program?

Section 1-75(c)(1)(K)(iii)(1) of the IPA Act requires the Agency to select Traditional Community Solar (“TCS”) Category projects on a first-come, first-serve basis, and allows the Agency to utilize additional methods to prioritize projects submitted at the same time. As explained in the Agency’s 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, the Agency has interpreted “at the same time” to mean projects submitted “on the same day.” The TCS Scoring Criteria will be utilized to prioritize projects submitted “at the same time” – that is, on the same day – when the collective size of project applications in MW submitted to the Program exceed the capacity available in the Program.

For the 2022-2023 Program Year opening on November 1, 2022, there is a total of 150 MW of capacity allocated to the TCS category, with 48 MW designated for Group A and 112 MW designated for Group B. The Agency expects that first-day applications will exceed the capacity allocated for both Groups, and that the scoring mechanism will be required to prioritize applications across all applications within the TCS Category. As explained in the Plan, the Agency will maintain the “first-come, first serve basis” outlined in the IPA Act, and will prioritize projects received on the same day in accordance with the scoring criteria. This means that project applications will be scored and ranked by the date the application is submitted. Therefore the highest-scoring project submitted on November 2, 2022, will be ranked below the lowest-scored project that met the minimum threshold on November 1, 2022. The Agency will only score projects beginning on the day that capacity for the Group/Category is exhausted; therefore, it is possible, though unlikely, that a project that does not meet the minimum waitlist threshold score could obtain a REC Contract. By way of example, if on November 1, 2022 (“Day 1”), projects totaling less than 48 MW are submitted to TCS Group A, the IPA and its Program Administrator would not score the applications submitted on November 1 for Group A. Under this scenario, all Day 1-submitted projects would be eligible to receive a REC Contract, provided that they meet program requirements and are ultimately Part I approved. If, on Day 2, projects submitted to TCS Group A would cause the 48 MW threshold to be exceeded, all Day 2-submitted projects would be scored, project applications which failed to meet the minimum threshold would be rejected, and remaining projects would be rank-ordered from highest to lowest score. This process would repeat for applications submitted on Day 3, and so on for all projects submitted on subsequent days prior to the close of the Program year on May 30, 2023. As explained above, the “first-come, first-serve basis” will be maintained, with scoring used to prioritize projects received on the same day. Therefore, under this example, Day 2-submitted projects ranked from highest score to lowest would sit atop the waitlist. Day 3-submitted projects which meet the waitlist minimum score will also be ranked by score from highest to lowest, with the highest Day 3-submitted project waitlisted next after the lowest-scoring Day 2-submitted project. Projects would continue to be waitlisted by date of application and prioritized within that date by score.

2. If a project applies and does not meet the minimum point threshold to be placed on the waitlist, can the project reapply at a later date upon fulfilling the minimum requirement? Is there any fallout from being rejected for being below minimum threshold score? Can an application be supplemented at a later date?

Only the documentation provided at project application submittal will be taken into consideration for the scoring process and cannot be supplemented to gain a higher score at a later time. Projects that have been submitted, reviewed, and scored by the Program Administrator will not receive a revised score due to changes in project attributes which occur after application submission. Projects that do not meet the minimum score of 5 points to receive a spot on the waitlist may reapply at a later date, either within the same Delivery Year or in a subsequent Delivery Year. Upon re-application and re-scoring, if the project meets the threshold, it will be added to the waitlist as of the date of the re-application. Application fees will be required for re-application.

3. If applications are submitted which do not meet the minimum score required for the waitlist, but capacity in the category is available, will those projects be selected?

Yes. The waitlist scoring will be used beginning on the day when applications received exceed the available capacity in the Traditional Community Solar category. That is, should first day project applications not exceed category capacity, then all applicant projects which otherwise meet the category requirements may qualify for a REC Delivery Contract.

## Siting

1. In order to figure out if county (or a township within Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County) does not have a contracted community solar project, will there be any publicly available list/map or guidance on what other counties don't have a project that will qualify?

Project application reports housed on this page: <https://illinoisshines.com/project-application-reports/> can be used to verify this information. Please use Report #2 for the purposes of this criterion.

2. What resources can be used to verify if there is not yet a Community Solar project sited in a county (or a township within Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County)?

Project application reports will be used to verify this information. Download the project application reports here: <https://illinoisshines.com/project-application-reports/>

3. If an Approved Vendor submits multiple projects sited in the same county, are all submitted projects eligible for points under the criterion of being the first Community Solar project sited in a county (or a township within Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County), or only the first application submitted?

All projects that are submitted in county without an already ICC-approved project may receive the points offered for this criterion. The points for this criterion are not allotted based on applications submitted or applications pending Part I review.

4. How might an Approved Vendor prove the ownership of land/property where a project is to be sited by a non-profit?

The Agency will accept various forms of documentation for demonstration that this criterion has been met, as long as ownership can be proven through such documentation, including but not limited to: bill of sale, property deed, tax documents, etc.

### Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs)

1. Is there an available list of EEC certified designees?

There are no certified EEC Designees at this time, but a list will become available at <https://illinoisshines.com/find-an-av-or-designee/> when Designees become certified.

