

Program Guidebook

Illinois Shines (Adjustable Block Program)

Version Released April 18, 2025 for 2025-26 Program Year



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Introduction

The Illinois Shines Program (“Program”)¹ 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”) that 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, (i.e. Program announcements) those statutes, orders, and materials 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 2025-26 Program Year. Key changes include, but are not limited to:

- New information on Consumer Protection Initiatives – including the escrow process, the restitution program, and the stranded customer REC adder
- New information on the 2025 REC Contract Amendment
- Changes to the EEP Attestation, EEP Certification, EEC Attestation and Application, Compliance Plan, Mid-Year Report, Year-End Report, Corrective Action Plan and MES Waiver, for purposes of compliance with the Minimum Equity Standard
- Clarifications for co-location pricing
- Clarifying information for timing on Community Solar application submissions
- Newly required latitude/longitude coordinates for all applications
- New information on CDCS Part II submissions
- Updated AV application
- Addition of a new Designee type
- Addition of a Safe Harbor approach for MES Compliance

¹ 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



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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").² This Guidebook also reflects changes to the Program that were proscribed through the enactment of Public Act 102-0662 and adopted in the Agency's 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 was published by the Agency on its website on April 19, 2024. The Agency will begin work on its 2026 Long-Term Plan in summer 2025, any changes approved in the 2026 Long-Term Plan will not take effect until the 2026-27 Program Year.

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 ("Master REC Agreements") between Illinois electric utilities and Approved Vendors, as described further in this Guidebook.

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

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

² 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/>.

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.

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 (“CEJA”), 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 certain 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, an Equity Investment Eligible Community, 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 1st through May 31st³ of a 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 law 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

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

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 Apprenticeship 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 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

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 utilizes 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.

C. Program Requirements and Key Documents

Key Program Documents

The Program has four guiding documents that contain requirements for all Program participants: the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, the REC Contract, 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”), the REC Contract governs the requirements of the project over the 15 or 20 year delivery term, 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 and its requirements. 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.

REC Contract - This standardized agreement between the contracting utility (“Buyer”) and Approved Vendor (“Seller”) governs the terms and obligations associated with the transfer of RECs from Seller to Buyer. The agreement begins upon ICC Approval and subsequent execution of the parties. As the Program has evolved over time, Program changes have resulted in the creation and use of multiple versions of the REC Contract (2019 15 Year, 2021 15 Year, 2022 15 Year, 2024 15 Year, 2021 20 Year, 2022 20 Year, 2024 20 Year).

When a new version of the REC Contract is developed and approved for use, projects will be assigned to the latest version of the REC Contract. As such, projects are generally not placed under older versions of the REC Contract.

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 or type, 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.⁴ 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.

⁴ 83 Ill. Adm. Code § 200

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

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 seeks to remedy this unsteadiness and unpredictability through employing the following methods beginning with the 2024-25 Program Year. These methods will continue in the 2025-26 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

E. Program Categories

The Program broadly supports only two project types: photovoltaic distributed renewable energy generation devices (i.e., distributed generation or “DG”), and photovoltaic community renewable generation projects (i.e., community solar or “CS”). 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.⁵
- Public Schools – Distributed generation projects and community solar projects up to and including 5 MW AC in size which serve a public school in Illinois.⁶

⁵ 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.

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

- Community-Driven Community Solar (“CDCS”) – Community solar projects up to and including 5 MW AC in size that meet the criteria to be classified as community-driven per the guidelines specified in Section 1.E.
- Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”) – Distributed generation projects and 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.⁷

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 (“TCS”) 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 outlined in Appendix E.

A 20% developer cap for any affiliated family of project developers for this Traditional Community Solar capacity will apply. Any affiliated⁸ 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 that participate in TCS scoring 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.

⁷ For the December 14, 2021 block of capacity for Equity Eligible Contractors, only DG applications were accepted

⁸ “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.

Community-Driven Community Solar

A Community-Driven Community Solar (“CDCS”) project is defined as a community 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 (5 MW) 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 application window for Community-Driven Community Solar projects to be submitted prior to any project selection. Upon closing of the 90-day application window, 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 capacity 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 any given Program Year, projects that have a minimum score of 10 points will be placed on a waitlist for the following Program Year.

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 for TCS and CDCS Projects

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 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.

Public Schools

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.⁹

⁹ Details can be found at [Evidence-Based Funding Distribution Calculation \(isbe.net\)](#) and [Environmental Justice Community Search Map \(arcgis.com\)](#)

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
Public Schools 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 submitted to this Program category 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 program 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 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 that owns the land where 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 capacity must be met by small subscribers (those requiring < 25kW). 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 equity eligible persons, or is a natural person that is an equity 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 on their own or with Designees, 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 EEC 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, 2022, or 2024 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 contracts 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 contracts 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 L. 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 or 2024 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 eleven months the block of capacity is open. The 2024-25 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 Opening¹⁰

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

¹⁰ 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.I.

- **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.

F. Block Structure

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 energy delivery years. The 2024-2025 Program Year will commence with annual blocks of capacity opening on June 3, 2024. 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 or until sufficient capacity is freed up in the block to support the project.

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 2025-26 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	-
Total	100%	123	286	391

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 2024-25 Program Year. The reallocation process is outlined further in Section 1.I. Final block sizes for the 2025-26 Program Year, inclusive of reallocated capacity, will be announced once the 2024-25 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

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/category¹¹ on a first come, first served basis (unless otherwise noted in this Section H 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 <=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.

¹¹ Beginning with the 2024-25 Program Year blocks of capacity opening on June 3, 2024, for any Program category that no longer utilizes Group A and B distinctions for awarding capacity (Small DG, Large DG, Public Schools) projects will be added to a waitlist in the order they are submitted to the Program category and will not be organized by Group.

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 pre-emptively 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

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 CPT. 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 and scoring will not take place. Should category capacity fill on the first day of the Program Year or later in the Program Year, then from that point forward, Traditional Community Solar projects will be subject to the scoring mechanism outlined in Appendix E.

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.

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 permitted 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.

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 permitted outside of this allowance.

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.E.

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.

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.

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 and project size.

I. Uncontracted Capacity

Following the 2023-2024 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:

- **First**, the Agency will 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.¹²

The Agency will endeavor to publish its capacity redistribution within two weeks after the close of that Program 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.

Annual Temporary Program Portal Closure

To prepare for each new Program Year, the Agency closes the Program's application portal for a five-day period prior to the start of the Program Year. This temporary closing of application submittals allows the Agency and the Program Administrator to calculate uncontracted capacity allocations for the upcoming Program Year, prepare resources for the new Program Year, and reset the Program Portal in anticipation of

¹² Small DG – 20%; Large DG – 20%; TCS – 30%; Public Schools – 15%; CDGS – 5%; EEC – 10%

new blocks and/or any required application changes. The closing restricts all access to the Portal with the exception of the generation, delivery, and execution of Disclosure Forms so as to have minimal impact on the market as preparation for the new Program Year takes place.

J. REC Pricing

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 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.

The process for payment of incentives per REC for a project from the contracting utility to the Approved Vendor is further outlined in Section 8.

REC Pricing for 2025-26 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 2025-2026 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	\$66.34	\$75.48
>10 – 25 kW AC	\$57.18	\$69.78
>25 – 100 kW AC	\$59.53	\$69.65
>100 – 200 kW AC	\$55.63	\$65.09
>200 – 500 kW AC	\$45.64	\$53.40
>500 – 2,000 kW AC	\$42.37	\$49.57
>2,000 – 5,000 kW AC	\$31.96	\$37.39

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	\$53.40	\$64.20
>500 – 2,000 kW AC	\$46.02	\$54.24
>2,000 – 5,000 kW AC	\$33.99	\$39.98

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

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. Additionally, in order to be eligible for this adder the entire system must be roof-mounted.

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 REC price for RECs generated by projects that were stranded and then “unstranded.” Please note this adder is not yet finalized. The Agency expects to fully develop the initiative by the close of the 2025 calendar year.

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 who have requested assistance 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 developed 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 amount is intended to represent the value of the additional risk and work of taking on a type of stranded customer. The REC adder will be highest for situations where the expected cost or risk to the new Approved Vendor (and/or Designee) is greatest.

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 can be found in Section 3.E

Price Adjustment Cap for Changes to REC Prices for Waitlisted Distributed Generation 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.

K. Appeal of Program Administrator Decisions

A Program participant can appeal any and all decisions made by the Program Administrator to the IPA, including but not limited to rejection of Approved Vendor/Designee application, decisions related to consumer protection, and determinations on project applications. 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. Unless otherwise specified by the Program Administrator, the deadline to submit an appeal is two weeks after the determination.

To appeal to the IPA, participants should provide to the Program Administrator, at admin@illinoisshines.com, 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 participant, 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.



Section 2: Approved Vendors

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A. Approved Vendor Overview and Requirements

Approved Vendor Role and Responsibilities

Participation in the Program takes place through Approved Vendors, which must submit an application and be formally approved prior to participating in the Illinois Shines program. There are several important obligations of Approved Vendors as the entity that receives direct payments through the Program. 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.

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 webinars and/or trainings.¹³

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.

For purposes of determining whether an entity is “affiliated,” the following definition is used by the Program: “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.

¹³ Includes all Program-produced materials such as webinars and marketing resources, all of which can be found at illinoisshines.com.

“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. An Approved Vendor that works with another Approved Vendor, developer or Designee and does not have a shared ownership structure as defined here should not list that entity in response to the question about “affiliates” in the Approved Vendor application. The Approved Vendor application further requires the applicant to disclose 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

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. If 100% of the ownership changes, the Approved Vendor must alert the Program Administrator to the change and provide documentation of the sale. The new owner will need to submit a new Approved Vendor application with details specific to its ownership of the entity.
- 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.¹⁴
- 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.

¹⁴ See Appendix G for a description of information collected in the Approved Vendor Application.

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 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. An entity may become an "Inactive" Approved Vendor and still participate as an active Designee if it has properly registered as a Designee.

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.

An Approved Vendor cannot be withdrawn from the Program until after it has submitted a withdrawal request for any projects it will not be moving forward with, including those that are currently listed as Part I "In Process." Approved Vendors that 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

Approved Vendors that wish to submit projects into the Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) category must first certify as an EEC. An Equity Eligible Person (EEP) is allowed to serve as the majority-owner of one EEC Designee, one EEC AV, and one EEC Subcontractor 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 EEP. This EEC and their EEC SPAVs will be considered affiliated and subject to the same Developer Cap should that be triggered for the given Program Year. EEC Approved Vendors may also submit projects into other Program categories and are not limited to only participating in the EEC category.

The following information is required for EEC certification: 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.

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 EEP eligibility criteria.

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.¹⁵

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. Please note that Personal Identifiable Information (PII) is not accepted via email. A request for a secure SharePoint folder must be submitted to the Program Administrator in order to submit required PII. 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.¹⁶

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 potentially other public reports.¹⁷

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. This notice of approval will prompt the new EEC Approved Vendor to schedule a required one-on-one check-in with the EEC Sector Strategist. The Approved Vendor will then be able to submit projects into the EEC category.

EECs will need to re-certify as an EEC each year alongside the annual renewal of their AV, Designee, or subcontractor status. As part of that process, EEPs that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC and qualify as an EEP based on residency will be required to re-certify their status as an Equity Eligible Person. For EECs 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 the EEP(s).

The EEC Application and Attestation can be found in Appendix B.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ <https://energyequity.illinois.gov/>

¹⁷ The Agency will endeavor to protect confidentiality of information as outlined in Section 2.F of this Guidebook.

C. General AV Attestation and EEC Certification

All Approved Vendors must attest to the attestation in Appendix G 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.

Equity Eligible Contractor Certification

Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) applicants will be required to complete the attestation in Appendix B of this Guidebook in addition to the Approved Vendor attestation in Appendix G. This document must be completed by each owner or board member in the organization used to establish EEC status. Each attestation 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

An entity that is applying to become an Approved Vendor or renewing its Approved Vendor status (required annually) 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 following¹⁸:

- Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months¹⁹;
- 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).
- Company ownership structure, including contacts, EIN, shareholder list, service territories, etc.
- Legal and regulatory information and customer complaints (history of sanctions, bankruptcy, audit findings, fraud, customer complaints).

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 to the success of the Program as a whole. The Program Administrator may consider any information presented in the application, as well as information from its 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

¹⁸ Complete set of requirements for the Approved Vendor application and attestation are included in Appendix G .

¹⁹ Sole proprietors must present documentation of their registration with the County in which the business is located and are not required to provide a Secretary of State registration. Municipalities, public schools, and other public entities are not required to provide a Secretary of State registration.

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.

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

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 two 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 two weeks of receiving a determination as described in Section 1.K, and the opportunity to appeal will be communicated by the Program Administrator as part of its notice of rejection.

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 that the prospective or renewing Approved Vendor must meet to address the identified concerns. 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, confirmation of MRETS/GATS registration, training materials from AVs who market the Program to customers and other AV information as requested by the Program Administrator.

EEC Approved Vendors will need to renew as an EEC annually to maintain their EEC certification. alongside the annual Approved Vendor renewal process. As part of that process, which occurs during the Approved Vendor renewal process, Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC Approved Vendor and qualify as an EEP under the primary residency within an Equity Investment Eligible Community (EIEC) criterion will be required to submit proof of eligibility documentation that shows their continued primary residency in an EIEC. For EEC Approved Vendors that qualify based on one of the other criteria, renewal will only require confirmation of continued majority-ownership by an EEP or EEPs.

Updates to the Equity Investment Eligible Communities (“EIEC”) map used to determine EEP status for primary residency-based qualification could result in some individuals that previously qualified as EEPs 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 certification 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

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), 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.²⁰ While the IPA will presume that seemingly commercially sensitive or confidential content contained in submittals including Quarterly Reports, Annual Reports, Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Compliance Plans, MES Year-End Reports, Approved Vendor applications, and project applications is indeed commercially sensitive or confidential and thus should be actively protected from disclosure, Approved 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

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. Designee types include installers, entities that perform maintenance and repair, marketing firms, community solar subscriber agents, lead generators, and sales organizations.²¹ For all DG projects, installers must be registered as a Designee. With respect to DG solar projects for residential customers, the physical presence of a Designee on a customer’s property constitutes direct interaction with the end-use customers for the purposes of Designee registration. For DG solar projects for commercial customers, entities that perform activities that are limited in scope and/or duration and are tangential to the solar project (such as installing perimeter fencing) do not need to register as a Designee.²² The Agency reserves the right to add additional categories as needed. Designees must register with the Program before interacting with customers and must 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 that are relevant to their role in the Program, including all applicable sections of the Consumer Protection Handbook.²³ 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

²⁰ 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.

²¹ This may also include warranty holders.

²² If the entity is unsure if Designee registration is required they may reach out to the Program Administrator for a determination.

²³ See Section VII of the [Consumer Protection Handbook](#) for more details.

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. Similarly, a Designee may not begin working with a Nested Designee on a project intended to be applied to the Program unless, and until, that Nested Designee is properly registered with the Program. Approved Vendors remain responsible for ensuring that all Designees – including Designees of Designees (Nested Designees) – are trained consistent with the requirements of the Consumer Protection Handbook and are informed of changes in Program requirements issued by the Agency. 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 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 ownership information, 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.²⁴ Installer Designees that will be performing electrical work on the project must demonstrate that they are certified by the Illinois Commerce Commission as a Distributed Generation Installer and must identify the full name of the 'Qualified Person'. 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.

²⁴ Sole proprietors must present documentation of their registration with the County in which the business is located and are not required to provide a Secretary of State registration. Municipalities, public schools, and other public entities are not required to provide a Secretary of State registration.

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 Install²⁵ 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. If an Installer Designee is not performing the electrical work on the project, the parent Designee must identify, upon registration and/or renewal, the Nested Designee that will be performing the electrical work on its behalf.
- Maintenance and Repair Designee - An entity that performs routine maintenance, monitoring and/or repair to a system after solar installation on behalf of an Approved Vendor or Designee.

As referenced above, any entity that has Program-related direct interaction with end-use customers of Illinois Shines must register as a Designee even if the work does not neatly fit within one of these categories and 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

²⁵ "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.

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, Installer Designee, and/or Maintenance and Repair 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 is no longer participating in the Program, it must notify the Program Administrator of this change. Designees may request to withdraw from the Program or may be listed as inactive if the Approved Vendor and/or Designee under which they are registered requests to remove them as a Designee under their account. Designees that have withdrawn or are inactive in Illinois Shines are responsible for responding to any inquiries by the Program Administrator and customers on any complaints or issues related to projects with which they were involved while they were registered with the Program. If a withdrawn/inactive Designee is nonresponsive to the Program Administrator, they may be subject to pre-disciplinary and disciplinary action and this may impact their ability to re-register in the Program in the future. 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, suspension, withdrawal or inactive status 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:

- 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).
- 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.

As with the Approved Vendor application, the Program Administrator may deny a Designee's registration if the Designee fails to respond to requests from the Administrator, is dishonest within their Designee registration materials, or is affiliated with or solely registered under a suspended Approved Vendor. Likewise, Designee registrations that are rejected will be provided a written explanation with the reasons for the rejection. The Program Administrator's rejection of a Designee registration may be appealed to the IPA within two weeks of receiving a determination as described in Section 1.K., and the opportunity to appeal will be communicated by the Program Administrator as part of its notice of rejection.

If a Designee withdraws or becomes inactive in the Program, it must continue to be responsive to any inquiries by the Program Administrator on any complaints or issues related to projects it was involved with while it was registered with the Program.

H. Equity Eligible Contractor Designees

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

EEC Designees will need to renew as an EEC annually to maintain their EEC certification. As part of the EEC Designee renewal process, which occurs during the Designee renewal period, Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC Designee and qualify as an EEP under the primary residence in an Equity Investment Eligible Community (EIEC) criterion will be required to submit proof of eligibility documentation that shows their continued primary residency in an EIEC. For EEC Designees that qualify based on one of the other criteria, renewal will only require confirmation of continued majority-ownership by an EEP or EEPs. Any projects that have received points in project selection from contracting with an EEC

Designee will not be penalized for a later change in the EEC status of that Designee due to an update to the EIEC map.

I. Equity Eligible Contractor Subcontractors

Businesses or organizations that qualify as an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) and seek to participate in the Program but do not yet have a relationship with an Approved Vendor, and/or do not interact directly with the end-use customer for projects submitted to the Program may certify as an EEC Subcontractor. EEC Subcontractors need to work with an Approved Vendor or registered Designee to participate in the Program. The certification process for EEC Subcontractors will be subject to the same eligibility criteria as described in Section 2.B.

If an EEC Subcontractor intends to interact with end-use customers on behalf of an Approved Vendor, they must register as a Designee before acting in that capacity. EEC Subcontractors that do not interact with end-use customers are not required to register as Designees. EEC 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 renew as an EEC annually to maintain their EEC certification. As part of the EEC Subcontractor renewal process, which occurs during the Designee renewal period, Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) that serve as the majority-owner of an EEC Subcontractor and qualify as an EEP under the primary residency within an Equity Investment Eligible Community (EIEC) criterion will be required to submit proof of eligibility documentation that shows their continued primary residency in an EIEC. For EEC Subcontractors that qualify based on one of other criteria, renewal will only require confirmation of continued majority-ownership by an EEP or EEPs.



Section 3: Consumer Protection

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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 Handbook²⁶
- Contract Requirements for:
 - Illinois Shines program – Community Solar
 - Illinois Shines program – Distributed Generation

The Consumer Protection Handbook replaced the former Marketing Guidelines.²⁷ 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 2025-26 Program Year. Updated versions of these documents will be published at least 45 days before Program Year opening and posted to the Program website.

