

# TCS Random Selection Event – September 10, Equitable Energy Future Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity

September 6, 2024

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

- **Events**
  - September 10, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. CPT - TCS Random Selection event. Register with this [link](#)
  - September 19, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. CPT - Technical Assistance Session - DCEO Equitable Energy Future Grant Program. Register with this [link](#)
- **Due Dates**
  - September 6, 2024 - [Stakeholder Feedback for Net Metering Changes to Disclosure Forms](#) deadline
  - September 10, 2024 – September REC Invoicing deadline
  - September 12, 2024 – Election Deadline: Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (for September 26 ICC meeting)
  - September 13, 2024 – Last day for API Test Environment users to submit a Production Access Review in the September timeframe

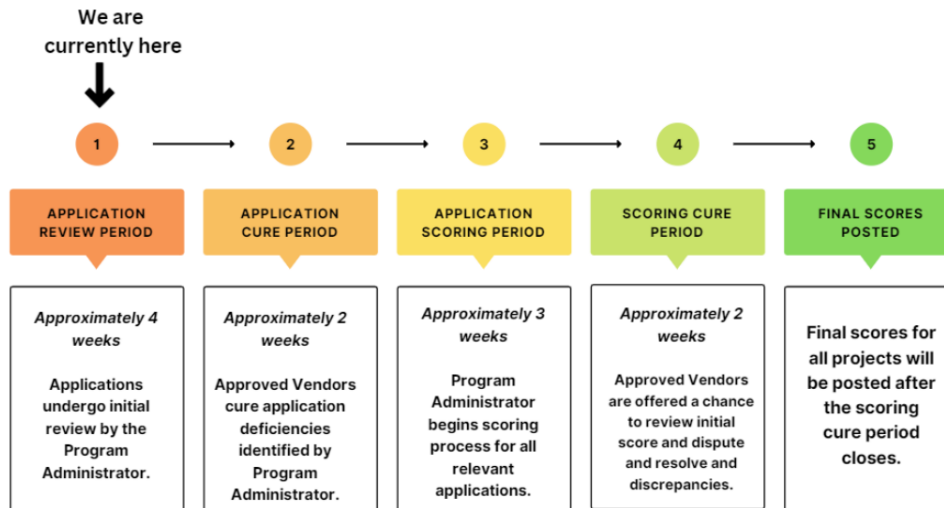
## Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** - September 11, 2024 from 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** - The Program Administrator publishes [Tips and Tricks](#) to help support stakeholders in avoiding project applications entering *Need Info* status and delaying their review and approval.
  - **Prevailing Wage** is a minimum compensation level set by the Illinois Department of Labor (“IDOL”) by county for construction activities related to public works. All Illinois Shines projects are subject to [Prevailing Wage](#). (With few exceptions that include small residential projects and houses of worship)
  - **Certified Transcripts of Payroll (“CTPs”)** are the documentation *required* for Illinois Shines projects to demonstrate that Prevailing Wage was paid appropriately. The Illinois Shines program requires CTPs from the **Illinois Department of Labor**. CTPs from the United States Department of Labor are **not** accepted unless the AV can prove the project is subject to the [Davis Bacon Act](#). No other documentation, including affidavits, are accepted for this requirement and should not be submitted.
    - CTPs for weeks in which no work was performed are not required and should not be submitted.

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

- **Community Solar Program News** - See [TCS](#) and [CDCS](#) hubs on Program website for all CS updates.
  - **Community-Driven Community Solar Update** - As outlined in Section 5 of the Program Guidebook, the Community-Driven Community Solar (“CDCS”) application window closes 90 days after the start of the Program Year. With the Program Year commencing on June 3, 2024, the application submission deadline for Program Year 2024-25 CDCS projects was September 3, 2024. Applications are not accepted after the close of the application window. **Please see the proposed schedule below for application review and scoring:**
    - Application Review Period - Applications undergo initial review by Program Administrator
    - Application Cure Period - AVs cure deficiencies identified by Program Administrator

- Application Scoring Period - 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)
- Scoring Cure Period - AVs are offered a chance to review initial score and dispute and resolve any discrepancies



- **Traditional Community Solar Scoring Update** - Preliminary scores for all Traditional Community Solar (“TCS”) projects submitted during the “first day” application window on June 3, 2024 were shared individually with each AV on July 19, 2024 followed by a Scoring Cure Period, [Scores Publication](#), and Appeals period which concluded on August 23, 2024. No project scores were changed due to scoring appeals following the scoring appeal period. However, there was a correction made to the interconnection execution date for one project application. As a result, because points for criterion 4c. are awarded based on the recency of the interconnection agreement and scoring is impacted by submission order, this date correction changes the scores for eight projects. The revised TCS scores file was published on the TCS Category Hub of the Program website on September 4, 2024, and all AVs with updated scores were notified.