2. Does procurement of materials (e.g. panels, racking, inverters) contribute to the percentage of "REC contract value"?

For purposes of this category, the IPA will assess the percentage of the REC contract value spent utilizing EEC certified Designees to be taken through a comparison of a) the value of the REC Delivery Contract (expected number of REC deliveries x REC price across the contract term) and b) the demonstrated value of agreements for the project development work to be performed by EEC-certified Designees in developing the project, with those agreement submitted to the Program Administrator at the Part II stage. If the latter value meets or exceeds 50% of the former value, then that project will be deemed to have met this criterion.

An Approved Vendor may not utilize an EEC Designee for the sole purpose of procuring materials. Material costs may count toward the percentage of the REC contract value, but those material costs must be tied to the EEC Designee that is performing the electrical, construction, or other site specific project development work that is related to those materials.

3. What is included in "work on the project" as noted in criteria 3.c and 3.d in the Traditional Community Solar Project Selection – Final Guidelines document?

For purposes of criteria 3.c and 3.d within the Traditional Community Solar Project Selection – Final Guidelines document, work on the project was intended to be limited to work outlined in definition for "project development work", as defined in footnote 11 of the document. The Final Guidelines were updated on October 21, 2022 to clarify this item.

Per the definition of project development work, ongoing operations and maintenance over lifetime of REC contract is not included. The work must be related to expenditures *within the definition of project development work* through Energization/Part II application approval of project.

4. Do we have any clarity on the ability for an EEC designee to subcontract work to non-EEC approved contractors?

EEC certified Designees may work with an Approved Vendor that is not EEC certified, but this would make projects submitted by that non-EEC certified Approved Vendor ineligible for EEC Category.

EEC certified Designees are permitted to utilize nested Designees/subcontractors, but those Designees must be EEC certified in order to receive points for utilization of EEC Designees.

5. Does the EEC Designee need to be named in the Part I application, or can the Approved Vendor simply commit to using any EEC Designee?

The EEC Designee(s) must be named at the Part I application. Applicants may demonstrate this commitment in the application by providing documents including but not limited to: letter of intent signed by all parties, contract, other legal agreement between parties, etc.

As the timeline between the release of the final scoring guidelines and the opening of the Traditional Community Solar application was truncated this program year, the Agency will allow for EEC Designees where an EEC application has been submitted but is pending approval to satisfy this requirement. If this allowance is to be utilized, the named Designee must be approved as an EEC prior to the scoring period for applications.

## **Built Environment – Disturbed Land**

1. What qualifies as “disturbed land”?

Applications for projects seeking to obtain points for being sited on disturbed lands will be evaluated to determine whether they meet the criteria outlined in the definition provided in footnote 1 of the scoring criteria. The Program Administrator will evaluate whether the project is sited on land that is (1) in an altered state, (2) in transition from one cover type (under USGS definitions), and (3) due to disturbances by mechanical or non-mechanical means. All three of these elements must be met to qualify as “disturbed land.” As explained in the scoring guidelines, mechanical disturbances may include forest clear-cutting, earthmoving, scraping, chaining, and other similar human-induced changes. Non-mechanical disturbances may be caused by wind, flooding, fire, animals, or other similar phenomenon. Approved Vendors will need to submit documentation which demonstrates that the land disturbances existed prior to the development of the site for installation of the solar project. Examples of supporting documentation that will be considered are outlined in footnote 1 of the scoring guidelines.

The Agency notes that “disturbed land” differs from “developed land,” which was not included among the scoring criteria pursuant to the direction of the ICC in approving the Long-Term Plan. Instead, the IPA has incorporated scoring criteria which encourages the development of community solar projects on rooftops and other structures.

The Agency will review submitted materials as it relates to qualifications for disturbed land on a case-by-case basis. As each site will differ, the Agency cannot provide a definitive list of examples that will qualify for points under this criterion. Points will only be awarded for this criterion if the definition of disturbed land is satisfied by the documentation provided.

The Agency will review submitted materials as it relates to qualifications for disturbed land on a case-by-case basis. As each site will differ, the Agency cannot provide a definitive list of examples that will qualify for points under this criterion. Points will only be awarded for this criterion if the definition of disturbed land is satisfied by the documentation provided.



## Built Environment - Conservation Opportunity Areas<sup>93</sup>

1. Will rooftops be required to commit to pollinator friendly in order to avoid the COA subtractor?

The Illinois Solar Pollinator Guidelines do not really contemplate rooftop arrays. As the intention of the Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) subtractor is to ensure that land that has the potential to be utilized for conservation purposes is not prioritized for solar development, systems that are sited on buildings or structures that are already built within COAs will not be subject to the COAs subtractor.

2. How does the scoring for the COA subtractor work in conjunction with the other points offered in the Built Environment section?

The ICC Final Order on the Agency's 2022 Long Term Plan states contaminated or disturbed land (+pollinators) would negate the COA subtractor, thus the demonstration of either or both of these criteria would satisfy the COA subtractor. In the original version of the Final Scoring Guidelines document, there was a typographical error that omitted "disturbed land" in criterion

- The Final Guidelines were updated on October 21, 2022, to correct this inadvertent omission.