The Consumer Protection Handbook²⁸ 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

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 at all times to ensure dignity and respect in all interactions with customers, the utilities, other Program participants, the Program Administrator, and the IPA at all times. Rudeness, incivility, discrimination, harassment or prejudice on the basis of (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, or national origin, gender identity or expression, sexual

²⁶ 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>

²⁷ An archive of Program guidelines and forms can be found at the following: <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/>

²⁸ The Consumer Protection Handbook, in which participants in both the Illinois Shines program and Illinois Solar for All program must be in compliance, can be found at the following link: <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/>

orientation, immigration status, religion or belief system, age, disability or medical condition, or socioeconomic background will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.

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 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 to act professionally towards customers, the Program Administrator, the IPA, utilities, or other Program participants could impact that entity's status in the Program, and could lead to disciplinary action and suspension.

C. Process for Consumer Protection Violations and Potential Violations

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 may 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 potential 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. Portal access may be restored once the entity begins responding in a satisfactory manner. Designees that have withdrawn or are inactive in Illinois Shines are expected to respond to any inquiries by the Program Administrator on any complaints or issues related to projects with which they were involved while they were registered with the Program. If a withdrawn/inactive Designee is nonresponsive to the Program Administrator, it may be subject to pre-disciplinary and disciplinary action upon re-entry into the Program.

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 Approved Vendor(s) associated with the Designee for the specific project(s) at issue. For Nested Designees, a copy will also be sent to the Designee under which the entity receiving the warning letter is nested. If the specific Approved Vendor (or parent Designee) associated with the project at issue cannot be identified, all Approved Vendors (or parent Designees) associated with the Designee will be copied.

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;
- An explanation of the process and terms for reinstatement (only for suspensions); 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 follow the process described on Section 1.K. 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

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, and appeals.

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 or invoicing process if doing otherwise may risk compounding the reason for which the Approved Vendor was suspended.

D. Stranded Customers

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) submit a project application to the Program. 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.²⁵

Beginning in 2023, the Program Administrator began soliciting Approved Vendors and Designees to submit interest in working with stranded customers. Approved Vendors and Designees are vetted using a list of eligibility guidelines including that the entity is properly registered with the Program, has not been suspended in the last six months, has a demonstrated history of responsiveness to the Program Administrator, and, for Approved Vendors, has successfully completed a minimum of 20 Illinois Shines program applications. The Program Administrator maintains a [public-facing "shortlist"](#) of Approved Vendors and Designees that self-identified as willing to assist with stranded customers and met the eligibility guidelines with the intention of connecting stranded customers to these entities. The shortlist is posted on the Illinois Shines website, alongside more information for stranded customers and a form to submit to the Program Administrator for purposes of tracking and assisting these stranded customers.

The Program Administrator developed a process to work with stranded customers to connect them to an Approved Vendor or Designee on the shortlist who may be able to assist with completing their project and/or ensure the project is applied to the Program. If the customer is stranded because the Approved Vendor has exited the market before the project is under a REC contract, the Consumer Protection team attempts to assist the customer in completing an Approved Vendor Switch to their new Approved Vendor. If the existing Approved Vendor is still in operation and the application is already “ICC Approved” but not yet Part II verified, the Consumer Protection team will work with the existing Approved Vendor to either (i) move forward with project removal, (ii) proceed with the Part II application process, or (iii) perform an Approved Vendor Assignment. Both Approved Vendor Switches and Assignments require the agreement and cooperation of the original Approved Vendor. Without that cooperation, the Program Administrator may not have any ability to assist a stranded customer absent utility termination of the original Approved Vendor’s Master REC Contract.

Until the REC Contract Amendment is in effect and executed (see Section 1. C above), assignments are only available for entire batches. If there are multiple projects in a single batch, the Program Administrator may reach out via email and phone to customers with projects in a batch to seek written consent to share their contact information so those customers may then communicate with one another to try to identify a new Approved Vendor to take over the batch. When the new REC Contract amendment is in effect and executed by the original AV, the Program Administrator can proceed with the unbatching and reassignment process described in Section 3.E below. The Program Administrator and Agency are also planning to implement the Stranded Customer REC Adder that was approved in the 2024 Long-Term Plan, which will provide additional economic incentive to Approved Vendors that take on stranded customers. See additional information in Section 3.E below.

E. Additional Consumer Protection Initiatives

In the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Agency proposed the development of three new consumer protection initiatives: a solar restitution program, an escrow process for Approved Vendors who are not passing through promised REC incentive payments to customers, and a stranded customer REC adder. While the details of some of these initiatives are still in development at the time of the publication of this document, available information is provided and additional updates will be available at <https://illinoisshines.com/consumer-protection-initiatives/>.

As noted in Section 1.C above, the escrow process and the stranded customer REC adder both require the development and execution of an amendment to the Program’s Master REC Contracts (between the Approved Vendors and utilities) prior to launching the initiatives.

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.

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.J of this Guidebook. The escrow process would complement the restitution program described below by ideally reducing the number of customers who²⁹ ultimately seek a restitution payment. Additional information on the activation and implementation of the escrow process can be found in the Consumer Protection Handbook, Section XII.A.

The escrow process will be activated in situations where there is a high likelihood that an Illinois Shines Approved Vendor will not pass through some or all of its future promised REC incentive payments to customers. For the escrow process to be initiated, the Program Administrator must receive at least five credible complaints within a 180-day period. The Program Administrator and Agency will retain discretion to not implement the escrow process even if five complaints are received within a 180-day period.

If the Program Administrator decides to move forward with the escrow process, the Program Administrator will first issue a Notice of Potential Violation to the Approved Vendor and will notify the Approved Vendor of the possibility of implementing the escrow process, providing the Approved Vendor with a reasonable opportunity to respond and demonstrate why the escrow process should not be implemented. If the Program Administrator decides to invoke the escrow process, the Approved Vendor will have an opportunity to appeal the decision to the Agency.

After the escrow process is initiated for a particular Approved Vendor, the Approved Vendor will submit its invoices to the utility as normal (with the "payee" listed as the escrow agent), and the utility will make payments under the relevant REC Contract to the escrow agent instead of to the Approved Vendor. The escrow process will be implemented at the contract, or invoice, level. In other words, the utility will pay the entire invoice to the escrow agent, even if part or all of the escrowed amount for a particular invoice is ultimately paid to the Approved Vendor. The Program Administrator will determine how much money from each invoice paid to the escrow agent should be paid to customers and how much money will be paid to the Approved Vendor.

Throughout the preliminary and implementation steps for escrow process for a particular Approved Vendor, the Program Administrator may, at its discretion, temporarily pause the generation of invoices and/or the verifying of an Approved Vendor's Part II project applications. Additionally, the Program Administrator may, at its discretion, implement the escrow process for affiliates of the Approved Vendor if the Program Administrator determines that, based on the totality of the circumstances, there is a significant risk that the affiliated Approved Vendor(s) will also fail to pass through promised REC incentive payments.

Once the escrow process has been implemented for an Approved Vendor, it may submit a request to the Program Administrator to reverse the implementation of the escrow process and no longer have its payments diverted to the escrow agent. An Approved Vendor may not make such a request more than once

²⁹ See <https://illinoisshines.com/stranded-customer-resources/>.

in a 12-month period. In the request, the Approved Vendor must demonstrate to a reasonable degree of certainty that it will not fail to pass through future promised REC incentives.

Solar Restitution Program

As discussed in Section 9.9 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Agency is developing a Solar Restitution Program to provide economic assistance to customers who have been harmed through their participation in Illinois Shines or Illinois Solar for All by an Approved Vendor or Designee's violation of Illinois Shines requirements. Additional information on the funding, eligibility, payment caps and claim prioritization, and claims process can be found in the Consumer Protection Handbook, Section XII.A.

The restitution payments will be made from the general Renewable Portfolio Standard collections fund held by the public utilities. Restitution payments for harm arising from participation in the Illinois Shines program will draw from Illinois Shines forfeited collateral, and payments for harm arising from participation in the Illinois Solar for All will draw from ILSFA forfeited collateral. Forfeited collateral from utility-scale solar procurements run by the Agency will be available to both Illinois Shines and ILSFA restitution claims.

Customers will be required to submit a complaint to the Program Administrator and cooperate with the normal complaint investigation procedure in order to be eligible for the Solar Restitution Program. The customer must experience financial harm by an Approved Vendor's or Designee's violation of Program requirements and must file a complaint regarding the relevant harm within two years of the latter of (1) the occurrence of the harm, or (2) the Restitution Program opening for that type of harm. Customers are not eligible for a restitution payment if they were a 5% or greater owner, or a member of the highest-level management team, of the entity whose conduct caused the harm, during the time that the entity's conduct was ongoing. Family members who live in the same household as a 5% or greater owner or member of the highest-level management team are also ineligible.

Upon the submission of a restitution claim, the Program Administrator will investigate the claim and make an initial determination regarding customer eligibility and, if eligible, the amount of payment.

The restitution program will be implemented in stages. In the first phase, the solar restitution program will only be available for customers who were promised a direct REC payment lump-sum pass-through and did not receive it. The first phase will be open to residential and commercial customers with projects in both the Small DG and Large DG categories. Further phases of implementation could include customers that experienced other types of financial harm, including but not limited to, installation-related damage and systems that were paid for but not installed.

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, if the entity is suspended based on the underlying actions, the 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 implement the first phase of the Solar Restitution Program in 2025 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 is finalizing the specific categories of stranded customers whose projects will be eligible for the stranded customer REC adder. Once finalized, the categories will be published on the Program websites. Each category will be associated with a low, medium, high, or very high REC adder value. The applicable REC adder category (low, medium, high, or very high) will be adjusted based on how many years of the REC Contract have already elapsed for that specific project.

Once the REC adder determination has been finalized, the assignment of the project to the new Approved Vendor can be processed, which will include re-approval by the ICC. The amount of collateral required for the re-approved project will not be affected by the REC Adder, as the REC Contract definition for collateral excludes the REC Adder from the Contract Price for the purposes of calculating collateral. After ICC approval, the approach to invoicing will depend on whether any REC payments were already made to the original Approved Vendor. If any (or all) REC payments were already made, the new Approved Vendor will submit an invoice for a “true up,” with the payment equal to the number of RECs already paid for multiplied by the REC adder value. Then going forward, the REC adder will be applied to the REC price on any subsequent invoices. If no payments had been made to the original Approved Vendor, then the REC adder will simply be added to the REC price on the project invoices. Schedules A and B to Exhibit A will have specific line items that indicate whether or not a stranded customer REC adder is applied and, if so, the amount.

The Agency will further develop the REC adder in 2025 and will post updates to the adder finalization and process to receive the adder on the Program website.

Unbatching and Reassignment

Pursuant to the 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Program will allow for unbatching 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 unbatch 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 unbatching of projects after REC Contract execution may be permitted when:

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

As of the publishing of this Guidebook, the finalization of the procedures related to unbatching and reassignment is in process and will be further refined in 2025.



Section 4: System Eligibility

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A. System Location

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

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 proof of interconnection approval 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

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

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 are not exempt from the requirement to be a qualified person. The self-installer is required 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.
- A system must be installed in compliance with the interconnection guidelines set by the interconnecting utilities.

E. Expansions

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, 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. The allocation of an expansion system capacity is taken from the Group/category corresponding to the individual applications, not from the Group/category corresponding to the aggregate system.

6. The systems are invoiced 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 a system on a single parcel is subsequently expanded (referred to in the Program as a system expansion), the Agency reserves the right to revise the incentive amounts paid for the subsequent system(s), and to set the incentives based on the total expanded system size rather than just treat the expansion as a separate system. For the purpose of establishing a revised incentive level under these circumstances, the systems' size would be considered at the parcel level. In addition, if a project expansion is submitted more than two years after ICC approval of the original system, then expansion pricing will not apply. However, if the expansion 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 expansion pricing.

F. Co-location of Distributed Generation Projects

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. 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.

Across Program Years

In cases where one project is approved for a contract and later, a second project is submitted resulting in co-location, and that second co-located project is submitted to a different block, a weighted average is used to determine the combined contract value. First, the total contract value for the combined size at the first block's price is calculated, as if the systems were submitted together in the first block. Then, the total contract value for the combined size at the second block's price is calculated, as if the systems were both submitted together in the second block. Once the combined contract value is determined for each block, a weighted average based on REC quantity is used to calculate the final, combined weighted average total contract value. The net contract value that will be applied is calculated by subtracting the actual contract value paid to the first system from the weighted average total contract value. The second system will receive a contract for the net contract value, which is the weighted average total contract value minus the actual awarded contract value of the first system. The REC price for the second project will be the net contract value divided by the number of RECs for the second system.

In cases where the addition of the second project does not change the price category of the original system (i.e. >2000–5000 kW AC) based on the combined system size, the second project's REC price may not change. The price calculation methodology is the same for both Distributed Generation and Community Solar projects.

Example 1: Combined system size **does not** change price category

- Application 1: Large DG submitted to Group B, Block 2023–24, 2500 kW, priced as a standalone project with a REC Price of \$39.56, 70,000 RECs = Total Contract Value of \$2,769,200.00 already received. The price category for this application as a standalone project is >2,000–5,000 kW AC,
- Application 2: Large DG submitted to Group B, Block 2024–25, 1500 kW, 50,000 RECs. The REC price for this application as a standalone project would be \$37.05.
- Calculate combined total contract value under Block 2023–24: The combined size is 4000 kW, so both projects would be priced at \$39.56 for purposes of this first calculation. This price corresponds to the same price category as the standalone project, which is >2,000–5,000 kW AC. $(70,000 \text{ RECs} * \$39.56) + (50,000 \text{ RECs} * \$39.56) = \$4,747,200.00$
- Calculate combined total contract value under Block 2024–25: The combined size is 4000 kW, so both projects would be priced at \$37.05 for purposes of this second calculation. This price corresponds to the >2,000 – 5,000 kW AC price category. $(70,000 \text{ RECs} * \$37.05) + (50,000 \text{ RECs} * \$37.05) = \$4,446,000.00$
- Calculate weighted average total contract value: $((70,000 * \$4,747,200.00) + (50,000 * \$4,446,000.00)) / (70,000 + 50,000) = \$4,621,700.00$
- Calculate net contract value to receive for Application 2 (total co-located contract value less contract value already received): $\$4,621,700.00 - \$2,769,200.00 = \$1,852,500.00$

- Calculate REC price for Application 2: $\$1,852,500.00 / 50,000 = \37.05 . This is the same price that corresponds to the project as a standalone system because the price category of >2000-5000 kW AC is the same for the original individual 2500 kW system and the combined 4000 kW system.

Example 2: Combined system size **does** change price category

- Application 1: Small DG submitted to Group A, Block 2022–23, 9.6 kW, priced as a standalone project with a REC Price of \$78.51, 190 RECs = Total Contract Value of \$14,916.90 already received. The price category for this application as a standalone project is ≤ 10 kW AC.
- Application 2: Large DG Submitted to Group A, Block 2024–25, 40 kW, 750 RECs. The REC price for this application as a standalone project would be \$55.89.
- Calculate combined total contract value under Block 2022–23: The combined size is 49.6 kW, so both projects would be priced at \$57.94 for purposes of this first calculation. This price corresponds to a different price category, which is >25–100 kW AC. $(190 \text{ RECs} * \$57.94) + (750 \text{ RECs} * \$57.94) = \$54,463.60$
- Calculate combined total contract value under Block 2024–25: The combined size is 49.6 kW, so both projects would be priced at \$55.89 for purposes of this second calculation. This price corresponds to the >25–100 kW AC price category for Block 2024–25. $(190 \text{ RECs} * \$55.89) + (750 \text{ RECs} * \$55.89) = \$52,536.60$
- Calculate weighted average total contract value: $((190 * \$54,463.60) + (750 * \$52,536.60)) / (190 + 750) = \$52,926.10$
- Calculate net contract value to receive for Application 2 (total co-located contract value less contract value already received): $\$52,926.10 - \$14,916.90 = \$38,009.20$
- Calculate REC price for Application 2: $\$38,009.20 / 750 = \50.68 This is a custom REC price because the price category that corresponds to the project as a standalone system (≤ 10 kW AC) is different than the price category that corresponds to the combined system size (>25-100 kW AC)

Across Categories

In cases where two projects are co-located but are submitted to two different project categories (i.e. Public Schools and Large DG), a weighted average REC price will be determined based on the REC quantity per system and the per-category REC prices that apply to the combined system size. First, the combined size of the systems will be used to determine what the co-located price would be for each system within its size category. For example, if two 500 kW projects that are co-located, the price for a 1000 kW project in each project category would be used. The total contract value for each system will be determined by multiplying the REC quantity for each system by the price that corresponds to the combined system size for each project category. The REC quantities for both systems will be added together to determine a total contract value. This will then be divided by the total number of RECs for both systems to determine a REC price. If the projects also happen to be submitted across different years, the above language will also apply.

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

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. Additionally, parcels that are separated by a public road, railroad, or other right of way accessible at all times to the general public are not considered contiguous.

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 co-located 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.

Across Years

In cases where one project is approved for a contract and later, a second project is submitted which makes the projects co-located, and that second co-located project is submitted to a different block, a weighted average is used to determine the combined contract value. First, the total contract value for the combined size at the first block's price is calculated, as if the systems were both submitted together in the first block. Then, the total contract value for the combined size at the second block's price is calculated, as if the systems were both submitted together in the second block. Once the combined contract value is determined for each block, a weighted average based on REC quantity is used to calculate the final, combined weighted average total contract value. The net contract value that will be applied is identified by subtracting the actual contract value paid to the first system from the weighted average total contract value. The second system will receive a contract for the net contract value, which is the weighted average total contract value minus the actual awarded contract value of the first system. The REC price for the second project will be the net contract value divided by the number of RECs for the second system.

Please see above section Co-location of Distributed Generation Projects for examples of this methodology. The price calculation methodology is the same for both Distributed Generation and Community Solar projects.

Across Categories

In cases where two projects are co-located but are submitted to two different project categories (i.e. TCS and CDGS) a weighted average REC price will be determined based on the REC quantity per system and the per-category REC prices that apply to the combined system size. First, the combined size of the systems will be used to determine what the co-located price would be for each system within its size category. For example, if two 500 kW projects that are co-located, the price for a 1000 kW project in each project category would be used. The total contract value for each system will be determined by multiplying the REC quantity

for each system by the price that corresponds to the combined system size for each project category. The REC quantities for both systems will be added together to determine a total contract value. This will then be divided by the total number of RECs for both systems to determine a REC price. If the projects also happen to be submitted across different years, the above language will also apply.

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 co-location 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

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

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

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 inputs³⁰:
 - a. System latitude and longitude coordinates as entered by the Approved Vendor
 - b. Module type: Standard
 - c. System losses: 14%
 - d. Array type: Approved Vendor input for system 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.

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.³¹ Approved Vendors can always choose a capacity factor lower than the PVWatts or alternative capacity factor if they determine it is appropriate.

Any proposed alternate capacity factor 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.

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.

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 in an effort to understand drivers of the design choices for such systems. AVs may proactively provide a brief explanation in the 'Comment' section of the Part I application at the time of submission to avoid a *Need Info* request that will delay application review. The Administrator will evaluate systems using non-standard technologies such as bifacial panels or seasonally adjusted tilt on a case-by-case basis.

³⁰ PVWatts version utilized may be updated in the portal mid-Program Year, but any changes will be communicated via announcements and the Program website.