Project scores have now been finalized and will be used to determine the waitlist order following a random selection event, to be held on **September 10, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. CPT**. During this process, the 20% developer cap will be applied, and the project waitlist position will be determined. TCS Random Selection Event webinar registration link:

[https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_wUfQciTZQ\\_K9nTbTXOaxgQ#/registration](https://energy-solution.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wUfQciTZQ_K9nTbTXOaxgQ#/registration)

Following the Random Selection event, final scores and project selection will be published.

- **Equitable Energy Future Grant Program Announcement** - On Friday, August 30, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (“DCEO”) announced \$25.5 million in a [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(“NOFO”\)](#) for the Equitable Energy Future Grant Program. This grant funding will provide seed funding and pre-development funding opportunities to Equity Eligible Contractors (“EECs”) to work on renewable energy projects in low-income and historically disadvantaged communities. Grantees will be selected through a competitive NOFO process. Through a competitive NOFO qualified entities can apply for grants from \$250,000 to \$1 million. Applications will be accepted until December 31, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. To view and apply for the grant, please visit the DCEO [website](#). Interested parties are encouraged to reach out to [CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov](mailto:CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov) for application assistance. To help applicants prepare to apply for funding, DCEO will be holding a technical assistance [webinar](#) from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. on September 19, 2024.

- **Annual Report Next Steps** - The Annual Report cure period is in progress. The Program Administrator is reviewing responses to discrepancies identified during the Annual Reporting period. All discrepancies must be resolved by October 15. Failure to cure discrepancies may be a Program violation. AVs must be responsive to requests for information.
- **MES 2023-24 Year End Report Next Steps** - The Program Administrator is reviewing all submitted Minimum Equity Standard Year-End Reports. Participating entities will be notified of their MES Rating starting this month.
- **September 2024 Consumer Protection Working Group** - The Agency and its Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All Program Administrators hosted the September Consumer Protection Working Group meeting today. The notes from the Working Group will be published on the Program website, where agendas for meetings are also shared. The next Working Group meeting will be held on Friday, October 4, 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](#).

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

- **August 2024 - Stakeholder Feedback Request: Updating DG Disclosure Forms for Supply-Only Net Metering** - On [August 21, 2024](#), the IPA released a request for stakeholder feedback on a proposal by the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All (“ILSFA”) programs to update Distributed Generation Disclosure Forms to reflect the change for residential and small commercial customers from “full retail rate” net metering to “supply only” net metering in the ComEd, Ameren, and MidAmerican service territories. This change will be in effect for new net metering customers starting in 2025, and the proposed updates would change the approach for calculating the value of electricity from solar projects. This [linked document](#) describes separate proposals for Illinois Shines and ILSFA and breaks down each proposal into three sections: changes to the user inputs into the Portal; changes to the Portal calculations related to the value of electricity, and utility rebate payments; and changes to the Disclosure Form PDF presented to the customer. Please see the full announcement for additional information. Comments should be provided [via email attachment to IPA.Solar@illinois.gov with the subject “\[Responder’s Name\] – Stakeholder Feedback on DF Updates” by September 6, 2024](#).
- **IPA Released Part I of its Equity Accountability System Assessment** - On [August 6, 2024](#), the IPA released [Part I of its Equity Accountability System \(“EAS”\) Assessment](#). The EAS Assessment is an IPA-authored report assessing the effectiveness of statutory EAS provisions in promoting equity across the clean energy economy in Illinois. In the announcement, the Agency provided components of the EAS and next steps. Additional information on IPA initiatives to promote equity across the clean energy economy can be found on the [Equity Accountability System](#) page at the Illinois Shines website and at the IPA’s [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#).

#### **Ongoing Operations Updates**

- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** – [Due to an increase in late requests to withhold projects from submission to the ICC, the Program Administrator would like to remind AVs of the important information below.](#)

In advance of each submission of batches to the ICC for approval, AVs are provided the opportunity to withhold or re-batch projects. [AVs must indicate any requests to withdraw or withhold projects during the two day re-batching window.](#) 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)
9/10/2024	9/12/2024	9/26/2024
9/24/2024	9/26/2024	10/10/2024
9/30/2024	10/2/2024	10/17/2024
10/15/2024	10/17/2024	10/31/2024
10/21/2024	10/23/2024	11/7/2024
11/1/2024	11/6/2024	11/21/2024
11/15/2024	11/19/2024	12/5/2024
12/3/2024	12/5/2024	12/19/2024

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

#### Application Processing Updates

- Application Processing Update** - The Program Administrator has completed the review of all Small DG waitlisted applications and is currently reviewing applications from the 2024-25 Program Year across all project categories. The Program Administrator expects to be within a two-week turnaround time for review of applications submitted in the 2024-25 Program Year at the end of September for all application categories. This forecast is subject to change, and updates will be provided in each weekly announcement until processing times are back within a normal range.