As an example, a project sited on disturbed/contaminated land that also commits to pollinator friendly habitat will not be subject to the COA subtractor, so scoring for the Built Environment for this project would be 3 points if no other criterion within the Built Environment section were sought.

## Built Environment - Agrivoltaics

1. How will the IPA require proof that 50% of the footprint of an array is being used for grazing?

The Part I application must include a description demonstrating the planned agricultural use of the site, and explanation of the viability of that use, and an accompanying attestation of the intent to utilize agrivoltaics throughout the lifetime of the REC contract. Firm demonstration of active agricultural use (such as grazing) is required at Part II. Documentation at Part II should include proof that agrivoltaics plan was followed, or any updates made to the plan through development of the site for grazing. Agrivoltaics plans submitted in the Part I application should include documentation described in Appendix B of the October 2022 version of the Program Guidebook. Please review details on a permissible agrivoltaics plan, including grazing requirements, in Appendix B of the Program Guidebook.

For the purposes of grazing, the Agency understands that round-the-clock grazing is not the norm and animals occasionally must be relocated in order to allow for grazed material to grow. A schedule/plan that outlines the times the herd will/will not be grazing should be outlined within the agrivoltaics plan. Additional aspects of grazing operations that could be included in the agrivoltaics plan are: information on pasture where grazing will occur on the parcel, information on the amount of land available for grazing, size and type of animals for the grazing herd, information on if one or multiple herds will be utilized, future plans

<sup>93</sup> Projects that are on the Program Year 2023-24 waitlist have already been scored using the Conservation Opportunity Areas subtractor as they were subject to the scoring system as outlined in the 2022 Long-Term Plan (even if such projects ultimately receive Program capacity in a later year). Any projects that are scored in starting the 2024-25 Program Year will not be subject to the Conservation Opportunity Areas subtractor in accordance with P.A. 103-0255.

for livestock utilization/sale, what resources are available to the herd (or herds) as it relates to soil condition, plant species the herd will graze on, water resources for herd, barn resources (if herd will remain on site), plans for the herd during winter months, additional diet supplementation for herd (if relevant), grazing system to be used (continuous, rotational, etc.). Please note these are suggestions and should not be used to limit what information should be included in an agrivoltaics plan focus on grazing should the Agency have missed any such part of a grazing operation that might be relevant.

2. Can grazing be added to land in order for it to count as agrivoltaics (i.e. introduce grazing where there was previously not grazing)?

Livestock grazing is included as a type of permissible agriculture uses under agrivoltaics for the Traditional Community Solar category, as it supports the spirit of agricultural production coinciding with solar energy production. At least 50% of the project footprint must feature agricultural production at the time of project energization. Please review details on a permissible agrivoltaics plan, including grazing requirements, in Appendix B of the Program Guidebook.

3. Can a Traditional Community solar project achieve 1 point for commitment to pollinator friendly habitat and 1 point for agrivoltaics?

Yes, a project may receive points for both agrivoltaics as well as pollinator friendly habitat, as long as requirements for each are 1) within the requirements as outlined in the Final Scoring Guidelines (i.e., agrivoltaics definition and requirements followed; pollinator plan in line with IDNR pollinator score card), 2) commitment is made in the Part I application and plans shared, and 3) documentation of successful implementation of commitments is provided in the Part II application.

### Project Application Submission in the Portal

1. Will the Program Administrator provide the ability to submit projects prior to November 1st but still count them towards Day One for purposes of the first come first served requirement? Or, in the alternative, will the Program Administrator provide the blank application form prior to November 1st to help ensure AVs have transparency into what will be required for submission?

The Portal will open Traditional Community Solar applications on November 1, 2022. Projects will only be able to be submitted once the portal opens on that day. No prior access to the application will be permitted.

Required application information for Traditional Community Solar can be found in Sections 1.F., 5.E. and 5.F. of the October 2022 version of the Program Guidebook.

A webinar will be held on Monday, October 24 at 1PM to go over both the scoring criteria and the portal interface for application submittal. Join link for webinar: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95373684104>

2. Does the IPA or the Program Administrator have a process for addressing Day One bugs in the portal to help ensure fair project submission for all AVs? Will there be a backup such as e-mailing or uploading applications to SharePoint by a certain time?

Special Traditional Community Solar focused office hours will be offered by the Program Administrator the day of and the day after the application opening as well as a dedicated IT and operations team to answer phones and emails.

3. When will an application be determined to be complete? If completion requires payment of the application fee, will a system be in place to receive the application fee? In order for applications to be considered fully submitted, they must be batched and payment should be initiated on the application fee. Fees may be paid by wire, check, credit card, or ACH direct deposit. Along with the batching release in the portal on October 27, 2022, a payment feature will be rolled out as well to enable payment for submitted batches.

### Interconnection Status – Top Two Queue Position

1. Is an executed interconnection agreement required to claim points at the time of application?

An executed interconnection agreement is required to achieve the points available for a top 2 queue position. Additionally, the project must have a top two queue position **among community solar projects** on the substation for claiming these points. Interconnection agreements must be both executed and valid, meaning not expired.

