

April REC Invoicing Opened, Upcoming Stakeholder Feedback Due Dates, Limited Initial Review of Waitlisted DG Projects

April 5, 2024

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

- **Events**
 - No events are scheduled next week
- **Due Dates**
 - April 5, 2024 – [Deadline for REC Contract stakeholder feedback](#). Responses should be sent to IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov
 - April 10, 2024 - Invoices must be submitted to the utility
 - April 10, 2024 – [Deadline for Equity Accountability System Assessment stakeholder feedback](#). Responses should be sent to IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov with the subject “[Responder’s Name] – Stakeholder Feedback on EAS Assessment”
 - **Key Dates Relating to the start of Program Year 2024-25 commencing on June 3, 2024**
 - April 19, 2024 – Final Program Guidebook, Final Consumer Protection Handbook, and Final Contract Requirements will be released
 - Mid-April, 2024 – MES 2024-25 Compliance Plans window opens
 - End of April, 2024 – Final 2024 REC Contracts will be released
 - May 1, 2024 – MES Year-End Report submission window opens
 - May 27 - June 2, 2024 – Program Year 2023-24 closure
 - June 3, 2024 – Program Year 2024-25 opens and MES Compliance Plans for Program Year 2024-25 are due
 - July 15, 2024 – MES Year-End Report for Program Year 2023-24 and Annual Reports covering the 2023-24 Delivery Year are due

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – April 10, 2024 - 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, portal, application, or other questions. Zoom link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>
- **Application Tips and Tricks** - Supplementing previous guidance, the Program Administrator seeks to continue supporting stakeholders in the avoidance of project applications entering *Need Info* status.
 - **Expansions** to an existing system should be marked on the application in Part I, Section 2 in Project Details under “*Is this an expansion of an existing facility?*”. After selecting “Yes”, the existing system should be identified by its Application ID, not its Disclosure Form ID.

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

- **Program Guidebook Reminder** - [The current Program Guidebook is in effect until June 2, 2024](#). The draft Program Guidebook for the 2024-25 Program Year, which was published for stakeholder feedback on [March 13, 2024](#), is in final development by the Agency and will be finalized and published by April 19, 2024. [The 2024-25 Program Guidebook does not go into effect until the start of the 2024-25 Program Year on June 3, 2024](#).
- **Initial Review Underway on Waitlisted Distributed Generation (DG) Projects** - As previously shared, even where project category blocks have exhausted their available allocated capacity for the current Program Year,

customers may still purchase, install, and finance solar projects, and vendors may continue to submit applications. This week, the Program announced that limited processing of waitlisted DG projects has begun in advance of the new Program Year when more capacity will become available, and these applications will now reflect as "Updated" in the website's [Project Look Up](#). These projects will not be Verified by the Program Administrator until new capacity is released for the 2024-25 Program Year, commencing June 3, 2024.

- **Consumer Protection Working Group** - The Agency and its Program Administrators for Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All hosted the April Consumer Protection Working Group meeting today, April 5, 2024. The notes from the Working Group will be published on the [Program website](#), where meeting agendas for future meetings are also added. The Working Group meets the first Friday of each month, with the next meeting to be held on Friday, May 3, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. CPT. If you are interested in participating in the group and future meetings, please submit the [form](#) on the website.
- **IPA Power Hour– Renewable Energy Projects Financing: Distributed Solar** - The Agency hosted a Power Hour on March 29, 2024. This educational webinar explored options and models for DG solar project financing, including key players in the industry. Presenters included IPA Director of Renewable Energy Finance, Chandrika Mital, and Partner at Environmental Resources Management (ERM), Rohan Saharia. The [presentation](#) and [recording](#) can be found [here](#).
- **New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to www.IllinoisShines.com have been shared:
 - Stakeholder comments to the draft Program Guidebook ([Stakeholder Feedback](#) page)
 - Excel version of [Find a Designee Report](#) now available ([Find an AV or Designee](#) page)
 - [State of the Program](#) communication ([About the Program](#) page)