³¹ All capacity factors submitted must be for the system's first year. Annual REC delivery commitments will include an assumption of 0.5% annual degradation and be based on the inverter's AC rating.

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.³² 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 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.

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.

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

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 that do not include a battery/storage component 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). 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. 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.

³² If mistakes are made in an application related to capacity factor calculation and discovered prior to Part I verification of the project, the Program Administrator may permit updates to an application's capacity factor if good cause/explanation is provided for the change(s). Still, Approved Vendors should not act in reliance on this and should ensure that application data is accurate and true prior to application submission.

L. Systems with Batteries

Approved Vendors shall identify all systems that include a battery via the application submission 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, a battery schematic diagram must be submitted with the application via the Part II application. If a battery is added to the system after Part II verification, the Approved Vendor should notify the Program Administrator. The battery schematic 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 must 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

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 2021.³³ 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

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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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

³³ See: <https://energycentral.com/c/gr/ansi-dc-metering-standard-earned-emerge-alliance>.

accurate to +/-5%. The inverter must be UL-certified and must include either a digital or web-based output display.

- 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.
- As referenced above, the Agency has not yet adopted a DC metering standard and welcomes continued feedback on the proper approach.

Registry	System Size	Accuracy	New vs. Refurbished	Meter vs. Inverter
GATS and M-RETS	>=25kW	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)
	>10kW and <25kW	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)
	<=10kW	+/-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 2019 REC Delivery Contract Cover Sheet and Section 2.2(a) of the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Contracts 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 2019 REC Delivery Contract and Section 2.2 of the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Contracts provides that, for a violation of Section 4(a) or Section 2.2(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

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 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.³⁴

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; the 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.³⁵ 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. Additionally, if a project would not be subject to prevailing wage based on its Part I application but then changes throughout construction such that prevailing wage would then apply to the final project as built, the project will be subject to prevailing wage requirements via the Part II application review process. If prevailing wage was not paid based upon reliance on the Part I application attributes that subsequently changed, the Approved Vendor will need to

³⁴ The Prevailing Wage Act defines ‘construction’ to include maintenance, repair, assembly, or disassembly work performed on equipment.

³⁵ See <https://labor.illinois.gov/laws-rules/conmed/prevailing-wage-act.html>

ensure backpay is provided to impacted workers to meet the prevailing wage rates and provide documentation of such backpay to the Program.

All projects subject to prevailing wage requirements may be subject to auditing by the Program Administrator to verify compliance. This auditing includes 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 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.³⁶

³⁶ Find prevailing wage rates here: <https://labor.illinois.gov/laws-rules/conmed/rates.html>



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 1st.³⁷ 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 the first day of each Program year.

Submission of an application to the Program is the first step of the REC Contracting process. Approved Vendors should only submit projects that are ready to receive a REC Contract.

	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	Public Schools	EEC
Application Opens	Start of each Program Year (June 1 st or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 st or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 st or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 st or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 st or next business day)	Start of each Program Year (June 1 st or next business day)
Application Closing Details	Application does not close. Once block capacity is filled, projects will be added to a waitlist. New capacity will open June 1 st 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 st 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 st or the next business day each year. Capacity for this category fills quickly, usually on the first day that new capacity is available.	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 st 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.

³⁷ 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	Part I application verification of all 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 of ICC approval
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	Part I application verification of all applications in a batch	Program Administrator	
4	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 of ICC approval
5	Part II application submission	Approved Vendor	Requires the execution and upload of Disclosure Forms for all subscribers Requires application verification by Program Administrator
6	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 Disclosure Forms

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 generated³⁸ using the portal on the Program website.³⁹ 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 Disclosure Form highlights key information about the solar project, including costs, fees, size, expected generation, and helps ensure the customer is educated, aware, and protected before signing a contract with the solar company. 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 the 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 Application Programming Interface (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.⁴⁰

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.⁴¹

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

³⁸ 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.

³⁹ CSV upload functionality as well as API functionality are both made available by the Program for Disclosure Form generation.

⁴⁰ 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.

⁴¹ 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

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.

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 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.**

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.

Approved Vendors and Designees interested in uploading signature bundled Community Solar Disclosure Forms to the Illinois Shines portal are responsible for developing a signature page with an approved third-party e-signing solution and must receive written approval from the Agency.

Approved Vendors and Designees that have developed signature bundling solutions must generate and send all Disclosure Forms to the potential subscriber and upload the Disclosure Form bundle in place of each individual disclosure form in the Program portal.

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 Portal which can be accessed on the Program website. Applications will be reviewed 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 eligible to receive Program capacity 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 and the application fees have been paid. 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 5 MW in size.

Application Fee

An application fee equal to \$20/kW AC, not to exceed \$15,000, will be required for each project.⁴² 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. Each AV will be assigned a unique payment account number generated by the Stripe payment processing platform 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. Applications become eligible to secure Program capacity once they are batched *and* the batch fee 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 is no longer eligible to secure capacity.

For Approved Vendors participating in the proposed 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 mentorship program), new application fees will be waived if the AV resubmits a 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 but not limited to 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.

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

⁴² See Section 7.10.2. of the 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan.

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.

Applications in the batch will be reviewed in the order in which the batches are received. Please 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.

ICC Submission Process

The Program Administrator submits batches of Part I verified projects to the ICC for approval six business days prior to the ICC meeting. Twelve business days prior to the ICC meeting, Approved Vendors with Part I verified projects that were Part I verified by the Eligibility Deadline will be permitted to manage the batching of their eligible applications or withhold projects from ICC submission. Approved Vendors can make changes until 12:00 PM Central Prevailing Time ten business days before the ICC meeting date (the Election Deadline).

Batching Process Flow Chart



Approved Vendor Withholding and Rebatching in Advance of ICC Meetings

An automated email will be sent on the Eligibility Deadline twelve days before the ICC meeting to all Approved Vendors with applications that are eligible to be submitted to the ICC, informing them of the opening of their rebatching period. The email directs the Approved Vendor to review their projects to be included in the submission to the ICC. It is critical that Approved Vendors review projects during this two-day rebatching period to ensure that the projects included are ready for a REC contract and have the appropriate system specifications, such as capacity factor, size and REC estimate. Failure to properly manage projects during the rebatching period may result in projects getting approved for a contract that may not be ready to meet contractual and Program requirements, or projects may include incorrect REC estimates. Once the ICC approves a contract, there are limited options to modify the contract. The Approved Vendor is required to sign the contract (or Product Order) as approved by the Commission within seven business days of receipt, and collateral is due within 30 days of ICC approval.

During the re-batching window, the Approved Vendor may:

1. Withhold a project from being sent to the ICC.
2. Create a new batch for each project or groups of projects, according to Approved Vendor discretion.
3. Withdraw any project by emailing a withdrawal request to the Program Administrator.

- a. In the absence of any rebatching or withhold request by the Approved Vendor, the Program Administrator will submit all projects to the ICC and rebatch on behalf of the Approved Vendor, according to the Program Administrator's discretion.

Note that Approved Vendors may make the election to withhold a Part I verified application from submission to the ICC **no more than twice** for any given project application. Once a project has been withheld twice, it must either be withdrawn from the Program or will go on to be submitted to the ICC for REC Contract approval in the next memo.

After the Election Deadline has passed, all the Approved Vendor's eligible projects will be included in the Program Administrator's submission of batches to the ICC. The Program Administrator will use its discretion to make batching decisions for projects included in batches of less than 100 kW on behalf of the Approved Vendor prior to the Program Administrator submitting batches to the ICC. Please note that a 100 kW minimum batch requirement applies to an Approved Vendor's first submitted batch.

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 follow the process described in Section 1.K. 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 for Part I verified projects 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. Failure to execute a Product Order within seven business days may result in withdrawal of the batch and any associated projects. As a result, the Approved Vendor 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 of the Approved Vendor's status in the Program. Suspension 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 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 may 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, 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 a new application will need to be submitted and the application fee paid. That application would receive the current REC price for the applicable category (not the REC price for the original project).

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.

Bi-Annual System Status Report

Each system that is ICC approved must provide a Bi-Annual System Status Report starting six months from the Trade Date until the project is Part II Verified/Energized. Under the 2019 REC contract, this reporting requirement was in place for all projects. Under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC contracts, this requirement is in place only for systems where the Proposed Nameplate Capacity is greater than 25 kW.

The Program Administrator will send a Bi-Annual report each month to Approved Vendors who have systems due for a status update. Approved Vendors are required to provide the following information for each eligible system listed on the report:

- Project status
- Estimated system completion date
- System delays
- Significant changes to the system
- Date of update from Approved Vendor

Withdrawn Applications

If an Approved Vendor wishes to withdraw a project application from the Program 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, but before ICC approval, 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.⁴³ 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

⁴³ The reasons for removal for the 2019 REC Contract can be found on the Program Documents page of the Program website as they are not included in the REC Contract.

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 generated by the Program Administrator to reflect the removal. A project removal completely removes the project from the Program, including any contractual requirements and ability to invoice. A project removal is permanent and cannot be reversed.

Duplicate Projects with 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 consumer/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 neither intended nor feasible (i.e., if the two applications appear to represent the same project), the Program Administrator 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); that 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.⁴⁴ 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 certified 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 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.

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.⁴⁵

Sale of an Approved Vendor

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.⁴⁶ 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-Approved Vendor must maintain its EEC certification after the sale 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 certified, any Part I projects that are not yet Part II approved

⁴⁴ Projects submitted to the EEC project category must be transferred to an EEC Approved Vendor or must utilize capacity from a different project category.

⁴⁵ See assignment process outlined in Section 6.B of this Guidebook.

⁴⁶ The seller’s Approved Vendor profile and banking information will not be visible to the new owner of the Approved Vendor after a sale.

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

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 significantly 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/Part II verified. 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 for systems without a battery/storage component, or 200% for systems with a battery/storage component is not exceeded (refer to Sections 4.K and 4.L 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 Program Administrator 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 AC 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. Please see Appendix O for more information.

C. Inspections

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. Projects may also be referred for inspection for consumer protection concerns. Inspections will be scheduled in advance but may occur at any time during which the project is still participating in the Program. The Approved Vendor and/or Designee are expected to inform customers of the possibility of an inspection. 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 to cure 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 (and the System Host copied) 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

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

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.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ 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.

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, 2022, and 2024 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 updated per the terms in that REC Contract.⁴⁸ 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.

Part II Submission Timelines for Community Solar Projects

Projects submitted for Part II Verification must also have a subscriber verification completed before the project is Part II Verified. Only when a project's application has been submitted for Part II Verification will a subscriber verification be initiated for that project.

Because the Part II Verification process for Community Solar projects requires additional steps to establish subscription rates, and because the projected volume of Part II Verification requests at the end of a Quarterly Period is typically high, Approved Vendors must submit Part II applications no later than six weeks prior to the end of the Quarterly Period to ensure Energization by the end of the Quarterly Period. Approved Vendors must provide subscriber records no later than four weeks prior to the end of the Quarterly Period.

⁴⁸ Subscription level will be verified through review of applicable Disclosure Forms and data provided by the interconnecting utility.

During this time window, Approved Vendors must also give at least two full business days of advance notice to the Program Administrator when requesting utility subscriber reports. For applications and subscriber data submitted within this timeframe, subscriber verifications will be completed before the end of the Quarterly Period to support Part II verification. The Program Administrator will strive to process Part II applications for Community Solar projects submitted outside of this timeframe, but it will not be guaranteed.

Ongoing Quarterly and Semiannual Subscriber Verification Processes

After a project is Energized, (Part II verified), it will be required to undergo ongoing subscriber verifications across the life of the contract. The timing of these events varies based on the REC contract version the project falls under.

- Approved Vendors with projects under the 15-year REC Contract must report subscription levels on a quarterly basis during a project's first year through the Quarterly Report process. 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. After the first year, subscription levels will be reviewed annually during the Annual Report process.
- Approved Vendors with projects under the 20-year REC Contracts will be required to report subscription levels on a semiannual basis, by the 10th of June and December of each year. The subscriber report due date is the last day to make changes to subscriber information (including subscription sizes, adding new subscribers, or termination subscribers) for a community solar project's quarterly or semiannual 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) for projects on the 15-year contracts or the first business day of June or December for projects on the 20-year contracts.

Under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 versions of the REC Contract, the Program Administrator will verify subscribers. Any subscription level of at least 90% will round up to 100% of actual nameplate capacity being subscribed. The Program Administrator will also verify that small, local, and anchor tenant requirements are met during this process.

Please see [Appendix W](#) for more detailed timelines related to ongoing subscriber verification requirements.

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.⁴⁹ 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 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 in the following paragraph. 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

⁴⁹ 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

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,⁵⁰ 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

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

⁵⁰ The full list of required details can be found in the Illinois Power Agency Consumer Protection Handbook in Section V(B).

this data in the Part I application form. All items not marked as “optional item” are required for a Part I application.

- Project location⁵¹ (address and latitude/longitude coordinates)
- 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)

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 Approved Vendors)
EEC projects may also indicate the following:

Would you like to request an Advance of Capital for this project?

Do you plan on using an Advance of Capital to pay collateral?

- 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) served by the project 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

⁵¹ 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.

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. (A Non-Homestead Property Tax Exemption Certificate.)
 - 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?⁵²
 - 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. The Program Administrator may request a line diagram that is labeled to match the

⁵² See: <https://www.illinoissfa.com/environmental-justice-communities/>.

photo labels or an updated plot map to assist in confirming module counts for Large DG projects.

- 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 only⁵³
 - 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
 - ◆ 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.⁵⁴ 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

⁵³ More information on scoring criteria of Community-Driven Community Solar projects can be found in Appendix F of this Guidebook.

⁵⁴ 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.

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.⁵⁵

- 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). Examples of a land use permit include but are not limited to a letter from the AHJ stating that permitting or ordinance guidelines have been met, city/town hall meeting minutes noting board approval to proceed with a project, etc.
 - If a land use permit is not applicable, the Approved Vendor must provide written confirmation from the AHJ that no permit
 - Additional uploads may be required in certain circumstances related to project type, advance of capital requests, etc. is required. The land use permit is required if more than 250kW of a system is ground-mounted.
- For Distributed Generation systems over 25 kW AC in size, applicant will provide one of the following to demonstrate interconnection approval prior to the date of Part I application:⁵⁶
 - Interconnection Agreement signed by both the interconnection customer and the interconnecting utility prior to the date of Part I application submittal.
 - Utility portal screenshot displaying interconnection approval, utility name, project address, project size, and approval expiration date.

⁵⁵ 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>

⁵⁶ 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.

- If a project is already energized prior to application, a Certificate of Completion of Interconnection will be accepted in lieu of an executed Interconnection Agreement or proof of interconnection approval.
- Requirements for systems already energized prior to application:
 - 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, indication if 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

Administrators 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-mount.
- 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 solar production 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.⁵⁷
 - All Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) Certified Transcripts of Payroll submitted to IDOL for the construction of the project.
 - Battery schematics (for systems with battery back-up)

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)

⁵⁷ 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.



Section 6: Renewable Energy Credit Management and Assignments

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A. REC Delivery

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, 2022, and 2024 15-Year REC Delivery Contracts) and 240 months (for projects under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 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

Approved Vendors are required to set up an irrevocable Standing Order for the transfer of RECs from the system to the utility.⁵⁸

- 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.

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.

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

⁵⁸ See Section 10.2 of the GATS Operating Rules available at <https://www.pjm-eis.com/-/media/pjm-eis/documents/gats-operating-rules.ashx>. See the latest version of the M-RETS REC Operating Procedures available at: <https://www.mrets.org/resources/documents/>

Administrator review of each of a project's four Community Solar Quarterly Reports. This process is as follows:

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

REC Delivery Contracts executed by participants 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 of the same type 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 specified on Section 1.E, projects that receive a REC Delivery Contract through the EEC category of capacity may not be assigned to an Approved Vendor that is not a certified Equity Eligible Contractor for six years after the Part II verification date of the project.

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, 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.⁶⁰ 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 unbatching of projects after the execution of the REC Contract where the ability to unbatch 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 of Assignment without consent form⁵⁹ 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 of Assignment and Consent form⁶⁰ is used in all other situations. Thus, one of the two versions of the form is required in all cases.
5. The Assignee and Assignor must execute the Assignment and Assumption Agreement, as the Utility requires it in addition to the form of Acknowledgement.⁶¹ 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
10. 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.
11. Buyer notifies Program Administrator that the assignment is complete.

⁵⁹ The Acknowledgement of Assignment form can be found on the Program Resources page of the Program website, here: <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/>. The Acknowledgment of Assignment form is also included as an Exhibit to the 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Contracts.

⁶⁰ The Acknowledgement of Assignment and Consent form can be found on the Program Resources page of the Program website, here: <https://illinoisshines.com/program-documents/>. The Acknowledgment of Assignment and Consent form is also included as an Exhibit to the 2021, 2022, and 2024 and REC Contracts.

⁶¹ See: <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Assignment-and-Assumption-Agreement.pdf>

12. 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 in the following Program Year (and receive the new block’s REC price), or when a previously selected and approved 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.⁶³ Projects which have applied under the EEC category must remain under an EEC Approved Vendor to remain on an EEC category waitlist or if assigned to an Approved Vendor that is not an EEC, must utilize capacity from a different project category.

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. Please note this adder is not available under subsequent versions of the REC Contract. 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% 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. Upon submission of the Part II application, the Program Administrator will coordinate with the Approved Vendor on the date to download utility reports and obtain subscriber information. Once the results of the verification are finalized, a Schedule B is made available to the Approved Vendor. The Schedule B will be used to determine the portion of RECs eligible for payment under the first invoice. 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, 2022 and 2024 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.J.

Summary of REC Adders Available to Community Solar Projects

The REC adders available for projects under the 2019, 2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts are the following:

Adder	REC Delivery Contract				
	2019 Pre-CEJA	2019 Post-CEJA	2021	2022	2024
Less than 25% small subscriber	No adder	No adder	No adder	No adder	No adder
25% or greater small subscriber and less than 50% small subscriber	Group A \$11.17 Group B \$10.88	Group A \$11.17 Group B \$10.88	No adder	No adder	No adder
50% or greater small subscriber	Group A \$22.34 Group B \$21.77	Group A \$22.34 Group B \$21.77	No adder	No adder	No adder
Greater than 75% small subscriber	Group A \$33.51 Group B \$32.65	No adder	No adder	No adder	No adder
Rooftop Adder	No adder	No adder	No adder	No adder	\$5

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:⁶²

- 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 (<25kW 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. □

Community Driven Community Solar Under All REC Delivery Contracts

All Community-Driven Community Solar (CDCS) projects submitted during or after the 2022–23 Program Year will be evaluated against the scoring guidelines outlined in Appendix F of the Program Guidebook. The Program Administrator will confirm that commitments to local subscribers have been maintained through subscriber verification at Part II verification, quarterly for the first year, and annually throughout the 15-year REC Contract. The Program Administrator will verify that the local subscribers are subscribers in the same

⁶² 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.

county where the project is located, or if that project's county population is below 50,000, then also in adjacent counties.

D. 2025 REC Contract Amendment

Across early 2025, the Agency developed a contract amendment in order to provide more flexibility on the Annual Report submittal deadline and the consequences that result from late submittal and to allow for the implementation of the Consumer Protection Initiatives outlined in Section 3.E of this Program Guidebook. This amendment was finalized on February 21, 2025 and posted to the Program website. All Approved Vendors with previously executed Master REC Contracts (of any version or type) are required to sign the REC Contract Amendment. Any future Master REC Contracts (of any version and type) will include the REC Contract Amendment pages appended at the end, therefore enacting the provisions into the Master REC Contract.