### General

1. If a hearing in which the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) will vote on the permitting/allowance of a TCS project occurs after November 1, 2022, can the AV still submit the project on November 1, 2022 without official AHJ approval?

A requirement of the Part I application is that all land use permits are submitted. As outlined in Section 7.9.1. of the Agency's Long-Term Plan, "For ground mounted systems over 250 kW a land use permit, when applicable from the Authority Having Jurisdiction ("AHJ") over the project. In the event a land use permit is not applicable, written confirmation from the AHJ that no permit is required must be provided."

### Corrections from Original Published Versions of Rationale and Scoring Requirements

#### Rationale Document

- There was a typographical error in the initial version of the Traditional Community Solar Rationale document. The minimum point threshold will be 5 points. Find corrected version here: [https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/TCS-Scoring-Rationale\\_October72022.pdf](https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/TCS-Scoring-Rationale_October72022.pdf)

#### Final Scoring Guidelines

- In the Final Scoring Guidelines document, under Verification within the "Qualification and Demonstration, Verification, and Compliance" section, a typographical error indicated that the Scoring Cure Period was "Approximately 32 weeks". The document, on the Program website, has been corrected to read "Approximately 2 weeks." Find corrected version here:
- <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Final-TCS-Scoring-Guidelines-7-Oct-2022.pdf>.  
Please keep in mind this is a tentative schedule and the volume and quality of applications may impact these approximations.
- In the Final Scoring Guidelines document published on October 7, 2022, in footnote #12 there was a typographical error. Mention of "Construction and electrical work" in this footnote

should have been changed to “project development work”. That correction has now been made in the final version of the document.

- In the Final Scoring Guidelines document, there was an error omitting “disturbed land” from items that would negate the COA subtractor. That correction has now been made in the final version of the document.

## Traditional Community Solar Clarifications #2 Published October 26, 2022

### Resources on Traditional Community Solar (TCS) Guidelines and Scoring

- [Final Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [Rationale for Final Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [TCS Clarifications #1](#)
- [Webinar Slides from 10/24](#)
- [Webinar Recording from 10/24](#)
- Portal Help Guides (includes batching and Part I CS submission)

### Equity Eligible Contractors

1. Can an EEC buy a community solar project that was submitted to TCS that fails to get awarded a REC Contract then submit the application to another category?

A project submitted to the TCS category cannot be moved to another category without withdrawal of the original application and re-application in the new category. Projects that are re-submitted to the Program in this manner will require a new application fee.

2. Can an EEC buy a what was originally slated to be a TCS project before November 1st from a TCS developer and put it into the EEC Block?

A project may only be submitted in one category. If a community solar project has not been applied to the Program is sold to an EEC-certified Approved Vendor, the EEC AV may choose to submit the project in the TCS category or the EEC category.

3. Are Approved Vendors who are Equity Eligible Contractors automatically qualified as an EEC Designee?

Yes, an additional application to become certified as an EEC is not required for EEC certified AVs to act as an EEC Designee. Still, the Approved Vendor must have an active Designee application and be connected with an Approved Vendor through Designee registration, this step is required of all Designees active in the Program and has not changed. Finally, per the Final Scoring Guidelines, any EEC that is acting as a Designee on a TCS project must be named by the Approved Vendor submitting the project. This EEC Designee commitment must be in compliance with the requirements outlined in the Final Scoring Guidelines and must be demonstrated via a contract, attestation, agreement, etc. signed by both parties.

4. Can you please confirm that if an EEC Designee uses any subcontractor that is not also an EEC-certified Designee, that precludes the project from taking points under the EEC category?

*In the guidance issued on October 21, 2022, the IPA clarified that: EEC certified Designees are permitted to utilize nested Designees/subcontractors, but those Designees must be EEC certified in order to receive points for utilization of EEC Designees.*

A project which receives points for commitments to work with EEC-certified Designees under the scoring criteria must utilize nested Designees/subcontractors which are also EEC-certified.

5. Given there are no EEC certified Designees at present, is it possible to get points under this category if the AV applying is not themselves an EEC?

If there are no active EEC Designees at the time of application and the Approved Vendor is not an EEC, then no, there are no points available for this Approved Vendor under the Equity Eligible Contractor section of scoring criteria.

For this program year, Designees that have submitted an application but are not yet certified as Equity Eligible Contractors by the Program Administrator will be permitted to be utilized as EEC Designees. If a Designee's EEC application is not approved by the Program Administrator, a substitution will need to be made for a qualifying EEC Designee. Applicant EEC Designees will need to be certified by the time the application scoring cure period begins. This allowance will only be made in the initial scoring of Day 1 applications. After such time, all EEC Designees must be certified at the time of Part I application submission to achieve points for the EEC scoring criteria.

### Portal Functionality

1. Can 2 people be logged into the same account in the Program portal and be entering applications independently?

Yes.

2. Is there a file size limit for uploads in the Program portal?

No, there is no file size limitation for uploads.

3. Will previously batched Part I applications be migrated over from the Legacy portal prior to the 11/1 deadline? If not, will all those applications fall behind the new Part I applications submitted on 11/1 in terms of processing priority?

All Part I applications that originated in the legacy portal have now been transferred to the new Program portal. Please reach out to the Program Administrator if this is not the case.