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

- **General Program**
 - **2024 REC Contracts - Released for Feedback – Comments are Due April 5, 2024** – On [March 22, 2024](#), the IPA released the draft 2024 REC Contracts for stakeholder feedback. Stakeholders can review the draft 2024 REC Contracts and redline versions of the contracts (March 22, 2024 vs 2022 Contract) on the [Program Documents](#) page. Responses are due today, **April 5, 2024** and should be sent to IPA.Solar@illinois.gov. After comment review, the final versions of the REC Contracts are expected to be published on the Program website by the end of April 2024.
 - **IPA Requests Stakeholder Feedback on Equity Accountability System Assessment – Comments are Due April 10, 2024** - On [March 21, 2024](#), the Agency requested stakeholder feedback on the [Equity Accountability System Assessment](#). Please provide comments via email attachment to IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov with the subject “[**Responder’s Name**] – **Stakeholder Feedback on EAS Assessment**” by **April 10, 2024**.
 - **2024-25 Program Year Final REC Prices and REC Calculator** - The 2024-25 Program Year Final REC Prices and an updated REC Calculator reflecting Program Year 2024-25 REC prices have been added to the [Program Documents](#) page of the Program’s [website](#).
 - **FEJA Job Training Programs and Grantees List Published on Energy Workforce Equity Portal** - On March 20, 2024, the IPA updated the [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#) with the [Future Energy Jobs Act \(FEJA\) Job Training Program List](#). The list helps identify graduates of qualified FEJA job training programs and can be accessed by clean energy companies participating in the IPA’s Illinois Shines program, Self-direct Program, and utility-scale procurements to support their efforts to hire Equity Eligible Persons to meet the Minimum Equity Standards. For more information, please see the [announcement](#) published by the IPA.

- **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) 2023-24 Year-End Report Webinar and Resources** - An informational webinar on the MES 2023-24 Year-End Report was held on March 6, 2024. The [recording](#), [presentation slides](#), and [FAQs](#) have been uploaded to the [Program Year Webinars](#) page. As a reminder, the Program published guidance on the MES Year-End Report on [February 27, 2024](#). The MES Year-End Report is due July 15, 2024, following the close of this Program Year, and encompasses reporting related to participating entities' Illinois-based project workforce for the 2023-24 Program Year. Stakeholders are encouraged to visit the Program's [EAS](#) page for MES resources and may request support from the Program Administrator by emailing MES@illinoisshines.com.
- **State of the Program Update** - On March 29, 2024, the Program released its newest Illinois Shines [State of the Program](#) communication, reflecting updates as of the midpoint of Program Year 2023-24. The update shares key areas of Program progress, implemented solutions, current initiatives to address needs and requests shared by stakeholders, and an updated Program vision and commitments that stakeholders can expect from the Program Administrator.
- **Equity Eligible Contractor** – See full EEC [hub on Program website](#)
 - **EEC DG Capacity** - In accordance with the 2022 Long-Term Plan, any unallocated capacity reserved for Equity Eligible Contractors (EEC) Distributed Generation (DG) projects will become available to be allocated to either EEC Community Solar (CS) or EEC DG projects after nine months of the start of the Program Year. EEC DG capacity is available to be allocated to EEC CS projects within the same Group and subject to waitlist and developer cap procedures. This adjustment to capacity is effective as of March 1, 2024, which is nine months from the start of the 2023-24 Program Year, which began on June 1, 2023.

Ongoing Operations Updates

- **April REC Invoicing Opened April 1, 2024** - REC invoices and Quarterly Netting Statements were made available for download from AV SharePoint folders on April 1, 2024. Invoices must be submitted to the utility by **April 10, 2024** to receive payment for the April invoice period. Any invoice amounts not submitted to the utility by April 10, 2024 will be carried forward and included in the next invoice period (July 2024).
- **Part II Verification Cut off for April** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for April will be **April 24, 2024**. Applications that are Part II verified on or before April 24, 2024 will be included in the May invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between April 25, 2024 and April 30, 2024 will be invoiced in June 2024.
- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** - In advance of each submission of batches to the ICC for approval, AVs are provided the opportunity to withhold or re-batch projects. In the absence of any action by an AV, the Program Administrator will re-batch the projects at their discretion and submit eligible projects to the ICC.
 - **It is extremely important that AVs review their re-batching files on SharePoint to indicate any re-batching preferences, but especially requests to withhold projects from submission.** The Program Administrator alerts AVs by email when they have projects that are eligible for re-batching and planned to be submitted to the ICC in the next memo. Unfortunately, sometimes these communications are missed, and projects are submitted to the ICC despite an AVs intent to hold a project back.
 - The Program Administrator requests that AVs who believe they may want to withhold or re-batch projects mark their calendars and review SharePoint folders for re-batching templates. This way, if any email alerts are missed, AVs are still aware of the dates that re-batching opens and can check if any projects are in the upcoming ICC submission. Below are the next re-batching windows:

Re-Batching Opens for AVs	Election Deadline – 12:00 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
4/16/2024	4/18/2024	5/2/2024
4/30/2024	5/2/2024	5/16/2024
5/13/2024	5/15/2024	5/30/2024
5/17/2024	5/21/2024	6/5/2024
6/3/2024	6/5/2024	6/20/2024
6/13/2024	6/17/2024	7/2/2024
7/8/2024	7/10/2024	7/24/2024
7/16/2024	7/18/2024	8/1/2024
7/29/2024	7/31/2024	8/14/2024

Application Processing Updates

- **Application Processing Tables** - Application processing tables are maintained at IllinoisShines.com/project-application-reports/. These tables are typically updated daily, but the Program Administrator is currently experiencing technical issues and data on the [Project Application Reports](#) page and it may not be updated daily. Thank you for your patience as the Program Administrator works on a solution. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com.

Ongoing Program Portal Updates

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

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
Enhancement		
Help AVs fill out applications by showing AC and DC sizes from Disclosure Form	Show AC and DC system sizes from earlier application stages to help AVs fill out applications. The AC and DC sizes from the Disclosure Form will be shown on Part I, section 4, and the AC and DC sizes from the Disclosure Form and Part I application will be shown on Part II, section 1.	April 3, 2024
Remove Part I Email Validation to Account for Blank Emails	AVs can now submit Part I applications without customer email when email is not available, or the customer has signed a Customer Email Waiver.	April 3, 2024
CS Part I application - Validation for CS Disclosure Form Conditional	This enhancement adds the question "What is the nearest Town, Village, or Municipality to this project?" when only latitude and longitude locations are used in the application.	April 3, 2024

Requirements and Reminders

- **Stakeholder Feedback** - This table outlines current and forthcoming proposals and feedback requests, which can also be found [at the Program website](#):

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
Draft 2024 REC Delivery Contracts	March 22, 2024	April 5, 2024	Comments should be emailed to IPA.Solar@illinois.gov .
Equity Accountability System Assessment	March 21, 2024	April 10, 2024	Comments should be emailed to IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov with the subject line “[Responder’s Name] – Stakeholder Feedback on EAS Assessment”
Draft Program Guidebook	March 13, 2024	March 27, 2024	Comments received are published here . On April 19, 2024, the IPA will release a final version of the Guidebook, 45 days in advance of the start of the 2024-25 Program Year, for AVs and Designees to become fully compliant with new requirements by June 3, 2024.

- **ICC Issues Final Order Approving the 2024 Long-Term Plan** – See [previous](#) announcement.
- **IPA Issued Request for AVs and Installer Designees Interested in Serving Stranded Illinois Shines DG Customers** - As previously [announced](#), the Program continues to review submissions on a rolling basis for entities interested in serving stranded customers. Please see the full [Request for AVs and Designees](#), including details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.
- **Illinois Shines Legacy Portal Retirement** - As [previously announced](#), on June 30, 2024 the Program will retired the Illinois Shines legacy Portal administered by the prior Program Administrator, after which AVs and Designees will no longer be able to access it. Please see the previous announcement for more details.
- **Transition to an Equitable Clean Energy Future: Labor and Equity Requirements for IPA Renewable Programs and Procurements Webinar** - On March 20, 2024, the IPA hosted a webinar on the *Transition to an Equitable Clean Energy Future: Labor and Equity Requirements for IPA Renewable Programs and Procurements*. The [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#) are available on the Agency’s [website](#).

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