Annual Report

The amendment shall retroactively apply to all previously executed REC Contracts to ensure that all previously contracted projects participating in the Program have a fair shot at remaining in the Program despite a possible late Annual Report submission.

The amendment contains requirements that Approved Vendors must file their Annual Report by August 1 following each Delivery Year. Approved Vendors will be given 90 days to cure any deficiencies found by the Agency and/or utilities within a submitted report or submit an Annual Report if none was provided by the August 1 deadline. Failure to submit Annual Reports or cure deficiencies within the 90-day period will be considered an Event of Default and may carry consequences under REC delivery contracts and/or result in disciplinary action under the Program.

Consumer Protection Initiatives

In addition to the updated deadline for annual reporting, the REC Contract Amendment allows for the implantation of several key consumer protection initiatives, including 1) unbatching and rebatching process to facilitate assignment of projects, 2) implementation of an escrow process, and 3) provision of economic incentives for stranded customer projects.



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

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A. Annual Report Requirements

On an annual basis, each Approved Vendor will submit an Annual Report of the contracts and systems in its portfolio⁶⁶. 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. For Approved Vendors with Community Solar projects, data required for reporting of subscriber information for the Annual Report must be submitted by June 10th each Program Year so that the Program Administrator may prepare the Annual Report in a timely fashion. The Annual Report response period begins on July 1st. Approved Vendors will have access to review reports and submit their Annual Report responses by July 15th, unless the REC Contract Amendment has been executed, which allows for an August 1st (or the next business day) deadline.

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)
- Confirmation of Traditional Community Solar scoring commitments (if applicable)
- For Approved Vendors with community solar projects, the report will also include:⁶⁷
 - 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
 - Daily average subscription rate
 - Small subscriber daily average subscription rate

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 Program Administrator will verify the subscriber data reported and produce a Community Solar Annual Report that includes the above metrics.

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

Under the REC Contract, Approved Vendors will be given 90 days to cure any deficiencies they reported during the Annual Report process or 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 Program and, if there are underperformances, coordinate with the applicable utility on drawing on collateral. That process is described in Section 7.C.

The questions asked in the Annual Report can be found in Appendix N.

B. Minimum Equity Standard

Public Act 102-0662 directs the Agency to establish an Equity Accountability System that includes 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 2023-24 Program Year. The MES requires that starting June 1, 2023, a percentage of the workforce on projects developed for the Program be made up of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs), 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 2025-26 Program Year the MES requirement is 14%, meaning 14% of the workforce on projects developed for the Program be made up of EEPs.

For the purposes of the MES, "participation" in the Program includes:⁶⁸

- 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.

For the purposes of the MES, “project workforce” is defined as:

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 the 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 Indexed REC contract holder, or any contractor and its employees whose contract exceeds 5% of the REC Contract value. Employees of contractors below that threshold may be counted toward the MES on a voluntary basis, but then all contractors below the 5% of REC contract value threshold must be included. 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 do not serve as majority owners of an EEC and qualify based on one of the other criteria will not be required to renew certification by virtue of the underlying reason for certification being unalterable. Personal Identifiable Information (PII) is not accepted via email. A request for a secure SharePoint folder must be submitted to the Program Administrator to submit required PII.

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 (“MES”) 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:

- 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 EEPs.

- 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. The Program Administrator will endeavor to complete reviews within 4 weeks of submission, pending the quality and quantity of submissions.
- If a Compliance Plan is denied, the Program Administrator will contact the AV or Designee, and the AV or Designee will have an opportunity to revise and re-submit their Compliance Plan. Revised Compliance Plans should be submitted within 2 weeks of the original plan being denied.

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. If an entity indicates that it is struggling to meet the MES, the Program Administrator will provide additional resources to support successful compliance.

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 not participated during the relevant Program 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. Registered EEC Approved Vendors, Designees, and Subcontractors are considered in full compliance with the Equity Accountability System by virtue of their participation in the Program as an EEC. However, EEC Approved Vendors, Designees, and Subcontractors will need to report on the demographic and geographic data of their employees via the Minimum Equity Standard Year-End Report, thus the Year-End Report is still a required submission for EECs. Data and information required to be submitted via the MES Year-End Report includes:

- Approved Vendor/Designee/Subcontractor 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

Year-End Report Evaluation, Scoring and Correction Processes:

- Submitted reports will be reviewed to confirm that all required information has been provided.
- Fully submitted reports are reviewed and either meet or fail to meet the MES. The Program Administrator will endeavor to complete reviews within 4 weeks of submission, pending the quality and quantity of submissions.
- If a Year-End Report is denied, the Program Administrator will contact the AV or Designee, and the AV or Designee will have an opportunity to revise and re-submit their Year-End Reports or submit an MES waiver request. Revised Year-End Reports should be submitted within 2 weeks of the original report being denied.
- If the AV or Designee is still unable to meet the MES or be granted a waiver, they may submit a Corrective Action Plan.

MES Compliance Schedule

- Mid-April – MES Compliance Plan for the upcoming Program Year opens for submissions
- May 1 – MES Year-End Report for the current Program Year opens for submissions
- Opening Day of Program Year (on or around June 1) - Deadline for submission of MES Compliance Plan for the upcoming 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 each 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 2024-25, 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, each organization will explain their plans to conduct outreach and hire EEPs to reach the 14% MES for the 2025-26 Program Year.

	MES Year-End Report	MES Compliance Plan
Data Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual project workforce total Actual project workforce demographic information Actual EEP total Description of outreach efforts employed to recruit EEPs Job training program graduate hiring data, Illinois-based workforce diversity data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated project workforce total Estimated project workforce demographic information Estimated number of EEPs currently in your project workforce Number of EEPs your organization seeks to hire over the Program Year to achieve compliance Communication/outreach plan that will be used to increase the utilization of EEPs
Who Needs to Submit	All AVs, Designees, and Nested Designees who participated in the applicable Program Year. EECs, including EEC Subcontractors, 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 (16 points for entities that do not work with subcontractors) based on the MES Waiver scoring rubric. Community solar waiver requests are required to be submitted on a per-project basis. Distributed Generation waivers may be submitted on a portfolio level basis, covering all applicable projects for a given Program Year. Final waivers can be found in Appendix J 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 of their non-compliance and given an opportunity to either re-submit a compliant Year-End Report, submit a Waiver request, or enter into a Corrective Action Plan. If the entity fails to respond to the non-compliance notification, or if it is still found that the entity is not compliant with the MES, the entity will be suspended from the Program and given the opportunity to submit a Corrective Action Plan. The goal of a Corrective Action Plan is for the Approved Vendor or Designee to provide concrete steps that will lead to compliance with the MES. When an entity has implemented the items described in their Corrective Action Plan, they may apply for reinstatement in the Program. To do so, the Approved Vendor or Designee must submit an attestation to the Program Administrator describing the implementation steps taken and how they resulted

in progress toward meeting the MES. This request for reinstatement must include supporting documentation for all implementation steps described.

Safe Harbor Approach

In the 2025-2026 Program Year, the Minimum Equity Standard (“MES”) requires that at least 14% of the project workforce for each Approved Vendor and Designee participating in the Illinois Shines program must be comprised of Equity Eligible Persons. The MES applies to all Approved Vendors and Designees participating in the Illinois Shines Program.

The MES is a legal requirement designed to provide businesses and workers from historically excluded communities access to the clean energy economy.

As the MES increases in future Program Years (incrementally to 30% by 2030), participating entities must increase their efforts to attract, recruit and retain EEPs and EECs into the clean energy workforce. For example, the MES compliance rate will increase to 18% in PY 2026-2027 at which time any entity with six or more employees must have at least one EEP employed within its workforce to be considered compliant.

During the initial years of MES implementation the IPA has sought to clarify how the MES applies to a business with a total Illinois-based project workforce that is small enough such that the percentage calculation results in less than one person.

The information below is intended to provide the IPA’s guidance on Minimum Equity Standard compliance for these small businesses.

Application of the MES to Businesses with Low Workforce Totals

The following table shows the workforce sizes at which hiring an EEP is required to comply with the MES.

Program Year	Proposed MES Percentage	Size of workforce at which the Small Business must employ at least one EEP to comply with the MES
PY 25-26	14%	8 or more employees
PY 26-27	18%	6 or more employees
PY 27-28	22%	5 or more employees
PY 28-29	26%	4 or more employees
PY 29-30	30%	4 or more employees

The above schedule of increases in required percentages of MES compliance leading to the 30% by 2030 requirement was proposed by the Agency and approved by the ICC in 2024. The Agency may propose changes to this schedule based on market trends in the future, which would be subject to approval by the ICC.

Safe Harbor Approach Eligibility

In lieu of being required to hire an Equity Eligible Person in order to meet the MES, companies that meet the following criteria are eligible for the Safe Harbor Approach. Eligible entities will also have to demonstrate a good faith effort to comply with the MES.

This approach applies to entities that:

- Have fewer than 8 employees, and
- Hired new staff during the 2025-26 Program Year, and
- Did not hire an Equity Eligible Person (EEP) and do not otherwise meet the Minimum Equity Standard (MES) by having an EEP on staff.

Safe Harbor Requirements

To demonstrate a good faith effort to comply with the Minimum Equity Standard, qualifying entities must complete at least one activity in three of the five categories from the list below. Failure to perform at least one activity in three of the five categories during the relevant Program Year will result in a finding of non-

compliance with the Minimum Equity Standard. These activities are designed to ensure meaningful efforts are made to recruit and hire EEPs or engage Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs).

1. Utilize in the Energy Workforce Equity Portal

- Register your organization as an employer on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal and, for any hiring done during the Program Year, post job opportunities to the Equity Portal.
- Conduct direct correspondence with EEPs who are seeking work in the sector, raising awareness of job opportunities within your organization.
- Conduct direct outreach to EECs listed on the Equity Portal to explore meaningful partnerships and subcontracting opportunities.

2. Engage in Local and Community-Based Recruitment Efforts

- Participate in at least one job fair (virtual or in-person) that is specifically focused on or located in an Equity Investment Eligible Community (EIEC).
- Conduct outreach to community-based organizations or community colleges to advertise job opportunities and recruit EEPs.

3. Conduct Outreach to Specific Equity-Focused Groups

- Collaborate with EEP-qualifying workforce development programs, such as those supporting formerly incarcerated individuals or foster care graduates, to identify and recruit eligible candidates.
- Advertise employment opportunities with community-based organizations or economic development organizations working with individuals residing in EIEC areas.

4. Post Job Opportunities on State-Sponsored Platforms

- Publicize employment opportunities on platforms such as Illinois Job Link or Illinois WorkNet to reach a broader audience of potential candidates.

5. Collaborate with the Program Administrator

- Meet with the Illinois Shines Program Administrator to review your hiring plans and receive feedback on recruitment strategies aimed at engaging EEPs or EECs effectively.
- Attend a webinar conducted by the Illinois Shines Program Administrator on MES-related topics.

Compliance Documentation

Entities are required to maintain records of their recruitment and outreach efforts. That documentation includes items such as:

- Copies of outreach communications with EEPs or EECs.
- Copies of job postings on state-sponsored platforms.
- Evidence of participation in job fairs or community events.
- Communication logs or collaboration agreements with workforce development programs, community-based organizations, unions, etc.

This documentation must be provided as part of the entity's MES Year-End Report. Failure to perform at least one activity in three of the five categories during the relevant Program Year will result in a finding of non-compliance with the Minimum Equity Standard. Absent a waiver or demonstration of compliance

through having an EEP on staff, that finding of non-compliance shall result in suspension from the Illinois Shines program. Entities are encouraged to proactively seek guidance from the Program Administrator to ensure they meet these expectations.

C. Collateral and Performance Evaluation Mechanics

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, 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, 2022, nor 2024 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 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, 2022, and 2024 15-year REC Contracts, 20 years under the 2021, 2022, and 2024 20-year REC Contracts) will be set, based on the system's approved capacity factor and a 0.5% annual reduction of delivery obligations.

Delivery performance evaluation methodologies vary across the 2019, 2021, 2022, and 2024 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.

Reduction in REC Obligation

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.

To request a reduction in REC obligation, Approved Vendors must submit a formal request to the respective contracting utility on the company letterhead and copy the Program Administrator and the IPA on the letter. The letter must include the following information:⁶³

1. Date of request
2. Vendor ID
3. System ID
4. Detailed reason for the proposed reduction
5. Proposed quantity of RECs to be reduced (ex. 500 RECs were promised, only 300 RECs will be delivered)
6. Requested new Contract Nameplate Capacity
 - a. For systems permanently going offline, the new Contract Nameplate Capacity should be calculated to correspond to actual number of RECs delivered to date.

⁶³ Approved Vendors may request assistance from the Program Administrator in calculating the new contract values.

- b. For systems continuing operation at a reduced capacity, the Approved Vendor must provide a new Contract Nameplate Capacity.
7. Value of payment adjustment required, calculated by the multiplicative product of the Contract Price and the REC Reduction Quantity.

Under the 2019 REC Delivery Contract and the 2021, 2022, and 2024 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.⁶⁴ 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, 2022, and 2024 20-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. AVs must provide the Program Administrator updated subscriber records for the purposes of the annual subscriber evaluation on June 10. 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.

⁶⁴ This refund procedure would not apply to prior collateral drawdowns based on annual community solar system parameters.



Section 8: Invoicing and Payments

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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.⁶⁵ 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.⁶⁶

A. Advance of Capital for EEC Approved Vendors

As outlined in Section 1.E 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.⁶⁷ Below outlines the steps for EEC advance of capital. The Seller is the EEC Approved Vendor while the Buyer is the contracting utility. The advance of capital is only offered for projects submitted to the EEC category and is not offered to EEC-submitted projects in other Program categories.

1. During the Part I application process an EEC 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.
2. The request must be submitted providing the information outlined in Appendix L. Where possible, any claims made in the request should be reinforced with supporting documentation.
3. Upon Part I verification and contract or product order approval by the Commission, the EEC Approved Vendor submits verification of milestone achievement for Agency review and approval for disbursement.
4. 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.
5. The EEC 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.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Details are further outlined in the applicable REC Delivery Contract.

⁶⁶ 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.

⁶⁷ Additional details can be found in Section 7.4.6.1 of the Agency's 2024 Long-Term Plan.

⁶⁸ More details on invoicing after an advance of capital are contained in the 2022 and 2024 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"> • If CS (Traditional or on Public Schools) adjust biannually based on subscription info in bi-annual reports • If DG on Public Schools, no biannual adjustment
		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"> • If CS (Traditional or on Public Schools) adjust biannually based on subscription info in bi-annual reports • If DG on Public Schools, no biannual adjustment
		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:

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

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, 2022 and 2024 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
	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		
2021, 2022, and 2024 REC Delivery Contracts	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:

6. Invoice amount;
7. Cumulative amount already received by the Approved Vendor under the REC Contract;
8. Maximum allowable payment; and
9. 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 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 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:⁶⁹

[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 \(August 29, 2022\)](#)

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

[Program Guidebook \(April 17, 2023\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(May 31, 2023\)](#)

[Program Guidebook \(August 3, 2023\)](#)

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

[Program Guidebook \(April 18, 2024\)](#)

⁶⁹ Drafts and comments on draft versions of the Guidebook can be found on the [Program Documents](#) page of the Program website.



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 Company⁷⁰

Approved Vendor: An entity approved by the Program Administrator to submit project applications to the Illinois Shines 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 Company⁷¹

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

⁷⁰ See: <https://www.ameren.com/illinois/>

⁷¹ See: <https://www.comed.com/>

project.” (Note: There are two distinct types of Community Solar projects in the Program, *Traditional Community Solar* projects and *Community-Driven Community Solar* projects.

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.

Dual-use: Dual-use solar involves the co-location of electricity generation and a non-energy use on the same land at the same time—that is, generating electricity on the land while also using the land for another purpose. This may include floating photovoltaics, also sometimes known as “floating solar” or “solar-over-water.” The Agency will consider these on a case-by-case basis.

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: 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 Eligible

Contractor category of the 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 Eligible Contractor Subcontractor: 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.

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.

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>.

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

10. Group A – Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in MISO
11. 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 Illinois Shines 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 Company⁷²

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 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 Utility⁷³

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.

⁷² See: <https://www.midamericanenergy.com/home>

⁷³ See: <https://mtcpu.com/>

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

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")

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.

Public Schools: A category for Small and Large Distributed Generation projects and Community Solar projects which are located on public school land 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. The 2024 REC Delivery Contracts (2024 15-Year REC Delivery Contract and 2024 20-Year REC Delivery Contract) will be published shortly after the release of this Program Year 2024- 25 version of the Guidebook.

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

2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 Program Year REC Prices

Block Group	Block Category	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
Group A (Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives, and Municipal Utilities located in MISOS)	Small DG	0 - 10 kW AC	\$78.51	\$75.21	\$73.71
		>10 - 25 kW AC	\$66.39	\$64.71	\$63.53
	Large DG	>25 - 100 kW AC	\$57.94	\$59.28	\$55.89
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$58.85	\$60.44	\$53.63
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$52.35	\$53.39	\$46.58
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$50.42	\$50.01	\$43.77
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$40.90	\$40.16	\$33.03
		Traditional Community Solar	0 - 25 kW AC	\$56.23	\$55.08
	>25 - 100 kW AC		\$59.19	\$58.94	\$58.84
	>100 - 200 kW AC		\$60.85	\$60.79	\$57.50
	>200 - 500 kW AC		\$57.22	\$56.96	\$53.46
	>500 - 2,000 kW AC		\$51.32	\$49.94	\$46.02
	>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC		\$45.50	\$39.27	\$33.99
	Community-Driven Community Solar	0 - 25 kW AC	\$71.60	\$71.10	\$73.82
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$75.34	\$76.16	\$75.40
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$77.27	\$78.33	\$73.28
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$72.47	\$73.02	\$67.73
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$64.76	\$63.72	\$57.93
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$56.85	\$49.33	\$41.94
	Public Schools	0 - 25 kW AC	\$74.95	\$74.95	\$77.17
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$65.57	\$65.57	\$68.57
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$66.40	\$66.40	\$65.81
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$58.94	\$58.94	\$57.72
>500 - 2,000 kW AC		\$56.73	\$56.73	\$54.51	

Block Group	Block Category	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
Group B (ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM)		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$45.72	\$45.72	\$42.15
	Small DG	0 - 10 kW AC	\$82.28	\$83.75	\$83.87
		>10 - 25 kW AC	\$71.89	\$76.27	\$77.53
	Large DG	>25 - 100 kW AC	\$62.23	\$69.47	\$70.23
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$59.02	\$65.96	\$63.34
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$53.11	\$58.36	\$54.60
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$47.63	\$52.06	\$49.49
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$33.31	\$39.56	\$37.05
	Traditional Community Solar	0 - 25 kW AC	\$61.54	\$63.48	\$70.91
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$64.39	\$71.92	\$72.15
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$65.23	\$73.22	\$69.58
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$62.09	\$65.20	\$64.20
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$55.50	\$56.08	\$54.24
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$47.78	\$42.39	\$39.98
	Community-Driven Community Solar	0 - 25 kW AC	\$78.27	\$82.37	\$91.47
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$82.16	\$93.61	\$92.92
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$83.42	\$95.12	\$89.36
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$79.19	\$84.10	\$82.24
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$70.12	\$71.80	\$68.95
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$59.44	\$53.31	\$49.79
	Public Schools	0 - 25 kW AC	\$81.16	\$81.16	\$93.17
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$70.42	\$70.42	\$84.96
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$66.59	\$66.59	\$76.91
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$59.81	\$59.81	\$66.88
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$53.59	\$53.59	\$61.04
		>2,000 - 5,000 kW AC	\$37.23	\$37.23	\$46.74