4. Will the portal option for TCS apps go live prior to November 1st so developers can populate all of the required application info and save in draft format as opposed to filling out all applications and submitting on November 1st?

No, the portal will not open earlier than 8AM CPT on November 1, 2022, for Traditional Community Solar applications.

5. The dropdowns for Tracking Type don't perfectly align between the guidelines and the portal. Can you confirm that 1-axis backtracking equals backtracking in the portal, and 2-axis tracking equals dual axis in the portal?

Confirmed as stated.

## Interconnection Status

1. As it relates to the points offered for the top 2 queue position in the clarification document, the IPA states "interconnection agreements must be both executed and valid meaning not expired". Can you confirm that this requirement applies to scoring criterion item 4.a (Project has a valid interconnection agreement at the time of application (Add 1 point) as well)?

Yes, a valid and executed interconnection agreement is required for both scoring items 1.a and 1.b under "Interconnection Status".

2. Under the "Interconnection Status" scoring criteria section, the first two items are:
  - a. Has valid interconnection agreement (1 point)
  - b. Has a top two queue position among community solar projects on a substation on the date of application (2 points)

Can you get points for both of these scoring criteria?

These points are additive. A project with a valid interconnection agreement will receive 1 point. A project with an executed interconnection agreement and a top two-queue position will receive an additional 2 points.

3. The new Guidebook indicates that a signed interconnection is not required for TCS. Is this the case for CDCS?

Community Solar systems (either TCS or CDCS) are not required to submit an interconnection agreement in the Part I application, but are required to provide a certificate of completion in the Part II application. Traditional Community Solar Part I application submissions may include an interconnection agreement in order to gain more points should scoring occur.

All Distributed Generation systems over 25 kW AC in size must submit an executed interconnection agreement in the Part I application.

4. Will projects with interconnection agreements executed after November 1st be able to have interconnection points applied to their score for the first block?

No, all attributes of a project that will be scored upon for the purposes of obtaining a REC Contract must be present at the time of application submittal. The only exception is the EEC certification of EEC Designees. EEC Designees must be applied at the time of submission, but must be approved by the time the scoring cure period occurs.

5. What is required to demonstrate interconnection queue position?

**For projects interconnecting in the ComEd territory** – please use the online portal offered by ComEd to check queue position. A printout, screenshot, email, etc. demonstrating queue position from either the utility portal or an email from a utility representative can be provided.

**For projects interconnecting in the Ameren territory** – Please reach out to the utility to assess your queue position. A printout, screenshot, email, etc. demonstrating queue position from either the utility portal or an email from a utility representative can be provided.

**For projects interconnecting with another electric provider** – Please reach out to the interconnecting utility's interconnection group to confirm, and provide a screenshot or email demonstrating queue position.

## Built Environment

1. Can you get points for both the Pollinator Habitat criterion and Agrivoltaics criterion? Or is it one or the other?

Yes, you can receive points for both commitment to pollinator friendly habitat and commitment to utilizing agrivoltaics, as long as points awarded do not exceed the 4 point maximum permitted under the Built Environment category.

2. As explained in the October 21 clarifications, applications for projects seeking to obtain points for being sited on disturbed lands will be evaluated to determine whether they meet the criteria outlined in the definition provided in footnote 12 of the scoring criteria. The Program Administrator will evaluate whether the project is sited on land that is (1) in an altered state, (2) in transition from one cover type (under USGS definitions), and (3) due to disturbances by mechanical or non-mechanical means. All three of these elements must be met to qualify as “disturbed land.” Approved Vendors will need to submit documentation which demonstrates that the land disturbances existed prior to the development of the site for installation of the solar project. If land is in transition, the transition can't have occurred in the past. Do you mean that building solar will mean it is in transition?

The land must be disturbed prior to the development of the solar project. That is, the solar development itself cannot be the trigger of the land disturbance.

3. Can you please confirm that if a community solar project is aiming to get points under the contaminated/disturbed or brownfield category, the site plan must show the project is 100% sited over the contaminated/disturbed or brownfield area?

The Agency will assess documentation provided to demonstrate the achievement of these points against the definitions provided in the Final Scoring Guidelines.

4. What will that be sufficient to secure the points available for disturbed land, contaminated land, and brownfields?

The Agency is open to any documentation that the AV thinks demonstrates the definitions provided for disturbed land, contaminated land, and brownfields.

## Project Submittal – Timing, Other Program Categories, and Other IPA Procurements

1. Are we able to submit a project into this program while also submitting to the indexed REC RFP in an effort to secure a REC contract? Understanding, that if selected under the indexed REC RFP, we would pull our TCS application and lose the bid fee.

No, the maximum size allowable for a TCS project is 5 MW AC while for the indexed REC RFP projects must be over 5 MW AC in size (per the definition of utility scale projects). One exception might be a project that is sited on a brownfield. In this case, it is permissible to submit an application to both the indexed REC procurement and the Illinois Shines program, but if selected in the indexed REC procurement the Approved Vendor would need to withdraw the Illinois Shines application.