#### Ongoing Program Portal Updates

- The latest Portal updates and enhancements, a Portal Development Roadmap, and portal help guides can be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/portal-updates/>.
- Portal Maintenance and 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 typically unavailable to users; the Program hopes these windows are 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
<b>Enhancement</b>		
Batch view page responsiveness, update to page's data query	The Portal page to view Batch Information has been updated for faster loading. No changes to the information displayed or navigation. This page can be accessed from the menu under Vendor -> Batches -> View	September 4, 2024
Net Metering Phase 1: Updated text on DG Disclosure Forms	Text has been added into the "Net Metering" and "Value of Electricity and Savings Estimates" sections of DG Disclosure Forms to inform customers of upcoming changes to net metering rates, as net metering calculations in Illinois will change from full retail rate to mixed retail and supply rate on January 1, 2025. Disclosure Forms of MidAmerican customers have been updated to more accurately reflect specific utility rates, and a disclaimer for estimated savings have been added to Disclosure Forms for customers of Mt. Carmel, municipal utilities, and rural cooperatives.	September 4, 2024
<b>Bug Fixes</b>		
Net Metering Phase 1: Net Metering Missing on Spanish Translated PPA and Lease Form	Previously, the Value of Electricity and Savings Estimates section was missing from Spanish Lease and PPA Disclosure Forms and contained a typo in the Spanish Purchase Disclosure Form. All Spanish Disclosure Forms have been updated to rectify these issues and include language about the upcoming changes to net metering rates on January 1, 2025. Spanish Disclosure Forms of MidAmerican customers have been updated to more accurately reflect specific utility rates, and a disclaimer for estimated savings have been added to Spanish Disclosure Forms for customers of Mt. Carmel, municipal utilities, and rural cooperatives.	September 4, 2024
API: "get_disclosure" - "form_pdf_url" - Returns Error from AWS when Signed PDF was created by E-Sign process	Previously API calls to the "get_disclosure" endpoint using the request type "form_pdf_url" could only download Unsigned Disclosure Forms and Forms completed by API upload and manual upload. Forms that were completed via the Portal's Hello-Sign integration were only accessible from the API using the "form_pdf" request type and attempts to download them with the "form_pdf_url" request type would return an error "specified key does not exist". This has been resolved and all signed Disclosure Forms (regardless of source/upload method) can now be downloaded using a secure URL and the "form_pdf_url" request type.	September 4, 2024
Disclosure Form Bug: PDF Fails to generate when "LossExceptions" field is over 284 characters	The "loss_damage_exceptions" field (also known as "Provide details of insurance coverage, including limitations of coverage") on Disclosure Forms should accept up to 300 characters. Previously if the "loss_damage_exceptions" field, contained between 284 and 300 characters. The Portal would accept the Disclosure Form's submission, but the PDF would fail to generate. This has been resolved, and PDFs will now consistently generate upon submission.	September 4, 2024

### Requirements and Reminders

- **Stakeholder Feedback** – This table outlines current and forthcoming proposals and feedback requests. Details on previous proposals and feedback requests can be found [at the Program website](#).

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
<a href="#">Updating DG Disclosure Forms for Supply-Only Net Metering</a>	August 21, 2024	September 6, 2024	



- **IPA Request for AVs and Installer Designees Interested To Serve Stranded Illinois Shines DG Customers** - As previously [announced](#), the Program seeks entities interested in serving stranded customers, and [updates the lists](#) of participating vendors on a rolling basis. The original announcements include details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.
- **Free Renewable Energy Contractor Clinic** - The Illinois Shines program and HIRE360 will host a Renewable Energy Contractor Clinic on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. CPT. This free event will include presentations on how to register as an Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”), participate in the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs, how to access free business advising and small business resources from the Cook County Small Business Source, and an overview of the grant opportunities by the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (“DCEO”) as well as information on working capital loans, certification support and other no cost resources for contractors that HIRE360 provides. Lunch will be provided, and the event includes a networking hour from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. CPT. The event will take place at 2540 South State Street, Chicago, Illinois 60616. Register here: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=WhykgeRTDE2nqHQvi9dkUU00ZkZbl0FCv1XakYuDriFUNzc2RFE00U1UWTFFQjdDRjk5Q1dVR1o3WS4u&origin=QRCode>
- **Illinois Shines API Test Environment: New Quarterly Test Data Refresh Process** - The Program has alerted current test users of the Portal’s API that on that on October 1, 2024 the Program Administrator will purge all test data from the API Test Environment, and refresh the database with the latest copy from Production. Program participants planning to submit a Production Access Review in the September timeframe, must either submit prior to **September 13, 2024**, or perform your final test run after October 2, 2024. Please see the [full announcement](#) for more details or contact the Program Administrator with questions.
- **Notification of Email Phishing Attempts Posing as Illinois Shines Compliance** - On [August 19, 2024](#), the Program Administrator notified participants to a new email phishing attempt to AVs and Designees, urging vendors to review compliance to information by clicking a linked PDF document embedded in the email. The message represented that the sender was the Program and used a spoofed sender address of “kristenfernand@illinoisabp.com” **These emails have not been sent from the Program, are not legitimate notices, and recipients should neither respond to them nor click the link(s) in the message.**

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