2021 Program Reopening REC Prices

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 11/1/21		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	0 - 25 kW AC	\$75.29	-	-	\$75.29	-	
	Large DG	>25 - 100 kW AC	-	\$54.71	-	-	\$57.82	
		>100 - 200 kW AC	-	\$44.62	-	-	\$47.03	
		>200 - 500 kW AC	-	\$39.79	-	-	\$41.48	
		>500 - 5,000 kW AC	-	\$36.88	-	-	\$38.33	
		0 - 10 kW AC	-	\$98.88	-	-	-	
	Traditional Community Solar	>10 - 25 kW AC	-	\$91.67	-	-	-	
		>25 - 100 kW AC	-	\$78.83	-	-	-	
		>100 - 200 kW AC	-	\$70.49	-	-	-	
		>200 - 500 kW AC	-	\$66.50	-	-	-	
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	-	\$63.97	-	-	-	
		Co-located systems >2MW in aggregate	-	\$59.79	-	-	-	
		Public Schools (DG Only)	0 - 25 kW AC	-	-	\$69.63	-	-
			>25 - 100 kW AC	-	-	\$56.99	-	-
	>100 - 200 kW AC		-	-	\$46.48	-	-	
	>200 - 500 kW AC		-	-	\$41.45	-	-	
	>500 - 5,000 kW AC		-	-	\$38.42	-	-	
	Community-Driven Community Solar	0 - 10 kW AC	-	-	\$98.88	-	-	
		>10 - 25 kW AC	-	-	\$91.67	-	-	
		>25 - 100 kW AC	-	-	\$78.83	-	-	
		>100 - 200 kW AC	-	-	\$70.49	-	-	
		>200 - 500 kW AC	-	-	\$66.50	-	-	
	Equity Eligible Contractor Projects (DG Only)	>500 - 5,000 kW AC	-	-	\$63.97	-	-	
		0 - 25 kW AC	-	-	\$75.29	-	-	
>25 - 100 kW AC		-	-	\$54.71	-	-		
>100 - 200 kW AC		-	-	\$44.62	-	-		
>200 - 500 kW AC		-	-	\$39.79	-	-		
Group B (ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM)	Small DG	>500 - 5,000 kW AC	\$64.56	-	-	\$64.56	-	
	Large DG	0 - 25 kW AC	-	-	-	-	-	
		>25 - 100 kW AC	-	\$55.73	-	-	\$58.84	
		>100 - 200 kW AC	-	\$45.66	-	-	\$48.06	
		>200 - 500 kW AC	-	\$40.83	-	-	\$42.51	
		>500 - 5,000 kW AC	-	\$37.91	-	-	\$39.37	
	Traditional Community Solar	0 - 10 kW AC	-	\$94.94	-	-	-	
		>10 - 25 kW AC	-	\$87.72	-	-	-	
		>25 - 100 kW AC	-	\$74.83	-	-	-	
		>100 - 200 kW AC	-	\$66.46	-	-	-	
		>200 - 500 kW AC	-	\$62.45	-	-	-	
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	-	\$59.89	-	-	-	
		Co-located systems >2MW in aggregate	-	\$55.68	-	-	-	
		Public Schools (DG Only)	0 - 25 kW AC	-	-	\$64.79	-	-
	>25 - 100 kW AC		-	-	\$58.05	-	-	
	>100 - 200 kW AC		-	-	\$47.56	-	-	
	>200 - 500 kW AC		-	-	\$42.53	-	-	
	>500 - 5,000 kW AC		-	-	\$39.49	-	-	
	Community-Driven Community Solar	0 - 10 kW AC	-	-	\$94.94	-	-	
		>10 - 25 kW AC	-	-	\$87.72	-	-	
		>25 - 100 kW AC	-	-	\$74.83	-	-	
		>100 - 200 kW AC	-	-	\$66.46	-	-	
		>200 - 500 kW AC	-	-	\$62.45	-	-	
	Equity Eligible Contractor Projects (DG Only)	>500 - 5,000 kW AC	-	-	\$59.89	-	-	
0 - 25 kW AC		-	-	\$64.56	-	-		
>25 - 100 kW AC		-	-	\$55.73	-	-		
>100 - 200 kW AC		-	-	\$45.66	-	-		
>200 - 500 kW AC		-	-	\$40.83	-	-		
		>500 - 5,000 kW AC	-	-	\$37.91	-		

2019 Initial Program Opening REC Prices

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
Group A (Ameren Illinois, MidAmerican, Mt. Carmel, Rural Electric Cooperatives, and Municipal Utilities located in MISOS)	Small DG	0 - 10 kW AC	\$85.10	\$81.70	\$78.43	
	Large DG	>10 - 25 kW AC	\$78.70	\$75.55	\$72.53	\$69.63
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$64.41	\$61.83	\$59.36	\$56.99
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$52.54	\$50.44	\$48.42	\$46.48
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$46.85	\$44.98	\$43.18	\$41.45
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$43.42	\$41.68	\$40.02	\$38.42
	Community Solar	0 - 10 kW AC	\$96.12	\$92.28	\$88.58	\$85.04
		>10 - 25 kW AC	\$87.07	\$83.59	\$80.24	\$77.03
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$70.95	\$68.11	\$65.39	\$62.77
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$60.47	\$58.05	\$55.73	\$53.50
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$55.46	\$53.24	\$51.11	\$49.07
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$52.28	\$50.19	\$48.18	\$46.25
		Co-located systems >2 MW in aggregate size	\$47.03	\$45.15	\$43.34	\$41.61
	Group B (ComEd, and Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Utilities located in PJM)	Small DG	0 - 10 kW AC	\$72.97	\$70.05	\$67.25
Large DG		>10 - 25 kW AC	\$73.23	\$70.30	\$67.49	\$64.79
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$65.61	\$62.99	\$60.47	\$58.05
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$53.75	\$51.60	\$49.54	\$47.56
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$48.07	\$46.15	\$44.30	\$42.53
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$44.64	\$42.85	\$41.14	\$39.49
Community Solar		0 - 10 kW AC	\$91.89	\$88.21	\$84.69	\$81.30
		>10 - 25 kW AC	\$82.82	\$79.51	\$76.33	\$73.28
		>25 - 100 kW AC	\$66.65	\$63.98	\$61.42	\$58.96
		>100 - 200 kW AC	\$56.12	\$53.88	\$51.72	\$49.65
		>200 - 500 kW AC	\$51.09	\$49.05	\$47.08	\$45.20
		>500 - 2,000 kW AC	\$47.88	\$45.96	\$44.13	\$42.36
		Co-located systems >2 MW in aggregate size	\$42.59	\$40.89	\$39.25	\$37.68

Appendix B – EEC Application and Attestation

Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Application

Welcome to the Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Application

This application is used to determine whether an Illinois Shines Approved Vendor (AV), Designee, or subcontractor qualifies as an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) 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 corporation, general partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, or limited partnership that is majority-owned by qualifying Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs), or a non-profit whose board members are majority-governed by EEPs, qualifies as an EEC and may certify as such. If the EEP is the sole proprietor, they may also qualify as an EEC. Majority-owned is ownership of greater or equal to 50%.

An Equity Eligible Person (EEP) is allowed to serve as the majority-owner of one EEC Designee, one EEC AV, and one EEC Subcontractor, which may be separate legal entities. The only exception to this limitation is the certification of Single Project Approved Vendors (SPAVs). There is no limit on the number of SPAVs which can be certified as EECs by a single majority-owner EEP. This EEC and their EEC SPAVs will be considered affiliated and subject to the same EEC category developer cap should that be triggered for the given Program Year.

Please review the steps outlined on the next page before starting your application. You will be unable to save this application upon starting.

Steps for Certifying as an EEC:

1. Download and read the Program Guidebook and Consumer Protection Handbook, which can be found on the [Program Documents](#) page
2. Register as an Approved Vendor (AV) or Designee, a prerequisite for EEC certification, by visiting the [Become an AV or Designee](#) page. This prerequisite does not apply to organizations/entities certifying as EEC Subcontractors.
3. Acquire a copy of a Certificate of Good Standing from The Office of the Illinois Secretary of State, which must include the applying organization/entity name and date of issuance. You will be prompted to upload this document at the end of this application. You can find information about registration and purchasing a Certificate of Good Standing at this [website](#).
4. Complete and sign the [EEC Attestation](#), which you will be prompted to upload at the end of this application.
5. Acquire proof of eligibility documentation for the majority-owner EEP(s) of the organization/entity if seeking qualification through one of these two criteria, which you will be prompted to upload at the end of this application:
6. Graduated from or are 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, 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;

You will be prompted to upload at the end of this application either a certificate of completion or written communication from the training program administrator confirming participation. This documentation should include both the date issued or received and the name of the program offeror. A list of qualifying program offerors can be found at the bottom of the [Become an Equity Eligible Contractor \(EEC\)](#) page.

- a. 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).

You will be prompted at the end of this application to upload **documentation that includes primary address**, such as a driver's license, state ID, utility bill, pay stub, lease, mortgage agreement, or other similar documentation.

7. Complete this application and respond to any follow-up emails from the Program Administrator throughout their review of your application. A determination on your eligibility typically takes 2-4 weeks.

AVs and Designees currently suspended from the Program or those that have unresolved notices of potential violations (NOPVs) are ineligible to apply for EEC certification.

Contact Information:

1. Full Name of Individual Completing Form
2. Position of Individual Completing Form
3. Organization/Entity Name
4. Email Address
5. Phone Number
6. Business Address: Street Address
7. Business Address: City
8. Business Address: Zip Code
9. Business Address: County
Please refer to this [map](#) of Illinois counties.
10. Business Address: State

Qualifying Information

Your responses to the following questions are required and will be considered in determining the organization/entity's eligibility for EEC:

11. Please select the program(s) in which your organization intends on participating as an EEC:

- Illinois Shines
- Competitive Procurement Process for Utility-Scale Projects

12. Please select the status of the organization/entity in the Illinois Shines program:

- Approved Vendor (AV)
- Designee
- Single-Project Approved Vendor (SPAV)
- Applying to become an EEC Subcontractor

13. Please select the EEC type(s) for which the organization/entity is seeking certification:

- EEC Approved Vendor (AV)
- EEC Designee
- EEC Single-Project Approved Vendor (SPAV)
- EEC Subcontractor

14. Please select which best describe your association with the organization/entity

- Sole Owner
- Joint Owner or Partner
- Independent Contractor
- Shareholder
- Board Member
- Other

15. Please indicate the organization/entity majority-owner(s) qualifying criterion:

- Job training graduate
- Foster care graduate
- Formerly incarcerated
- Primary residence in an equity investment eligible community

For Prospective EEC Subcontractors

16. Please indicate the organization/entity's business type(s):

- Electrical Contractor
- Agrivoltaics
- Administrative
- Operations and Maintenance (O&M)
- Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC)
- Other

17. If you answer "Other" to the question above, please provide a description of the business type:

Ownership and Affiliations:

Please list the organization/entity shareholders, owners, partners, or proprietors with ownership interests of more than 5% and the amount of their respective ownership interests (including you as the applicant), **that are Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs):**

- 18. EEP Owner 1 Full Name:
- 19. EEP Owner 1 Percentage of Ownership:
- 20. EEP Owner 2 Full Name:
- 21. EEP Owner 2 Percentage of Ownership:
- 22. EEP Owner 3 Full Name:
- 23. EEP Owner 3 Percentage of Ownership:
- 24. EEP Owner 4 Full Name:
- 25. EEP Owner 4 Percentage of Ownership:
- 26. EEP Owner 5 Full Name:
- 27. EEP Owner 5 Percentage of Ownership:
- 28. Check this box if you have additional EEP owners to list

Please list the organization/entity shareholders, owners, partners, proprietors, or businesses with ownership interests of more than 5% and the amount of their respective ownership interests, that are not Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs):

If you are certifying a Single-Project Approved Vendor (SPAV) as an EEC you may list the parent EEC as the majority owner with their AV ID#.

- 29. EEP Owner 1 Full Name:
- 30. EEP Owner 1 Percentage of Ownership:
- 31. EEP Owner 2 Full Name:
- 32. EEP Owner 2 Percentage of Ownership:
- 33. EEP Owner 3 Full Name:
- 34. EEP Owner 3 Percentage of Ownership:
- 35. EEP Owner 4 Full Name:

- 36. EEP Owner 4 Percentage of Ownership:
- 37. EEP Owner 5 Full Name:
- 38. EEP Owner 5 Percentage of Ownership:
- 39. Check this box if you have additional EEP owners to list.

Please list any affiliated businesses or organizations owned or partially owned by the organization/entity:

- 40. Affiliate 1:
- 41. Affiliate 2:
- 42. Affiliate 3:
- 43. Affiliate 4:
- 44. Affiliate 5:
- 45. Check this box if you have additional affiliates to list.

Additional Information:

Your responses to the following questions are required for data collection purposes, but will not be considered in determining the organization/entity's eligibility as an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC):

46. How did you hear about the EEC certification?:

- Qualifying Job Training Program
- Illinois Shines Website
- Word of Mouth
- Public Event
- Illinois Shines Team Member
- Other

47. Current number of employees:

48. Organization/entity's date of organization/incorporation in home state:

49. As required by Section 1-75(c-20) of the Illinois Power Agency Act, please provide the organization/entity's majority-owner(s) demographic information:

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino

- Multiracial
- Other

50. As required by Section 1-75(c-20) of the Illinois Power Agency Act, please provide the organization/entity's majority-owner(s) gender information:

- Male
- Female
- Other/Non-Binary

51. Please select any of the following categories that apply to the organization/entity:

- Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Disabled-owned Business Enterprise
- Veteran-owned Business Enterprise
- Small Business

Public Information

Section 1-75(c-25)(2) of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), Public Act 102-0662, requires a publicly available "searchable database of suppliers, vendors, and subcontractors" including "a list of equity eligible contractors with their contact information, types of work performed, and locations worked in[.]" As a result, the contact information for all Illinois Shines Approved Vendors, Designees, and EEC Subcontractors, with their EEC status, are published on the Illinois Shines program website (IllinoisShines.com).

In addition to the name of the organization/entity and EEC status, the following information will be published on the Illinois Shines program website (IllinoisShines.com). The publicly listed email address and phone number may differ from the contact information provided in this application.

Note that all information provided in the previous sections and in your EEC Attestation including qualifying criteria, MWBE status, and demographic information, are not publicly listed.

52. Publicly Listed Email Address

53. Publicly Listed Phone Number

54. Company Website (optional)

Upload Required Documentation:

Please upload the following documents:

1. Completed and signed EEC Attestation for each qualifying Equity Eligible Person (EEP) constituting majority ownership of the organization/entity
2. Proof of eligibility for each (if applicable):

- a. Graduated from or are 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, 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;

Please upload either a **certificate of completion or written communication from the training Program Administrator confirming participation**. This documentation should include both the date issued or received and the name of the program offeror. A list of qualifying program offerors can be found at the bottom of the [Become an Equity Eligible Contractor \(EEC\)](#) page.

- b. 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).

Please upload **documentation that includes primary address**, such as a driver's license, state ID, utility bill, pay stub, lease, mortgage agreement, or other similar documentation.

3. A copy of a Certificate of Good Standing from the Office of the Illinois Secretary of State, which must include the applying organization/entity name and date of issuance clearly legible.

Thank you for submitting your Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Application

The Program Administrator will contact you if any additional information or documentation is needed throughout their review and assessment of the organization/entity's qualification for the EEC certification. Application review typically takes two to four weeks.

Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Attestation

Name: _____

Date: __/____/____

Organization/Entity: _____

This attestation is used to determine whether an Illinois Shines Approved Vendor (AV), Designee, or subcontractor qualifies as an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) 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 corporation, general partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, or limited partnership that is majority-owned by qualifying Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs), or a non-profit whose board members are majority-governed by EEPs, qualifies as an EEC and may certify as such. If the EEP is the sole proprietor, they may also qualify as an EEC. Majority-owned is ownership of greater or equal to 50%.

This form must be completed and signed by the majority-owner and uploaded to the EEC Application found on the [Become an Equity Eligible Contractor \(EEC\) page](#). If majority ownership is achieved through multiple qualifying individuals each must complete and sign separate attestations, which must be uploaded on the same EEC Application.

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

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 only one category for which you qualify, even if you meet multiple criteria:**

- 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, 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.

If you select this eligibility criterion, please attach either a certificate of completion or written communication from the training program administrator confirming participation. This documentation should include both the date issued or received and the name of the program offeror. A list of qualifying program offerors can be found at the bottom of the [Become an Equity Eligible Contractor \(EEC\) page](#).

- 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 select this eligibility criterion, please attach documentation that includes your address, such as your driver's license, state ID, utility bill, pay stub, lease, mortgage agreement, or other similar documentation.

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 __/____/____

As the applying Approved Vendor, Designee, or prospective EEC Subcontractor seeking certification as an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC), 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.

Printed Name: _____

Authorized Vendor Signature: _____

Date: __/____/____

Upload this completed and signed attestation (with your proof of eligibility documentation, if applicable) to the EEC Application, which can be found on the [Become an Equity Eligible Contractor \(EEC\) page](#).

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.

1. Livestock Grazing

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.

2. Requirements for Successful Agrivoltaics Plans

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

- Solar panels do not interfere with the continued use of land beneath the canopy for agricultural purposes;
- The solar panels optimize a balance between electricity generation and agricultural production;
- 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;
- Crop(s) are compatible with the design of the agricultural solar system accounting for such factors as crop selection, sunlight percentage, etc.;
- 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;
- The system design information, shall include, but is not limited to:
 - c. dual-use type, e.g., ground mount racking, pole towers, tracking, etc.;
 - d. total gross acres of open farmland to be integrated with the project;
 - e. type of crop(s) to be grown, including grazing crops;
 - f. pounds of crop(s) projected to be grown and harvested, or grazed;
 - g. animals to be grazed with herd size(s); and

- h. 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.;
- 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
- The land is continuously used for agrivoltaics purposes through the duration of the REC Delivery Contract, while seasonally appropriate.

B. 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.⁷⁴

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.

⁷⁴ "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>

Appendix D – Brownfield Requirements

The requirements of this appendix apply only to projects seeking points under Traditional Community Solar scoring criterion 1.c 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 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.

B. Supporting Documentation for Projects Regulated by One of the Programs

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.

C. 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.

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 or the next business day if June 1st does not fall on a business day. 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 “contaminated lands” as defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.⁷⁵ (Add 2 points)
- b. Sited on rooftops or other existing structures. (Add 3 points)
- c. Sited on a brownfield, as defined in Section 1-10 of the Act and further clarified in Section 5.4.2 of the Plan.⁷⁶ (Add 2 points)
- d. Commitment to utilize agrivoltaics or dual-use solar.^{77, 78} (Add 1 point)

⁷⁵ See US EPA definition for contaminated lands here: <https://www.epa.gov/report-environment/contaminated-land#:~:text=Contaminated%20lands%20include%3A,disasters%20or%20acts%20of%20terror>

⁷⁶ 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 (c) of the Built Environment scoring.

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, 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.

⁷⁷ Projects utilizing crop-based agrivoltaics should not submit the project’s Part II application until the crops are planted and documentation of adherence to commitment to utilize agrivoltaics can be proved. Approved Vendors will be asked to prove the progress of planted crops and/or other agrivoltaics activities in the Part II application.