Please direct all further questions on the indexed REC procurement to the Procurement Administrator here: <https://www.ipa-energyrfp.com/>

2. Can AVs submit a project into more than one category?

No, per the Program Guidebook, Section 1.D:

“If a project is eligible for more than one category, the Approved Vendor may select any one of those eligible categories into which to submit the application during the Part I application as described in Section 5 below. Approved Vendors will be provided with a drop-down list in the Part I application displaying all categories for which the project is eligible in order to make a selection. An application must be submitted into one and only one category.”

3. Does timing during Day 1 of application matter? i.e. will an application submitted at 8am be better positioned than one submitted at 2pm (both on day 1)?

Timing during Day 1 of application submission does not matter. Section 1- 75(c)(1)(K)(iii)(1) of the IPA Act requires the Agency to select Traditional Community Solar (“TCS”) Category projects on a first-come, first-serve basis, and allows the Agency to utilize additional methods to prioritize projects submitted at the same time. As explained in the Agency’s 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, the Agency has interpreted “at the same time” to mean projects submitted “on the same day.” The TCS Scoring Criteria will be utilized to prioritize projects submitted “at the same time” – that is, on the same day – when the collective size of project applications in MW submitted to the Program exceed the capacity available in the Program. As explained in the Plan, the Agency will maintain the “first-come, first serve basis” outlined in the IPA Act, and will prioritize projects received on the same day in accordance with the scoring criteria. This means that project applications will be scored and ranked by the date the application is submitted.

## Application Fee Payment

1. Does the Program accept American Express (AMEX) for the payment of application fees?

Yes, payment with American Express is accepted.

2. What are the additional fees for credit card payment?

The fee for credit card payment is 2.9%, but is capped at \$10,000 per month (on a rolling 30-day basis, not calendar month) per Approved vendor.



3. If a project application is completed and batched on November 1, but then paid for some time in the next 10 days, it will still be registered as a November 1 application and not the date that payment was received.

Yes, this is correct.

4. How do AVs obtain a W-9 for Energy Solutions? Most large companies require W-9s to issue payments.

Energy Solutions' W-9 can be provided upon request by emailing [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com).

5. How much time do we have to get wire submitted after a batch is submitted?

Fees must be paid with 10 days after a batch has been submitted. If payment is not received within 10 days, the capacity allocation will be withdrawn.

## Batching

1. What is the batch minimum and maximum for DG projects?

Batch minimums and maximums are the same for all projects across the Program. The first batch an Approved Vendor submits must be 100kW or larger, there is no batch minimum size after the first submitted batch. The batch maximum size is 5 MW.

2. Can multiple batches be submitted on November 1st?

Yes, multiple batches may be submitted.

3. If you are submitting multiple projects, should you batch all projects together?

As noted above, the maximum batch size is 5 MW AC. This choice is left up to the Approved Vendor, as long as the batch falls within the minimum and maximum batching size requirements. Approved Vendors will also want to keep in mind that once placed on a REC Contract, assignments can only occur at the batch level, not at the project level.

4. Since batches are subject to a maximum of 5 MW in size and that is also the maximum size allowance for a TCS project, do you just not batch them or should each 5 MW TCS project be within its own batch?

All projects submitted to the Program must be batched. A project is not considered fully submitted until it is batched and that batch is submitted. Batches can contain a single project or multiple projects (as long as batching size minimums and maximums are met), this choice is left up to the Approved Vendor.

## Siting

1. For scoring criterion, 2.c - *Sited in a county (or a township within Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County) that does not currently have a community solar project that was approved by the ICC for a REC contract under the Adjustable Block Program at the time of application. (Add 2 points)* – To achieve these 2 points, does the project need to be sited within Cook, DuPage, Kane,

Lake, McHenry, or Will County? Or can the project be sited in a different county without a community solar project?

It can be sited in any county that does not already have a CS project, excluding those most populous counties in Illinois listed here: Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County. For the counties in the state that are the most populated (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County) the project must be sited in a township within that county that does not yet have a CS project, as these counties likely already have several CS projects sited within them.

Must be Located within a <u>TOWNSHIP</u> that Does Not Yet Have An ICC Approved CS Project	Must be Located in a <u>COUNTY</u> that Does Not Yet Have An ICC Approved CS Project
Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County	All other counties in Illinois aside from Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will County

2. Can the IPA add County to the Project Reports on the Illinois Shines website?

The county in which a project is located will be added to the application reports before the week closes out, found here: <https://illinoisshines.com/project-application-reports/>

As there will be no ICC approvals between October 26, 2022 and November 1, 2022, this list will be accurate for those AVs submitting projects on November 1st.

General

- 1. Can Approved Vendors be combined? We currently have each individual project company as an Approved Vendor, but we would like to make the parent company (holding company) an Approved Vendor.

Changes, merging of AVs, or moving projects from one AV to another in the portal must be worked through individually with the Program Administrator. Note that since the process takes time, if there is not already an active AV that the AV want to submit projects under, this may not be possible prior to November 1<sup>st</sup> as a new AV application for the parent company will be required. Please reach out to the Program Administrator for further assistance. Additionally, please keep in mind that single project Approved Vendors have different Part I application requirements, these can be reviewed in the Program Guidebook.

