



# Illinois Shines Process Guide

This graphic is for explanatory purposes only, with timing estimated and subject to change. Utilities and the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) are independent entities and are responsible for their own timing. Approved Vendors (AV) may consult the Program website's [Project Application Reports](#) page for current information on application review progress, and use the [Project Look Up tool](#) to track individual applications.

There are seven phases in the application submission and approval process, including development of the solar project, with several steps within each phase.



**1. Disclosure Form Execution**



**2. Part I Application Submission and Review**



**3. ICC Review**



**4. REC Contract Execution**



**5. Installation of the Solar Project**



**6. Part II Application Submission and Review**



**7. REC Invoicing and Payment**



# 1. Disclosure Form Execution



- The Disclosure Form is created by an AV or Designee of an AV.
- The Disclosure Form must be sent to system host (along with the Illinois Shines program brochure) before they sign their installation contract.
- The system host signs the Disclosure Form either electronically or by wet signature.
- Once the form is electronically signed or completed and uploaded by the AV, the application may be started by the AV. The AV is required to complete all six steps of the Part I application and upload all required documentation before submitting it for payment.
- Note: Community Solar projects do not require the signature of Disclosure Forms until Phase 6: Part II Application Submission and Review.
- **Estimated Time: Subject to AV's timeline for application submission.**



## 2. Part I Application Submission and Review



- The AV batches the application along with other projects and submits them to the Program Administrator via the Illinois Shines Portal (the first batch size must be at least 100 kW).
- Once the batch of applications submitted, an invoice will be issued, and the AV will make payment using their designated payment method.
- After the payment is received, the batch of applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. The Program Administrator will verify the Part I applications in the submitted batch if all the requirements are met. If there are errors or discrepancies in the application or with the documentation, the AV has 14 days to respond to a *Need Info* inquiry and cure deficiencies. Projects whose deficiencies are not cured may not move forward. Projects that pass final Quality Assurance checks and are Part I verified will move onto the ICC submission process and will be re-batched with any other Part I verified projects (from the same or different batches).
- After the Part I application is submitted, stakeholders can track the application status with the Program's [Project Look Up Tool](#).
- **Estimated Time: One to two months for application review; Applications in the same batch the require additional information will delay the entire batch of applications from moving forward. Timeline may fluctuate based on current application volume and AV response time to information requests.**

# 3. ICC Review



- The Program Administrator sends the completed verified batch to the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) for approval at least eight business days prior to the ICC meeting at which the batch will be considered for approval.
- Renewable Energy Credit (REC) contract for all applications in the batch assigned to the contracting utility by the Program Administrator. Note that the contracting utility may not match the interconnecting utility.
- The batch of projects goes before the ICC for approval at the ICC open meeting which occurs approximately every two weeks.
- Meeting schedule: [icc.illinois.gov/meetings](http://icc.illinois.gov/meetings)
- **Estimated Time: One to three weeks for ICC submission then approval.**



## 4. REC Contract Execution



- Once a batch is approved by the ICC, the applicable contracting utility will execute the contract (or Product Order).
- Utility sends a partially executed REC contract (or Product Order) to the AV (likely to occur within 1-2 weeks of ICC approval).
- AV countersigns and returns REC contract (or Product Order) to the utility (must occur within 7 business days of receipt).
- AVs that do not execute an Illinois Shines contract (or Product Order) after project selection, submission to the ICC for approval, the ICC's approval, or the utility's execution may face disciplinary measures impacting their status as an AV in the Program moving forward. The batch and all applications within the batch may also be withdrawn from the Program.
- Within 30 business days of the ICC approval, the AV must post 5% collateral with the utility unless the project qualifies to have collateral withheld from the first REC payment. Failure to post collateral is an Event of Default and may result in contract termination or other disciplinary measures.
- **Estimated Time: Three to four weeks to execute the contract and post collateral.**



## 5. Installation of the Solar Project



- **Estimated Time: Subject to installer's timeline.**

# 6. Part II Application Submission and Review

- Only projects that are fully constructed and energized are eligible to submit a Part II application.
- Part II Application Submission

## Energized Projects

- Part II applications for energized projects may be submitted by the AV via the Illinois Shines Portal after contract execution.
- The AV will establish an irrevocable standing order in GATS or M-RETS after ICC approval and contract signing, and prior to the Part II application submission.
- **Estimated Time: Subject to AV's timeline.**

## Non-Energized Projects

- Distributed Generation projects have 18 months to complete development and Energization.
- Community Solar projects have 24 months to complete development and Energization.
- Some extensions may be allowed. See Section 5 of the Program Guidebook for more information.
- **Estimated Time: Subject to project installation and Energization timeline.**





# 6. Part II Application Submission and Review



- **Part II Verification**

- The Program Administrator verifies the Part II application to confirm if the project's requirements have been met. If there are errors or discrepancies in the application or the documentation submitted, a *Need Info* request will be issued to the AV, with 14 days to cure deficiencies.
- Upon a final Quality Assurance check and Part II verification, a Schedule B is created, which contains the final specifications of the project within the REC contract.
- **Estimated Time: One to two months for Part II application review, based on current application volumes, and AV response time to any open *Need Info* requests, which can result in delays in application approval.**

# 7. REC Invoicing and Payment



- Invoices are created only for energized projects (that received a Schedule B) with Part II applications that have been verified by the Program Administrator prior to the verification deadline.
- The invoice is created and made available to AVs between the 1st and 10th of each month, according to the invoicing timelines and quarterly payment cycle per project as outlined in the Program Guidebook.
- The AV submits the invoice to the utilities, which must be done by the 10th of the month for the invoice to be paid on time. Any invoices not submitted by the 10th of the month will be treated as “missed” and included in the next invoicing opportunity. The utility will pay the invoice by the last business day of the month following invoice submission – if it’s the first invoice under a given REC contract. Otherwise, for subsequent invoices, the payment will be made by the last business day of the month the invoice was submitted.
- Please see the Program Guidebook or applicable REC Contract for details on invoice calculations per project type.
- **The timing of the payment from the AV to the system host is subject to the AV and the terms of their contract with the system host.**

# Glossary

- **AV** - Approved Vendor
- **ICC** - Illinois Commerce Commission
- **Designee** - Approved Vendor Designee: a company identified by an Approved Vendor to perform marketing and/or project installation on its behalf
- **Utility** - Contracted Utility under the REC Contract