⁷⁸ Dual-use solar involves the co-location of electricity generation and a non-energy use on the same land at the same time— that is, generating electricity on the land while also using the land for another purpose. This may include floating photovoltaics, also sometimes known as “floating solar” or “solar-over-water.” The Agency will consider these on a case-by-case basis.

- e. Commitment to pollinator friendly habitat, as defined in in the Pollinator Friendly Solar Site Act (525 ILCS 55).⁷⁹ (Add 1 point)

2. Siting (Maximum of 4 points permitted)

- a. Sited in an Environmental Justice Community⁸⁰ or an R3 area.⁸¹ (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)⁸² 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.⁸³ (Add 2 points)

3. Equity Eligible Contractors (Maximum 4 points permitted)^{84, 85}

- a. Project is developed by an EEC Approved Vendor and can demonstrate contractual commitments for all project development work⁸⁶ to be performed by EEC Subcontractor(s) and/or Designee(s).⁸⁷ (Add 4 points)
- b. Project is developed by an EEC Approved Vendor or a non-EEC Approved Vendor and the contractual commitments for EEC Subcontractor(s) and/or Designee(s) that all project

⁷⁹ 525 ILCS 55/ limits pollinator friendly sites to ground-mounted systems, thus rooftop systems may not attain points under this criterion. Resources for how to successfully certify as pollinator friendly here: <https://dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/pollinatorscorecard.html>

⁸⁰ 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=d87a45c18a5c4e0fa96c1f03b6187267>

⁸¹ 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>

⁸² The Illinois Public Land Survey System (PLSS) GIS map will be used to determine the county and township boundaries for each project: <https://prairie-research.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=16239dfab62f49e48e692bb93b495fd9>

⁸³ Multiple projects in a given county or township that does not presently feature a community solar project either under contract may receive points in this category for the current Program Year. Project application reports will be used to verify this information.

⁸⁴ 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.

⁸⁵ 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.

⁸⁶ 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 and in this Guidebook's Glossary, for which a firm's Illinois-based employees are included in the "project workforce" regardless of function.

⁸⁷ The points available under scoring criteria 3.a. are not attainable unless all project development work – including pre-application development work – was performed by an EEC Designee

development work represents at least 75% or more of the project's REC Contract value.⁸⁸ (Add 3 point)

- c. Project is developed by an EEC Approved Vendor or a non-EEC Approved Vendor and the contractual commitments for EEC 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)
- d. Project is developed by an EEC Approved Vendor or a non-EEC Approved Vendor and the contractual commitments for EEC Subcontractor(s) and/or Designee(s) that all project development work represents at least 25% and up to 50% of the projects 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)⁸⁹
- b. Project has a top-two queue position among community solar projects on a substation on the date of the application (Add 2 points)⁹⁰
- c. Recency of project having obtained a valid interconnection agreement (Add up to 1 point)
- d. 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.⁹¹
- e. 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.
- f. Projects applying on the first day of the Program Year, 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.

⁸⁸ 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 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.

⁸⁹ 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.

⁹⁰ 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.

⁹¹ 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).

- g. If a project lacks an effective interconnection agreement, no points will be awarded to that project under this category for that project.
- h. For projects submitted *after* the first day of the Program Year, 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 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).⁹²

2. 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.

3. 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.

⁹² If there is only one project with a valid interconnection agreement submitted on a particular day, it will be awarded .25 points.

4. Proposed Schedule for Application Review and Scoring⁹³

- Application Review Period
 - a. Applications undergo initial review by Program Administrator – Approximately 4 weeks
- Application Cure Period
 - a. Approved Vendors cure deficiencies identified by Program Administrator – Approximately 2 weeks
- 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
- 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.

⁹³ Please note this schedule is tentative for each program year and will be dependent on both the quality and quantity of applications received

5. 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

Scoring Criterion	Topic	What Should Be Submitted
1.a	Built Environment – Contaminated Land	Provide documentation of qualifications per definition
1.b	Built Environment – Rooftops/Other existing structures	Statement that this scoring criterion is sought after (Yes/No)
1.c	Built Environment – Brownfield	Provide documentation of qualifications per definition
1.d	Built Environment – Agrivoltaics or dual-use solar	Agrivoltaics development plan with all required items outlined in Appendix C or a written explanation of the dual-use solar application. This should include a description of the additional function the land will serve besides the generation of electricity
1.e	Built Environment – Pollinator Friendly Habitat	Pollinator Friendly Habitat development plan that aligns with IDNR’s Illinois Planned Pollinator Habitat on Solar Sites Scorecard ⁹⁴
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 – EEC AV or Non-EEC AV and at least 75% 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 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.

⁹⁴ See: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/pollinatorscorecard/pages/default.aspx>

Scoring Criterion	Topic	What Should Be Submitted
3.c	Equity Eligible Contractor – EEC AV or non-EEC AV and at least 50% and up to 75% 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 AND Attestation from EEC Designee(s) of its interest and capacity to perform project development work.
3.d	Equity Eligible Contractor – EEC AV or Non-EEC AV and 25% and up to 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 AND Attestation from EEC Designee(s) of its interest and capacity to perform project development.
4.a	Interconnection Status – Valid Interconnection Agreement ⁹⁵	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.

Changes between Part I and Part II

12. 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, as described in Section 1.K of this Guidebook.

⁹⁵ A valid interconnection agreement is an agreement signed by both the interconnecting utility and the customer. Partially executed agreements will not be accepted.

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
- b. Agrivoltaics
 - i. Changes to an agrivoltaics plan, such as a change in crop utilization or footprint size (above the required 50% outlined in Appendix C), 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.
- c. Pollinator Friendly Habitat
 - i. 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.
- d. EEC Designee Substitution
 - i. 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 application. Any substitutions must be made in writing to the Program Administrator, and are subject to review and verification.

2. Part II Verification of Commitments Made at Part I

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.

3. 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.d) and Built Environment – Pollinator Friendly Habitat (1.e). 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
<p>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.</p>	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"> 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. <p>Indirect benefits can include, but are not limited to, demonstration of environmental, educational, and cultural benefits.</p>	20% of REC contract value	25% of REC contract value	30% of REC contract value	More than 35% of REC contract value

Criteria	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points
<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"> 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. 	3 or fewer community members or organizations engaged in Moderate project organization and development	3 or fewer community members or organizations engaged in Substantial project organization and development	4 or more community members or organizations engaged in Moderate project organization and development	4 or more community members or organizations engaged in Substantial project organization and development
<p>D. Engagement in project operations and management by nonprofit organizations, public entities, or community members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	Minimal community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management.	Moderate community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management.	Substantial community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management	Extensive or more community members' or organizations' involvement or plans for involvement in project operations and management
<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>	-	-	-	Was indeed developed in response to site-specific RFP

Sufficient demonstration of any of the individual primary selection criteria will be worth up to 4 points each in the scoring system. Demonstration of any of these primary selection criteria should be accomplished through a detailed written narrative description that includes firm commitments and evidence as to how any benefits, resources, and wealth-building will flow to the community that will host the project. Additionally, any community engagement activities and planned community ownership should be documented in a detailed way in this narrative.

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"> 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. 	<p>Provide complementary opportunities to listed programs</p>	<p>Developed in collaboration w/listed programs</p>
<p>B. Projects that increase the diversity of locations of community solar projects in Illinois, including by locating in urban areas and population centers.</p>	<p>Population of locality is 50,000 – 69,999 (Locality meaning city, town, or village)</p>	<p>Population of locality is 70,000 or more (Locality meaning city, town, or village)</p>
<p>C. Projects that are located in Equity Investment Eligible Communities.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Whole project needs to be sited in EIEC; projects that are only partially in an EIEC will be reviewed on case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>D. Projects that are not greenfield projects.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Definition of greenfield: 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>
<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.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Need to serve local subscribers for the length of REC contract.</p>

Criteria	1 Point	2 Points
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. ¹
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

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 and in this Guidebook’s Glossary, for which a firm’s Illinois-based employees are included in the “project workforce” regardless of function.

Demonstration of any of these additional selection criteria should be accomplished through a detailed, written narrative description separate from the narrative provided for the primary selection criteria outlined directly above. Evidence of any/all additional selection criteria that are applicable to the applicant’s Community- Driven Community Solar project should be outlined as comprehensively as possible in this narrative.

Projects that are awarded points for committing to serve only local subscribers as defined above must meet the local subscriber requirement at the time of Part II verification in order to qualify for a REC contract in the CDCS category. If the project does not meet the requirement, it will be removed from the REC Contract, with forfeiture of collateral and would be eligible to reapply for a Traditional Community Solar Block or waitlist as such capacity becomes available. The local subscriber requirement will be verified at each of the quarterly reports over the first year of the project’s operation. Non-local subscribers will be treated as unsubscribed capacity and REC payments will be adjusted accordingly.

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. The following rubric has been developed for this CDCS scoring process.

Compliance

Part II Demonstration of Project Commitments and Permissible Changes

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) will 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.

At Part II application submission, please submit a detailed narrative demonstrating how the Part I scoring commitments have been achieved and include supporting documentation. The Program Administrator may request additional information during the Part II review process. The scoring commitments must be approved by the Program Administrator during the Part II review process, prior to Part II Verification of the project.

Approved Vendors must submit proper documentation for each scoring criterion sought based on the following table:

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<p>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.</p>	<p>Please detail how the percent ownership claimed in Part I has been achieved and provide supporting documentation. Supporting documentation can include proof of ownership by community residents or non-profit organizations and demonstration of decision-making ability and participation.</p> <p>Community subscriptions will be confirmed during the Part II subscriber verification process prior to Part II verification.</p>
<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> <p>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. Indirect benefits can include, but are not limited to, demonstration of environmental, educational, and cultural benefits.</p>	<p>Please show that the commitments made in Part I were maintained, addressing each commitment and include any contracts, agreements, or supporting documentation.</p> <p>Here are examples of supporting documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For a donation, please provide evidence of donation (per IRS): a bank record or a written communication from the qualified organization containing the name of the organization, the amount, and the date of the contribution. This could be in the form of a receipt or an acknowledgement letter/proof of charitable contribution. - For subscriber bill savings, please calculate the annual projected bill savings over the 15-year life of the project. - For increased economic activity (local labor, materials, etc.), please provide contracts/receipts of the work that has already occurred and the planned work that will occur over the life of the contract. - For local taxes, please provide a copy of the annual tax bill. - For demonstration of environmental, educational, and cultural benefits, please provide a narrative related to these benefits and include any relevant documentation of such community benefits. <p>The total local contributions of the contract value over 15 years must be maintained, but changes to the specific contributions and timelines proposed in the narrative are permitted.</p> <p>The Program Administrator may request more information regarding these commitments in the Annual Report.</p>

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<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> <p>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.</p>	<p>Please detail the community, non-profit, and or public entity involvement that occurred during project organization and development.</p> <p>Please address each commitment stated in Part I and show how it has been completed. Small changes in the involvement of community members, non-profit organizations or public entities stated in Part I are permitted if the overall level of commitment is maintained.</p>
<p>D. Engagement in project operations and management by nonprofit organizations, public entities, or community members.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Please detail the existing and planned future engagement that will occur throughout the 15-year life of the REC contract.</p> <p>Please address each commitment stated in Part I and show how it has been or will be completed. Small changes in the engagement of community members, non-profit organizations or public entities stated in Part I are permitted if the overall level of commitment is maintained.</p> <p>The Program Administrator may request more information regarding these commitments in the Annual Report.</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>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<p>Secondary Scoring Criterion</p>	<p>What should be submitted at Part II</p>

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<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> <p>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.</p>	<p>Please demonstrate how the project has collaborated with or provided 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. If these Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) workforce programs are still in development at the time of Part II submission, please provide an explanation as to why the collaboration/complementary opportunities have not occurred and a written commitment/plan for future collaboration or complementary opportunities over the project’s life.</p> <p>The Program Administrator may request more information regarding these commitments in the Annual Report.</p>
<p>B. Projects that increase the diversity of locations of community solar projects in Illinois, including by locating in urban areas and population centers.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<p>C. Projects that are located in Equity Investment Eligible Communities.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<p>D. Projects that are not greenfield projects.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<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.</p>	<p>Please submit subscriber information (as of the energization date) including proof that minimum subscriber commitments have been met (50% of capacity must be subscribed, and all subscribers must be local). Also include the percentage of small subscribers (as a share of total system capacity). This information will be verified during Part II subscriber verification.</p>
<p>F. Projects that have a nameplate capacity that does not exceed 500 kW.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<p>G. Projects that are developed by an Equity Eligible Contractor.</p>	<p>Please demonstrate that all “project development work” (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) has been completed by the equity eligible contractor (EEC) stated in the Part I application. Non-site specific development functions (such as general sales and marketing activities) will not be considered as project development work.</p> <p>Documentation can include an electrical procurement construction (EPC) contract, or other relevant contractual agreements.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Please demonstrate via narrative and relevant supporting documentation how the project is working towards the goals of providing more direct and tangible connection and benefits to the communities which they serve, and a plan to continue this work throughout the life of the project.</p>

After Part II Verification

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<p>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.</p>	<p>Please detail how the percent ownership claimed in Part I has been achieved and provide supporting documentation. Supporting documentation can include proof of ownership by community residents or non-profit organizations and demonstration of decision-making ability and participation.</p> <p>Community subscriptions will be confirmed during the Part II subscriber verification process prior to Part II verification.</p>

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<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> <p>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. Indirect benefits can include, but are not limited to, demonstration of environmental, educational, and cultural benefits.</p>	<p>Please show that the commitments made in Part I were maintained, addressing each commitment and include any contracts, agreements, or supporting documentation.</p> <p>Here are examples of supporting documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For a donation, please provide evidence of donation (per IRS): a bank record or a written communication from the qualified organization containing the name of the organization, the amount, and the date of the contribution. This could be in the form of a receipt or an acknowledgement letter/proof of charitable contribution. - For subscriber bill savings, please calculate the annual projected bill savings over the 15-year life of the project. - For increased economic activity (local labor, materials, etc.), please provide contracts/receipts of the work that has already occurred and the planned work that will occur over the life of the contract. - For local taxes, please provide a copy of the annual tax bill. - For demonstration of environmental, educational, and cultural benefits, please provide a narrative related to these benefits and include any relevant documentation of such community benefits. <p>The total local contributions of the contract value over 15 years must be maintained, but changes to the specific contributions and timelines proposed in the narrative are permitted.</p> <p>The Program Administrator may request more information regarding these commitments in the Annual Report.</p>
<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> <p>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.</p>	<p>Please detail the community, non-profit, and or public entity involvement that occurred during project organization and development.</p> <p>Please address each commitment stated in Part I and show how it has been completed. Small changes in the involvement of community members, non-profit organizations or public entities stated in Part I are permitted if the overall level of commitment is maintained.</p>

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<p>D. Engagement in project operations and management by nonprofit organizations, public entities, or community members.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Please detail the existing and planned future engagement that will occur throughout the 15-year life of the REC contract.</p> <p>Please address each commitment stated in Part I and show how it has been or will be completed. Small changes in the engagement of community members, non-profit organizations or public entities stated in Part I are permitted if the overall level of commitment is maintained.</p> <p>The Program Administrator may request more information regarding these commitments in the Annual Report.</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>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
Secondary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<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> <p>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.</p>	<p>Please demonstrate how the project has collaborated with or provided 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. If these Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) workforce programs are still in development at the time of Part II submission, please provide an explanation as to why the collaboration/complementary opportunities have not occurred and a written commitment/plan for future collaboration or complementary opportunities over the project’s life.</p> <p>The Program Administrator may request more information regarding these commitments in the Annual Report.</p>
<p>B. Projects that increase the diversity of locations of community solar projects in Illinois, including by locating in urban areas and population centers.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<p>C. Projects that are located in Equity Investment Eligible Communities.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<p>D. Projects that are not greenfield projects.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>

Primary Scoring Criterion	What should be submitted at Part II
<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.</p>	<p>Please submit subscriber information (as of the energization date) including proof that minimum subscriber commitments have been met (50% of capacity must be subscribed, and all subscribers must be local). Also include the percentage of small subscribers (as a share of total system capacity). This information will be verified during Part II subscriber verification.</p>
<p>F. Projects that have a nameplate capacity that does not exceed 500 kW.</p>	<p>No explanation or documentation required, as this was verified in Part I application review.</p>
<p>G. Projects that are developed by an Equity Eligible Contractor.</p>	<p>Please demonstrate that all "project development work" (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) has been completed by the equity eligible contractor (EEC) stated in the Part I application. Non-site specific development functions (such as general sales and marketing activities) will not be considered as project development work.</p> <p>Documentation can include an electrical procurement construction (EPC) contract, or other relevant contractual agreements.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Please demonstrate via narrative and relevant supporting documentation how the project is working towards the goals of providing more direct and tangible connection and benefits to the communities which they serve, and a plan to continue this work throughout the life of the project.</p>

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 Year⁹⁶

Thank you for your interest in registering as an Approved Vendor in the Illinois Shines Program!

The following application is to be completed by entities applying to become new Approved Vendors. 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 four (4) to six (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 Approved Vendor application and prevent you from re-applying for a period of six (6) months.

In order to complete this application, you will need to provide information in the following categories:

13. Company background (ownership structure, contacts, EIN, shareholder list, service territories)
14. Vendor classification and project types (affiliations with other Approved Vendors, Designees, application types)
15. Legal and Regulatory Information and customer complaints (history of sanctions, bankruptcy, audit findings, fraud, customer complaints)
16. Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) if applicable (contact info, categories under which you seek EEC Certification)

Additionally, you will need to submit the following documents:

17. Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing Dated within the past 12 Months (including for any DBAs, if applicable)
18. Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) (if the entity will be installing Distributed Generation solar projects)
19. Documentation of either PJM-GATS aggregator account or M-RETS account
20. A representative sample of your company's marketing resources (print, website, social media, etc.)
21. 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 with any questions.

⁹⁶ Non-substantial changes to this application may occur mid-Program Year.

Background and Contact Information

What type of Approved Vendor Application is this?

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 _____

Secondary Contact Name _____

Secondary Contact Title _____

Secondary Contact Phone Number _____

Secondary 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 two additional business representatives.

Third Contact Name _____

Third Contact Title _____

Third Contact Phone Number _____

Third Contact Email _____

Fourth Contact Name _____

Fourth Contact Title _____

Fourth Contact Phone Number _____

Fourth Contact Email _____

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 finance questions related to application fee payments or other payment issues? 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. Please include middle name/initial for any natural person listed. _____

Employer Identification Number (EIN) _____

Is the company a legal entity?