Minimum Point Threshold for Waitlist

- 1. When the capacity available is exceeded, triggering the scoring process, will all projects be required to meet the waitlist minimum threshold to qualify for an award?

The Agency will utilize the scoring criteria to prioritize projects submitted on the same day and to establish a waitlist for those projects that after scoring do not fit into the block of capacity allotted for this category. On the day applications submitted for the Traditional Community Solar block exceed the MW of capacity offered by the block, scoring will commence. All applications submitted on the same day will be treated equally in terms of application submission timing. The scoring process works as a tiebreaker to rank order projects that are submitted on the day that capacity is exceeded. All projects submitted on the day that capacity is exceeded

will be scored and ranked according to their score. The capacity of the block will be filled in order of the rank-ordered project list until the block of capacity is filled. There is no minimum point threshold for selection on the day that scoring is triggered. Once the block of capacity is filled with rank ordered projects, the remaining projects received will be eligible to join the waitlist, provided that they meet the minimum score required for the waitlist (5 points).

As is clear in the Commission's Final Order approving the 2022 Long-Term Plan, the minimum point threshold is to only be used as a threshold to gain a spot on the waitlist, not as a threshold to gain a REC Contract. This means, for project applications received on the day that scoring is triggered, those scored and rank-ordered projects that fill the capacity of the block will not be subject to the 5-point waitlist threshold. Once capacity is filled with the top-ranked projects, those projects which are not selected will be subject to the minimum point threshold, and must have a score of 5 points or higher to secure a place on the waitlist. All projects submitted after the day that blocks are filled will also be subject to the minimum 5-point waitlist threshold.

### Waitlisted Process & 2023-24 Program Year

#### 1. Will waitlisted projects get priority in the next Program year?

Yes. Once capacity for the Traditional Community Solar category has been reached for the 2022-2023 Program Year, subsequent applications must receive a minimum score of 5 points, per scoring requirements discussed in Section 1.F of the Program Guidebook, to receive a spot on the waitlist.

In the case that there is uncontracted capacity from other Program categories at the end of the 2022-2023 Program year, the uncontracted capacity will be allocated to Program categories according to Section 1.D of the Program Guidebook.

For waitlisted capacity not met through uncontracted capacity redistribution, Section 1- 75(c)(1)(K) of P.A. 102-0662 provides that "the waitlist of projects in a given year will carry over to apply to the subsequent year when another block is opened." Thus, those waitlisted projects will be given priority in selection within their category under that new Program year's capacity allocation to that category.

### Communications

#### 1. For the Traditional Community Solar capacity, will the IPA publish a list of applications and/or an aggregate number of applications prior to implementing the tiebreaker scoring?

The Program plans to announce on November 2nd how many MW of projects were submitted on November 1st, before application review and scoring commences. Additionally, the Program Administrator will seek to update the block capacity dashboard hourly throughout the day on November 1st.

# Appendix O - Advance of Capital Evaluation Criteria

## Published December 12, 2023

### Final Advance of Capital Evaluation Criteria

In developing these criteria, the Agency attempted to balance a requirement that EECs must demonstrate the need for an advance while recognizing that documentation of need may not always be readily available. The criteria were selected to help the Agency identify EECs that have barriers to participation in the solar market and require an advance of capital to overcome those barriers, in accordance with the spirit and direction of the provisions of the IPA Act.

The 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, which governs the following two program years, has been filed for approval with the Illinois Commerce Commission in Docket No. 23-0714 and references this stakeholder process and development of evaluation criteria. The Agency intends to rely on the criteria adopted here in future program years as well, pending the ICC's approval of that approach in the filed Plan. Stakeholders wishing to comment on future program years' process may do so through the Long-Term Plan approval process.

### Final Evaluation Criteria

By law, advancement of capital should be “designed to overcome barriers in access to capital faced by equity eligible contractors” and granted only “upon a demonstration of qualification or need.”<sup>94</sup> To determine whether “need” is present and in assessing how to structure an advance of capital specific to an applicant project, applicant Equity Eligible Contractors – and, in some cases, their EEP majority owners – will be required to provide the following information. The resulting responses will then be the criteria on which advance of capital determinations are made. Where possible, please reinforce any claims with supporting documentation. In addition, the Program Administrator reserves the right to request further documentation to substantiate any claims made in the submitted Advance of Capital Request.

### Threshold Criteria

This information is dispositive – if an EEC does not demonstrate a “need” for a capital advance based on evaluation of the criteria below, they will not receive an advance.

### Company Information

1. Number of Employees (weighted in favor of smaller companies)
  - a. How many persons are employed by the EEC?
    - i. Full-time?
    - ii. Part-time?
  - b. How many persons are employed by any companies that have an ownership stake in the EEC?
    - i. How many of those employees work on projects that are owned by the EEC or for which the EEC is the Approved Vendor?
2. Number of projects submitted within the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs that have received REC contracts and number of projects developed outside of these programs (weighted in favor of entities with fewer successful project applications and projects developed)
  - a. How many projects has the EEC submitted to either Illinois Shines or Illinois Solar for All and that have received a REC contract?
  - b. How many projects has the EEC developed outside the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs?

<sup>94</sup> 20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c)(1)(K)(vi).