22. Yes

23. No

Company Type:

24. Corporation

25. General Partnership

26. LLC

27. LLP

28. LP

29. Non-Profit

30. Sole Proprietor

31. Other

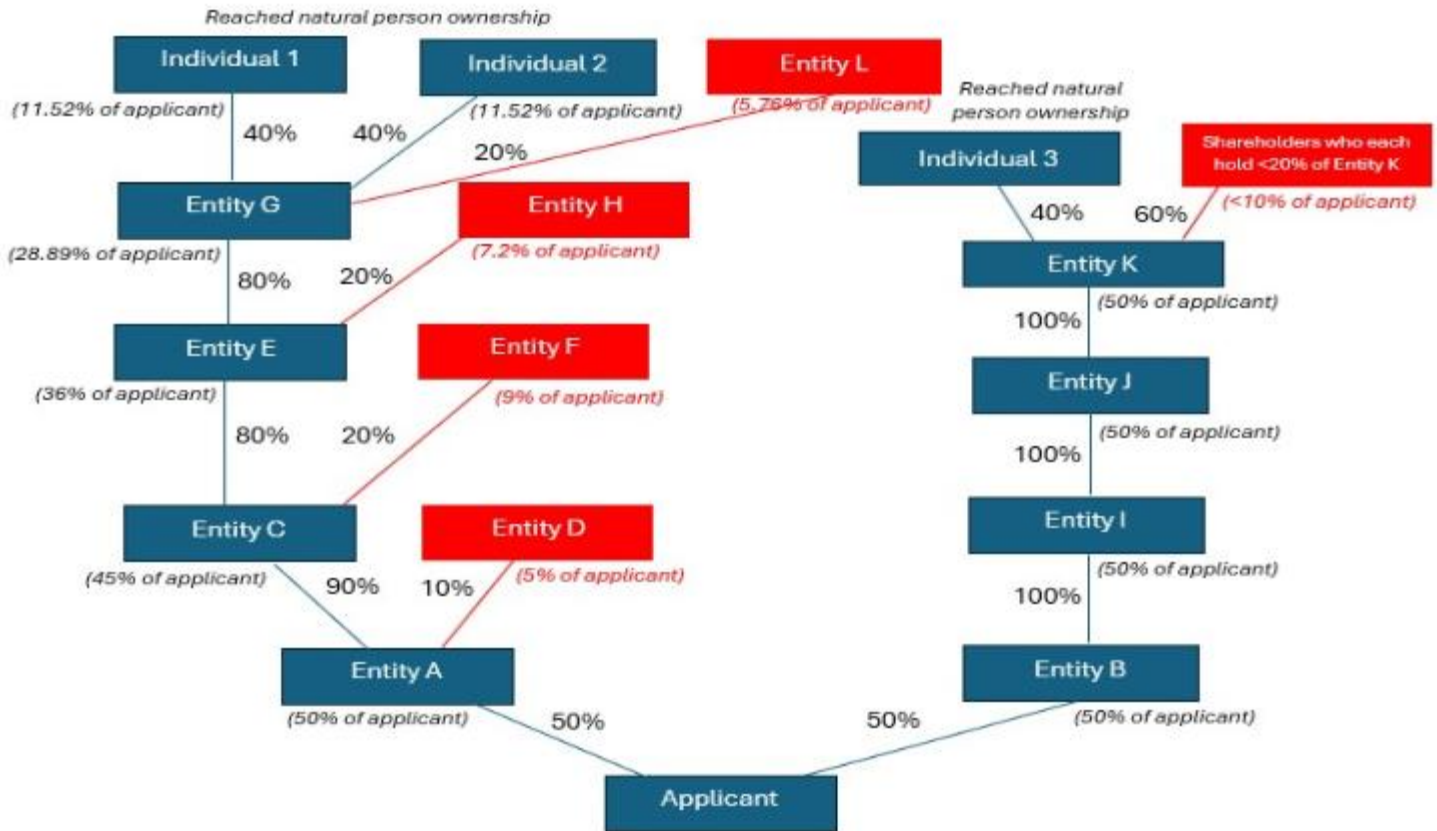
Current number of employees: _____

A list of company shareholders, owners, partners or proprietors with ownership interests equal to or greater than 10% in the applicant entity (whether via direct ownership of the applicant, or indirect ownership through a parent entity) and the amount of their respective ownership interests. Please provide a home address and the middle name/initial for any natural person who fits this criterion. Please see the sample company ownership chart as guidance on when you would need to provide ownership information in response to this question. _____

Ownership Example

Applicants would need to disclose all individuals who directly or indirectly own 10%+ of Applicant (entities/individuals in blue).

Applicants would not need to disclose entities/individuals in red because they own <10% of Applicant.



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:

- 32. White: _____
- 33. Black or African American: _____
- 34. American Indian or Alaska Native: _____
- 35. Asian American: _____
- 36. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: _____
- 37. Hispanic or Latino: _____
- 38. Multiracial: _____
- 39. Other: _____

Please select any of the following categories that apply to your business.

- 40. Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- 41. Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- 42. Disabled-owned Business Enterprise
- 43. Veteran-owned Business
- 44. 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)
- 45. None
- 46. Other: _____

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?

- 47. Yes
- 48. No

Does the company install (or intend to install) distributed generation projects in Illinois? If yes, please include your Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) with your e-mail submission of required documents.

- 49. Yes
- 50. No

Does the company install (or intend to install) Community Solar projects in Illinois?

- 51. Yes
- 52. No

In which regions of Illinois do you primarily work/install projects?

- 53. Cook
- 54. North East
- 55. North West
- 56. East central
- 57. West central
- 58. Southern

Please identify the counties in your service area. [list 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?

- 59. Yes
- 60. 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?

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:

- 61. That has a 10% or more ownership in the applicant company
- 62. That the applicant company has a 10% or more ownership interest in
- 63. That has a partner, officer, director, member or manager in common with the applicant company
- 64. That has a common parent company with the applicant company. Any such affiliated Approved Vendor or Designee is an “Affiliate” for purposes of the remainder of this application.

If yes, provide a thorough explanation of the relationship with the Affiliate, including, but not limited to, the name(s) of the Affiliate, 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.

Company And Affiliate History

During the past seven (7) years, has the applicant business, or any Affiliate (using the criteria in #61) 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 (hereinafter referred to as “Relevant Individual”):

- 65. Been sanctioned, disciplined or fined (or are currently under investigation by a regulatory body) related to any business or professional permit or license?
- 66. 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.
- 67. 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?
- 68. Had a surety called upon to complete an awarded contract?
- 69. 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?
- 70. 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.

71. None of these apply

72. 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., or any Relevant Individual (as defined in #63), had any judgments entered against it that remain undischarged?

73. Yes _____

74. 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, any of its Affiliates or any Relevant Individual (as defined in #63), initiated or been the subject of any bankruptcy proceedings?

75. Yes

76. 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?

77. Yes

78. 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?

79. Yes

80. 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?

81. Yes

82. 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, any of its Affiliates that are or were engaged in operations in the U.S., or Relevant Individual, 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?

83. Yes

84. 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?

85. Yes

86. 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:

87. Been the subject of any judgment or settlement as the result of a lawsuit filed in a court of law, or

88. 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?

89. Yes

90. No

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.

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?

91. Yes

92. No

If yes, provide the name of the program and jurisdiction, an explanation of the issue(s), and the current status of the issue(s).

Required Documents

Please email all of the required documents below to admin@illinoisshines.com. If documents are not received, the application cannot move forward.

93. Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months (including for any DBAs, if applicable)
94. Distributed Generation Installer Certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission (if the entity will install Distributed Generation solar projects)
95. Documentation of either PJM-GATS aggregator account or M-RETS account
96. Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) Attestation (if applicable)
97. 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 2025-26, at least 14% 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 2025- 26 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://illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system/>.

Additional Questions

Utility service territory(ies) in which you seek to operate (select all that apply)

- 98. Ameren Illinois
- 99. ComEd
- 100. MidAmerican
- 101. Mt. Carmel
- 102. Municipal Utilities in MISO
- 103. Municipal Utilities in PJM
- 104. Rural Electric Cooperatives in MISO

Rural Electric Cooperatives in PJM Type of Approved Vendor (select all that apply)

- 105. Distributed Generation Installer
- 106. Distributed Generation Project Developer
- 107. Community Solar Project Developer
- 108. SREC Broker/Aggregator
- 109. Non-profit
- 110. 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.

- 111. Small Distributed Generation
- 112. Large Distributed Generation
- 113. Community Solar (both Traditional and Community-Driven)
- 114. Public Schools
- 115. Equity Eligible Contractors

Do you intend to participate in the Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) Program?

- 116. Yes
- 117. No

Do you consent to being contacted about solar job training programs in Illinois?

- 118. Yes
- 119. 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?

- 120. Yes
- 121. No

How did you hear about the Illinois Shines Program?

- 122. Current or former Program participant
- 123. Illinois Power Agency website
- 124. Illinois Shines website
- 125. Illinois Solar for All website
- 126. Google/Internet search
- 127. Community-Based Organization
- 128. Meeting an Illinois Shines representative at an event
- 129. Request for Proposal requirement

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.

- 130. I agree

The information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

- 131. I agree

I agree to participate in Program-related registration and any initial or recurrent required training.

- 132. 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.

- 133. I agree

I agree to provide the Program Administrator with 30 days' advance notice of closing down my company's business operations in Illinois.

- 134. 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.

- 135. I agree

I agree to provide copies of any marketing materials 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 Illinois Power Agency (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.

136. 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.

137. I agree

I agree to provide and maintain credit and collateral requirements pursuant to the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan.

138. 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 RECs generated and delivered by completed projects; and comply with any other annual report requirements as determined by the Program Administrator.

139. I agree

I agree to comply with all community solar subscriber reporting requirements including providing updated and accurate subscriber data.

140. 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.

141. 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.

142. I agree

I agree to provide company financial statements and/or project references upon request of the Program Administrator.

143. I agree

I will comply with ongoing Program requirements, terms and conditions, and timely respond to Program Administrator requests.

144. 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.

145. 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.

146. 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.

147. 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 section of this application.

148. 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.

149. 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.

150. I agree

Please type the name of the individual agreeing to the above attestations:

Equity Eligible Contractor Application

Are you applying to become an EEC?

- 151. Yes
- 152. No

Appendix H – 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	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 1	Longitude	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
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	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 on Public School-owned land?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	What is the Property Index Number (sometimes called "parcel number" or "permanent index number") of the land the project will be built on?	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	The project will be constructed at (a K-12 School; a K-12 District Facility; other K-12 district-owned land; a Public Higher Education Institution)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not 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? Funding designation only applies to K-12 schools.	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	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

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	District Name	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 2	Will the project be constructed within an identified Environmental Justice Community, per the criteria contained in 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	
Part I Section 3 Owner	Company Name	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 3 Owner	Street	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 3 Owner	Apartment or Suite	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Part I Section 3 Owner	City	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 3 Owner	State	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 3 Owner	Zip Code	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 3 Owner	Phone	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 3 Owner	Email	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 3 Installer	Is the system installer known at this time?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I Section 3 Installer	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
Part I Section 3 Installer	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
Part I Section 3 Installer	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
Part I Section 3 Installer	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
Part I Section 3 Installer	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
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	

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	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	
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

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	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.
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

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	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.
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

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	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.
Part I - Required Documents	Proof of Site Control	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part I - Required Documents	Plot diagram or site map for all systems	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 - Required Documents	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
Part I - Required Documents	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.
Part I - Required Documents	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
Part I - Required Documents	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
Part I - Required Documents	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
Part I - Required Documents	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

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 - Required Documents	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
Part I - Required Documents	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
Part I - Required Documents	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
Part I - Attestation (Confidentiality)	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	
Part I - Attestation (Prevailing Wage)	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 I – 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	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
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
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	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
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	
Section 2	Do you have a Net Metering Application Approval Letter?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Legal Business Name	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Street	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Apartment or Suite	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	
Section 3	City	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	State	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Zip Code	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Phone	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Email	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Name of Qualified Person who conducted installation	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Has this installer received Distributed Generation Installer certification from the Illinois Commerce Commission?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	ICC Docket Number for the Certification of the DG Installer of record	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
Section 3	Is the system owner the installer?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3	Installation Contract Execution Date	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	Do you have any employees who live in Illinois who have worked on this project?	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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
Section 3 - Demographic and Geographic Data	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	
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	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
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	
Section 4	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	
Section 4	Is at least 50%	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required	
Part II - Required Documents	Certificate of Completion of Interconnection	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II - Required Documents	Photograph of the project showing all installed modules	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II - Required Documents	Photograph of the inverter	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II - Required Documents	Photograph of the meter	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II - Required Documents	Proof of irrevocable transfer	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II - Required Documents	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
Part II - Required Documents	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

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part II - Required Documents	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
Part II - Required Documents	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
Part II - Required Documents	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.
Part II Attestations	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	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II Attestations	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	
Part II Attestations	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	

Application Part	Data Point	Small DG	Large DG	TCS	CDCS	EEC DG	EEC CS	Public School DG	Public School CS	Notes/Required Documentation
Part II Attestations	Confirm compliance with all DG installation contract requirements or community solar subscription contract requirements	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	
Part II Attestations	The installation contract signed between the Approved Vendor (or its agent) and the system host is fully compliant with all 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	
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	
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	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 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	
Part II Attestations										

Appendix J – Minimum Equity Standard Waivers

PLEASE NOTE – THIS TEMPLATE IS NOT TO BE USED TO SUBMIT AN MES WAIVER. THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR WILL RELEASE A DIGITAL FORM FOR SUBMISSIONS. THIS TEMPLATE IS SIMPLY TO PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ON THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH THE RELEASED FORM.

Illinois Shines Minimum Equity Standard Waiver Request

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. Requestors must receive at least 20 points to qualify for a waiver (16 points for entities that do not work with subcontractors). As of Program Year 2025-26, when scoring the waiver request, the Agency will consider the number of similarly situated entities that are able to meet MES.

Is your organization a non-union or union entity?

- Non-Union
- Union

Is this waiver for a Community Solar or Distributed Generation project?

Please note that Community Solar waiver requests are required to be submitted on a per-project basis as of Program Year 2025-26.

- Community Solar
- Distributed Generation

Please indicate the Program Year for which you are requesting an MES Waiver.

- PY 2023-24
- PY 2024-25
- PY 2025-26

Non-Union Waiver Request

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.

Please list the projects included in this waiver request.

Please note that Community Solar waiver requests are required to be submitted on a per-project basis as of Program Year 2025-26.

Non-Union Outreach/Recruitment Narrative

Please provide a brief narrative describing the entity’s effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons (“EEPs”) prior to the start of project construction. For each of the items in questions 4 through 7, please include the dates

associated with the event, meeting or contact, and the names and dates of the contacted individuals, where available.

Supplemental documentation must be submitted to mes@illinoisshines.com, with the subject line "***Company Name* MES Waiver Request**".

Working consistently and assertively with job training and workforce development programs (6 points). Evidence may include:

- *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.*
- *Outreach to workforce training programs could include contacting training programs that may not qualify a person as an EEP, 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.*

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)

Participating in job fairs (in-person or virtual) and related local community events to recruit an equitable workforce. (5 points)

- *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.*
- *Waiver requests will also receive credit for demonstration of attempted participation in such events, including reaching out to past job fair organizers, etc.*

Direct outreach to Equity Eligible Contractors ("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)**

Did the entity advertise any available positions on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal (<https://energyequity.illinois.gov/>)? 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)**

- *Please provide documentation of any efforts in this category.*
- *Please note that the Illinois Power Agency will cross-reference activity on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal to verify job postings.*

Engagement in direct and extensive outreach to trade associations or other relevant organizations to notify them of opportunities.

- *Efforts to contact organized labor unions **(2 points)***

- *Efforts to contact community colleges (2 points)*
- *Efforts to contact community-based organizations (2 points)*

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)**

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) or Illinois Job Link (illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov). **(2 points)**

Please provide documentation of employment offers that were made to equity eligible persons but that were not accepted. **(2 points)**

Please describe any other efforts outside of the scope of the above criteria to recruit EEPs. **(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	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	-
TOTAL	35	-

Organized Labor/Union Waiver Request

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. Please list the projects included in this waiver request.

Organized Labor/Union Outreach/Recruitment Narrative

Please provide a brief narrative describing the entity's effort to recruit Equity Eligible Persons ("EEPs") prior to the start of project construction. For each of the items in questions 4 through 6, please include the dates associated with the event, meeting or contact, and the names and dates of the contacted individuals, where available.

Supplemental documentation must be submitted to mes@illinoisshines.com, with the subject line "*Company Name* MES Waiver Request".

1. 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)**
2. 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)**
3. Direct outreach to Equity Eligible Contractors ("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)**
4. Did the entity advertise any available positions on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal (<https://energyequity.illinois.gov/>)? 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)
 - *Please provide documentation of any efforts in this category.*
 - *Please note that the Illinois Power Agency will cross-reference activity on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal to verify job postings.*

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)**

Please provide documentation of direct outreach to trade associations or other relevant organizations to notify them of the project and employment opportunities.

- *Efforts to contact community colleges (2 points)*
- *Efforts to contact community-based organizations (2 points)*

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) or Illinois Job Link (illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov). **(2 points)**

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)**

Please provide documentation of employment offers that were made to EEPs but that were not accepted. **(2 points)**

Please describe any other efforts outside of the scope of the above criteria to recruit EEPs. **(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	-
TOTAL	35	-

Appendix K – Extension Request Process

Each Scheduled Energized Date extension request under Section 5(b) [2019 REC contract] or Section 2.4(b) [2021, 2022, and 2024 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). In certain cases, an Approved Vendor may request 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 Agency encourages extensions to be at least three months in length to assist with Program administration.

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.

Appendix L - Advance of Capital Evaluation Criteria

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.

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.”⁹⁷ 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 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?

⁹⁷ 20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c)(1)(K)(vi).

- b. How many projects has the EEC developed outside the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs?
 - 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-EEC 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?

Appendix M – Designee Registration

Section 2.G of the Program Guidebook describes a requirement for any third-party (i.e., non-Approved Vendor) entities that have direct interaction with end-use customers of the Illinois Shines program to register as a Designee and be listed on the Illinois Shines website, along with the Approved Vendors with which they work. The purpose of this requirement is to increase transparency for the Program. Potential customers will be able to verify that a company that reaches out to them is a registered Program participant and likewise be able to review if they are listed in the Program’s consumer complaint database or the disciplinary actions report. All Designees are added to the Program’s Designee database once registered. This database is housed on the Illinois Shines website.

All third-party entities that have direct interaction with end-use customers of the Illinois Shines Program need to register by submitting a Designee Request Form.

Designees of Designees are referred to as Nested Designees and can be registered underneath the Designee(s) with which they work. 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.

- **Disclosure Form Designee** – An entity that is permitted to generate Disclosure Forms on behalf of an Approved Vendor. A Disclosure Form Designee may create disclosure forms only after it has established an affiliation in the portal in that role with the Approved Vendor.
- **Community Solar Subscriber Designee** – An entity 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 is 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.
- **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.

The IPA and Program Administrator reserve the right to add or remove roles as needed over time. Once a Designee has completed, initialed, and signed the Designee Request Form, it should be emailed to the Approved Vendor/Parent Designee to return to the Program Administrator. In writing, the Approved Vendor/Parent Designee must provide approval to the Program Administrator to accept the Designee Request Form. As part of the registration process, Designees must provide an Illinois Secretary of State Statement of Good Standing dated within the past 12 months. A new Designee is not authorized to act in

the indicated role until affirmatively approved in writing by one or more Approved Vendors/Parent Designees. A Designee is authorized to act only in that designated role with Approved Vendors/Parent Designees that have approved it as a Designee and have not revoked that acceptance.

Failure by a Designee to comply with applicable Program requirements could subject the Designee to suspension or termination from registration. If the Designee ignores a suspension or termination decision made by the Program Administrator or the IPA and continues its market activity nonetheless, any Approved Vendor or Designee that works with the Designee during that period may be subject to discipline. Likewise, Approved Vendors and Designees found to be working with entities that fail to register as Designees with the Program will be subject to discipline.

Approved Vendor/Parent Designee

Approved Vendor/Parent Designee ID

Designee/Nested Designee Information

Name		Company Name
Street Address		Phone
City	State	Email Address
Zip Code		

Type of Designee:

Select all that apply

- Disclosure Form Designee
- Marketing or Sales Designee
- Community Solar Subscriber Designee
- Installer Designee (DG Installer Certificate approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission required upon registration)

D/B/A Information: Please provide information related to “trade name,” “assumed name,” or other “doing business as” (d/b/a) company name information. If a Designee does business under multiple names, the Designee must register separate Designee accounts for each name under which it conducts business.