- c. How many projects have any affiliated companies (i.e., companies that own a minority-share of the EEC) submitted to either program?
  - d. How many projects have any affiliated companies developed outside of Illinois Shines or Illinois Solar for All?
3. Ownership structure - please list all owners, including other businesses, and their ownership stake in the EEC (weighted in favor of entities with higher EEP ownership stake and control of the company)
  - a. What is the role of the EEP majority-owner(s) within the company? E.g. Chief Operating Officer, General Manager, etc. If the role is simply "part-owner," please provide specific details of the EEP's duties and decision-making authority, and whether they hold positions with other companies.
  - b. For non-EEP owners, please list their titles/roles within the EEC and any titles/roles held with other companies.
  - c. For businesses that have minority ownership shares in the EEC, please list that non-EEP company's ownership structure and the individuals that directly work on the project for which the EEC is seeking an advance of capital, and their role within the minority-owner company.
4. When did the EEC start operating in the solar market (please list dates for any participation nationally and Illinois-specific participation)? (weighted in favor of companies with less years of experience)
5. When did any companies that have an ownership stake in the EEC begin operating in the solar market (please list dates for any participation nationally and Illinois-specific participation)? (weighted in favor of companies with less years of experience)
6. Please describe the EEC's and any company with a minority ownership share's portfolio of completed projects (size by kW AC, type (community solar or distributed generation), and location). (weighted in favor of companies with fewer completed projects)

#### Other Sources of Financial Support

1. Is the EEC pursuing any other government funding opportunities (both specific to the project for which the advance of capital request is made and company-wide)? (weighted in favor of those with who may not have access to other capital sources; please note that pursuing other funding opportunities does not automatically disqualify an EEC from receiving an advance of capital, and eligibility for other funding opportunities may speak to general barriers to capital)
  - a. If so, what are they?
    - i. Please include the source of the opportunity/funds (name of granting nonprofit or granting agency) and the fund/opportunity name.
    - ii. Please include the status of that funding opportunity.
  - b. When would those funds be available if granted?
2. What is the annual revenue of the EEC? (weighted in favor of businesses with small annual revenue)
  - a. Please provide documentation proving such annual revenue, such as a tax return, cash flow statement, balance sheet, or others. This information will be treated as confidential as described in Section 2.F.
3. What is the annual revenue of companies with an ownership stake in the EEC? (in combination with other information on the role of any companies with a minority ownership stake, weighted in favor of EECs where a company with a minority share exhibits less control of the EEC and has fewer resources available)
  - a. Please provide documentation proving such annual revenue, such as a tax return. This information will be treated as confidential.
4. Has the EEC or its owners previously received private financing for other solar or non-solar projects? If so, please provide an estimate of the size of the most recent several loans or other financing mechanisms received by the EEC or its owners. The estimate should be rounded to show order of magnitude (e.g., \$50,000, \$100,000, \$750,000, \$2 million, etc.), without divulging confidential information. (weighted in favor of EECs that have not previously received private financing or have only received few or smaller amounts)

#### **Additional Criteria**

This information is additive – if an EEC demonstrates eligibility for a capital advance based on the threshold criteria, the criteria below will also be evaluated to make a final determination for receiving an advance.

Miscellaneous

1. Is the EEC company certified as a MWBE, veteran-owned, or disabled-owned business? If so, please list and provide copies of your certification(s). (weighted in favor of entities with other certifications)
2. Will the EEC partner with other companies that do not have an ownership stake in the EEC?
  - a. Will those partners provide financial resources?
  - b. If so, please provide the annual revenue of those partners.
3. Is the EEC partnering (subcontracting, sourcing materials from, or consulting) with any other EECs that would benefit from the Advance of Capital? (weighted in favor of firms partnering with other EECs)

Experience based on EEP status (to be answered by the majority-owner EEP(s))

1. What difficulties or barriers have you faced in starting your business and accessing capital to develop this project?
  - a. To the extent possible, please connect these difficulties to the basis for qualification as an EEC:
    - i. a graduate of or current or former participant in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Illinois Climate Works Preapprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, or the solar training pipeline and multi-cultural jobs program
    - ii. a person who is a graduate of or currently enrolled in the foster care system
    - iii. a person who was formerly incarcerated,
2. If the majority-owner EEP is a person whose primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community, how long have they lived in that community (or another EIEC)? (weighted in favor of EEP owners with longer residency in EIECs)
  - a. Please provide any other information you feel would be relevant to understanding the requestor's experience in the EIEC or involvement in the community.

Documentation of financial difficulty

1. If applicable, please provide any evidence or documentation of challenges in accessing capital, such as letter of denial for financing or record of loan application history.

Size of project and requested advance

1. Please provide the size and type of project(s) for which the EEC is requesting capital. (weighted in favor of smaller and DG projects)
2. What is the total amount of the requested advance of capital for this project? (weighted in favor of smaller requests)
  - a. Across all requests submitted this year?
3. Has this EEC received an advance of capital in previous years? (weighted in favor of EECs that have not previously received an advance of capital)
4. Please list the specific project costs that the advance will cover.
5. What project milestone(s) should trigger disbursement of the advance?