Social Media: Please include all social media accounts that contain Illinois Shines information, market your company’s Illinois Shines offers, and/or connect customers to the Illinois Shines program.

We hereby agree to the following terms and conditions for our approval and ongoing participation as an Approved Vendor Designee (“Designee”) in the Illinois Shines Program.

- We have reviewed and commit to comply with all Illinois Shines 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).
- We will maintain accurate, current, and comprehensive registration information related to our business relationships with Approved Vendors and Designees 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 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.

Additionally, through my execution below, I assert that I have the authority to enter into binding agreements on behalf of this Designee.

Signature

Title_____

Date

Print Name_____

Company_____

Appendix N – Annual Report

Below is a full list of the questions contained in the Annual Report form, for your reference.

1. Vendor ID
2. Approved Vendor Name
3. Your First and Last Name
4. Your Email
5. RECs delivered by each of the systems in the portfolio. Please confirm that the *RECs Delivered* report located in your SharePoint folder is correct. This report should reflect the number of RECs delivered by each system in the Approved Vendor's portfolio that was Energized (Part II Verified) by May 31, 2025 and has successfully transferred at least one REC to the buyer by May 31, 2025. Is the information in this report correct? Yes/No
6. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – ComEd.
7. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – Ameren.
8. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – MidAmerican.
9. Status of all systems that have been approved, but not yet energized, including any extensions requested and granted. Please confirm that the *Systems Not Energized* report located in your SharePoint folder is correct. This report should reflect projects that as of May 31, 2025 have been approved by the ICC, but not Energized (Part II Verified). Is the information in this report correct? Yes/No
10. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – ComEd.
11. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – Ameren.
12. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – MidAmerican.
13. **Energized systems that have not delivered RECs in the year.** Please confirm that the *Systems Energized No RECs* report located in your SharePoint folder is correct. This report should reflect systems Energized (Part II Verified) that have not yet delivered a REC. These are systems that as of May 31, 2025 are ICC approved and Energized (Part II Verified) but have not delivered a REC. Is the information in this report correct? Yes/No
14. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – ComEd.
15. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – Ameren.
16. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – MidAmerican.

17. **Community Solar Subscriber Information.** Please confirm that the Community Solar Subscriber Information located in your SharePoint folder is correct. This report should reflect subscriber information as reported to the Program Administrator as of May 31, 2025.

If you do not have any Community Solar projects, please answer N/A. Yes/No/N/A

18. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – ComEd.

19. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – Ameren.

20. If no, provide an explanation of what is incorrect in the text box – MidAmerican.

21. Attestation for Community Solar Approved Vendors only. Required to answer.

- I attest that any and all required Community Solar Disclosure Forms were signed by the subscribers
- I am not a Community Solar Approved Vendor

Balance of Collateral held by each utility (\$). Please confirm that the *Collateral Balances* report located in your SharePoint folder is correct. This report should reflect the collateral balance as of May 31, 2025 as reported by the contracting utility.

22. Is the information in this report correct? Yes/No

23. Balance held by ComEd – Cash (please format as 00.00 with no \$)

24. Balance held by ComEd – Letter of Credit (please format as 00.00 with no \$)

25. Additional Comments – ComEd

26. Balance held by Ameren – Cash (please format as 00.00 with no \$)

27. Balance held by Ameren – Letter of Credit (please format as 00.00 with no \$)

28. Additional Comments – Ameren

29. Balance held by MidAmerican – Cash (please format as 00.00 with no \$)

30. Balance held by MidAmerican – Letter of Credit (please format as 00.00 with no \$)

31. Additional Comments – MidAmerican

A summary of requests for REC obligations, suspensions, reductions, or eliminations due to force majeure events.

Please upload any additional documentation that you would like to include to your SharePoint folder.

32. Provide a detailed response – ComEd

33. Provide a detailed response – Ameren

34. Provide a detailed response – MidAmerican
35. I uploaded additional documentation to SharePoint for this question (requests for REC obligations, suspensions, reductions, or eliminations due to force majeure events). Yes/No
36. **Summary and status of consumer complaints** received related to Illinois Shines program projects, including sales and marketing efforts, whether or not those efforts resulted in a project application. Please indicate if the complaint was submitted to the Illinois Shines Program, the Illinois Commerce Commission, the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, or directly to the Approved Vendor or Approved Vendor Designee (some complaints may fall into more than one category). The Program Administrator reserves the right to request additional information. Please upload any optional backup documents to your SharePoint folder.
37. I uploaded additional documentation to SharePoint for this question (consumer complaints). Required to answer. Yes/No
38. Has any maintenance been performed on Energized (Part II Verified) projects that are subject to prevailing wage?
39. If yes, I attest that prevailing wage rates were paid, notice and reporting requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act have been met, and Certified Transcript of Payrolls have been filed with Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) for work performed on Energized (Part II Verified) projects that are subject to prevailing wage. Yes/No
40. Do you have Traditional Community Solar projects that received points for the scoring criterion Built Environment – Agrivoltaics (1.c)?
41. If yes, please confirm that all commitments stated in the agrivoltaic plan submitted at Part I application have been maintained and the projects intend to continue to utilize agrivoltaics throughout the lifetime of the REC Contract.
42. Additional comments – Agrivoltaics (1.c)
43. Do you have Traditional Community Solar projects that received points for the scoring criterion Built Environment – Pollinator Friendly Habitat (1.d)?
44. If yes, please confirm that the sites have maintained the commitment to a pollinator friendly habitat, as defined in the Pollinator Friendly Solar Site Act (525 ILCS 55).
45. Additional comments - Pollinator Friendly Habitat (1.d)

Appendix O – Post Part II Verification Application Changes

	Post Part II Verification Change Request	Is AV required to obtain approval from Program Administrator/IP A?	Conditions for Approval	Submission Requirements	Approval Process
Location Change	Changing location of solar panels within the same installation site, including different locations on the same rooftop for rooftop installations	Yes	Change must not affect a project's ability to meet REC delivery requirements as outlined in the REC Contract. Modules must remain located on the original parcel.	<p>AV must provide the following to the Program Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated site map Written statement that the system's ability to meet REC delivery obligations will not be affected by the change. 	The Program Administrator will review the submission and provide written approval, denial, or request additional information within 10 business days of receipt.
	Changing mounting location of solar panels within the same location Examples: moving a roof mounted system to a ground mount, within the same parcel	Yes	Change must not affect a project's ability to meet REC delivery requirements as outlined in the REC Contract. Modules must remain located on the original parcel.	<p>AV must provide the following to the Program Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated site map Written statement that the system's ability to meet REC delivery obligations will not be affected by the change. 	The Program Administrator will review the submission and provide written approval, denial, or request additional information within 10 business days of receipt.
Battery Storage	Adding battery/storage component	Yes	Installation must be in line with all detailed battery schematic requirements listed in the Program Guidebook.	<p>AV must provide the following to the Program Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed schematic showing that Program Guidebook requirements are met. 	The Program Administrator will review the submission and provide written approval, denial, or request additional information within 20 business days of receipt.
Other	Change of system ownership. Examples: homeowner sells home, change in business ownership, Community Solar project changes ownership	No	None	<p>AV must provide the following to the Program Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New owner name New owner contact information 	The Program Administrator will review the submission and update the project portal within 10 business days of receipt.

Appendix P – Quarterly Report Subscriber Verification Requirements

Quarterly Reports are a requirement for Community Solar projects on the 15-Year REC Delivery Contract in the first year after a project's Energization (also known as Part II Verification). The Quarterly Report requires the submission of subscriber information as well as submission of other details such as confirmation of REC delivery, collateral balances, requests to change REC obligation, and complaints. All relevant information, including due dates and supplemental information, is outlined in the REC Delivery Contract.

The Quarterly Report requires the following information:

- Associated Collateral Requirement held by Buyer
- Requests to change REC obligation?
- Description of change to REC obligation
- Consumer complaints received?
- Description of Consumer Complaints
- Subscriber Report Updated?
- Is the REC Delivery Correct? to confirm:
 - REC Deliveries since last report (or since Energization if first report)
 - Date of first REC Delivery
 - RECs contracted
 - RECs Delivered
- Date Report Submitted

Appendix Q – Program Year 2025-26 Minimum Equity Standards (MES) Compliance Plan for the Illinois Shines Program

PLEASE NOTE – THIS TEMPLATE IS NOT TO BE USED TO SUBMIT A COMPLIANCE PLAN. THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR WILL RELEASE A DIGITAL FORM FOR SUBMISSIONS. THIS TEMPLATE IS SIMPLY TO PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ON THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH THE FUTURE-RELEASED FORM.

Program Year 2025-26 Minimum Equity Standards (MES) Compliance Plan for the Illinois Shines Program

Background

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (Public Act 102-0662 or “CEJA”) amended the Illinois Power Agency Act to expand the “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.”

CEJA directed the Illinois Power Agency (“IPA” or “Agency”) to help historically underserved communities participate in and benefit from the growing clean energy economy in Illinois. The Minimum Equity Standard Compliance Plan is the reporting mechanism the Program Administrator uses to assess understanding of compliance requirements and estimated project workforce demographics.

For Program Year 2025-26, at least 14% of the project workforce for each entity participating in the Illinois Shines Program must be composed of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs). With the exception of Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs), all Approved Vendors (AVs) and Designees participating in the 2025-26 Program Year are required to submit an MES Compliance Plan, describing how the requirement will be met over the course of the year.

The Equity Accountability System Hub provides helpful resources and tips for MES Compliance Plan submissions: <https://illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system>.

As you review the form below in preparation for submitting your MES Compliance Plan, please note that asterisks indicate required sections. Once submitted, MES Compliance Plans will become public records that may be subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140); as such, if any information within this MES Compliance Plan should be protected from disclosure, please indicate in question #XX of this form what information, if any, in this form is proprietary, privileged, or confidential, and the disclosure of that information would cause competitive harm.

Is your company an Approved Vendor, Designee or both?

- Approved Vendor
- Designee
- Both

Submitting Company Name:

AV and/or Designee ID #(s):

If you are submitting a new Approved Vendor application or Designee registration that has not been approved yet, please type "N/A"

Name of Person Completing Form:

Title of Person Completing Form:

Email of Person Completing Form:

During the 2025-26 Program Year (June 2, 2025 - May 29, 2026), do you intend to submit projects to Illinois Shines, perform construction on a previously Part I approved project, conduct any sales or marketing activity for projects that have been or will be submitted to the program, manage subscriptions for a community solar project that holds a REC contract (including projects approved prior to the passage of CEJA), maintain a project on a waitlist, or otherwise conduct activities or business on a project seeking or that holds a REC contract?

If you answer 'no', you do not need to complete the rest of the form. Choosing 'no' to this question will complete your submission.

- Yes
- No

"[AV or Designee Company] affirms its intent to comply with all necessary requirements set forth in Public Act 102-0662 (Climate Equitable Jobs Act) relating to the Minimum Equity Standard and agrees to comply with certain obligations, including hiring a diverse project workforce and working with Equity Eligible Contractors, where applicable."

- Yes
- No

Please type the name of the individual agreeing to the above attestation.

Today's Date:

Did your organization enter into a Corrective Action Plan for non-compliance with the Minimum Equity Standard in the 2023-24 Program Year?

- Yes
- No

Please provide the status of the Corrective Action Plan.

Is this an **original** Compliance Plan submission or a **revised** Compliance Plan submission?

If you failed your first submission, or received an 'Info Needed' request, please choose 'Revised Compliance Plan'.

- Original submission
- Revised Compliance Plan

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
- None
- Other (fill in text box)

Please provide a narrative description of how the AV will ensure that at least 14% of its project workforce are Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs). *Please see <https://illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system/> for more information on EEP qualification criteria.*

Do you work with subcontractors that are not registered as Designees?

Non-registered subcontractors are those who do not have direct interaction with the client but are part of the project workforce. Please include employees of any non-registered subcontractors in your projected workforce total below.

Projected total number of employees/workers on Illinois Shines projects during the 2025-26 Program Year (exclude any employees/workers of registered Designees your company is subcontracted with from your total).⁹⁸

Please refer to the MES FAQs for details on who is within the scope of the project workforce for MES: <https://illinoisshines.com/vendor-faqs/#mes>

Estimated Number of Equity Eligible Persons **currently** in your Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce:

⁹⁸ If your organization works with registered Designees on projects, please exclude those individuals from your total project workforce. All registered Designees, as registered participating Program entities, are required to submit their own MES Compliance Plans.

An Equity Eligible Person (“EEP”) is a person that “would benefit most from equitable investments by the State designed to combat discrimination,” and CEJA provided four specific characteristics that would qualify a person as an EEP:

- Graduates or current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, 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 multicultural jobs program created by FEJA

- 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 eligible investment community

Only individuals who fit within these criteria will count as Equity Eligible Persons.

Number of Equity Eligible Persons your organization **seeks to hire** to meet MES Compliance over the Program year:

Equity Eligible Contractor Partnerships

Do you plan to partner with Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendors, Designees, or Subcontractors in the 2025-26 Program Year?

Yes

No

If yes, please list the name(s) of the EEC AVs, Designees, or Subcontractors you plan to partner with:

Please list any non-EEC Designees you intend to partner with in the 2025-26 Program year:

Communication Plan for Local Outreach

Please indicate the actions from the list below that you plan to take during the 2025-26 Program Year to increase the utilization of EEPs and Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs).

- Identify percentage of existing workforce that qualify as EEPs due to their primary residence within an Equity Investment Eligible Community (EIEC) <https://energyequity.illinois.gov/resources/equity-investment-eligible-community-map.html#map-target>
- Conduct outreach and recruitment with EEP-qualifying workforce development programs
- Conduct outreach to workforce training programs and community-based organizations that work with individuals who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system and/or who were formerly incarcerated
- Conduct outreach with workforce training programs and community-based organizations that work with individuals residing in EIEC communities

- Review of previous applicant records to identify individuals who may be contacted for future project employment opportunities
- Participate in job fairs (virtual or in-person) and related community events to expand recruitment efforts
- Register on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal as a Clean Energy Company
- Post jobs on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal
- Conduct outreach to Equity Eligible Persons listed on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal looking for employment opportunities
- Engage in direct and extensive outreach to trade associations or other relevant industry organizations to notify them of employment opportunities
- Increase marketing efforts on platforms used to announce or publicize available employment opportunities, such as employment websites, alumni listservs, union halls, social media, etc.
- Publicize employment opportunities on state-sponsored platforms, such as Illinois WorkNet (www.illinoisworknet.com) or Illinois Job Link (illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov)
- Conduct direct outreach to EECs listed on the Illinois Shines program website to explore subcontracting opportunities
- Engage with organized labor unions, community colleges, and community-based organizations to notify them of employment opportunities
- Meet with Program Administrator to review recruitment and hiring plans for current and upcoming opportunities.
- Other actions (please describe)

Please identify which responses in this form (#X – XX) contain proprietary, privileged or confidential information, the disclosure of which would cause competitive harm.

Please upload any supplemental documentation you would like to attach to your MES Compliance Plan.

(Upload field)

Equity Eligible Person (EEP) Data Needed

As your organization hires and/or works with Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) during the Program year, please keep in mind that the Program will require data for these individuals at the time of the MES Year-End Report. The Program Administrator verifies EEP eligibility as part of the review process for the Year-End Report. Approved Vendors and Designees have two options for providing this data.

1. The Approved Vendor / Designee can encourage all EEPs in their project workforce to register in IPA's Energy Workforce Equity Portal: <https://energyequity.illinois.gov/>
 - a. This option allows the AV/Designee to simply provide the names of the registered EEPs in its MES Year-End Report.
2. The AV/Designee can collect signed EEP attestations and provide documentation for their EEPs to the Program Administrator.. The EEP attestation can be downloaded here: <https://illinoisshines.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/EEP-Attestation-Form-vFeb2024.pdf>
 - a. This option requires that the AV/Designee collect required supplemental documentation for EEPs who qualify based on graduation from a participating workforce training program,

or whose primary residence is located in an Equity Investment Eligible Community. Acceptable documentation includes:

- i. For EEPs who qualify based on graduation or current participation in a qualifying workforce training program, please provide either an acceptance letter from the training provider (for current participants), or a certificate of completion from the training provider (for graduates).
 - ii. For EEPs who qualify based on primary residence, please provide the individual's driver's license, utility bill, lease, mortgage agreement, or other similar documentation for the Program Administrator to verify the individual's eligibility.
 - b. The AV/Designee then lists the EEPs in its project workforce in the Year-End Report, and submits the EEPs' attestations and required supplemental documentation to the Program Administrator.
3. The Approved Vendor/Designee will be asked about EEPs' employment classification information (full-time, part-time, etc.) at the Year-End Report.

Appendix R - Program Year 2025-26 Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Mid-Year Report for the Illinois Shines Program

PLEASE NOTE – THIS TEMPLATE IS NOT TO BE USED TO SUBMIT A MID-YEAR REPORT. THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR WILL RELEASE A DIGITAL FORM FOR SUBMISSIONS. THIS TEMPLATE IS SIMPLY TO PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ON THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH THE FUTURE-RELEASED FORM.

Program Year 2025-26 Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Mid-Year Report for the Illinois Shines Program

The Illinois Shines program is committed to fostering equity within the clean energy sector. As part of this initiative, the Minimum Equity Standard (MES), which mandates that at least 14% of the workforce for each participating entity must consist of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs). This requirement applies to all Approved Vendors (AVs) and Designees participating in the Program for the 2025-26 Program Year, with specific exceptions for Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs).

How Can Illinois Shines Support?

This brief assessment is designed to help your entity assess the progress toward meeting the MES requirements. If your organization faces challenges in fulfilling these obligations, our Program Administrator is available to provide additional resources and guidance tailored to your needs. To ensure compliance with the MES, we encourage all participating entities to submit a Mid-Year Report (10-15 min needed). Asterisks indicate required sections.

We are dedicated to supporting you in achieving equitable representation within your workforce, ensuring that our clean energy initiatives benefit all communities effectively.

Key Actions Required

Mid-Year Report Submission due: **By December 31, 2025**, For more detailed information regarding the Equity Accountability System and the Minimum Equity Standard, please visit [Equity Accountability System - Illinois Shines](#).

1. Is your company an Approved Vendor, Designee, or both? *
 - a. Approved Vendor
 - b. Designee
 - c. Both
2. AV and/or Designee company name(s) *
 - a. Short answer
3. AV and/or Designee ID #(s) *
 - a. Short answer
4. Name of person completing form *
 - a. Short answer
5. Email of person completing form *
 - a. Short answer
6. Are you currently on track to meet the MES Requirement? *
 - a. Yes

- b. No
- 7. Is your organization a non-union or union entity?
 - a. Non-union
 - b. Union
- 8. If you are not currently on track to meet the MES requirement, what barriers or hurdles are you experiencing?
 - a. Long answer
- 9. If you are not currently on track to meet the MES requirement, what steps do you plan to take to meet the requirement?
 - a. Long answer
- 10. What additional resources or guidance would be helpful for you to meet the MES requirement?
 - a. Long answer

Appendix S - Program Year 2024-25 Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Year-End Report

PLEASE NOTE – THIS TEMPLATE IS NOT TO BE USED TO SUBMIT A YEAR-END REPORT. THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR WILL RELEASE A DIGITAL FORM FOR SUBMISSIONS. THIS TEMPLATE IS SIMPLY TO PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ON THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH THE FUTURE-RELEASED FORM.

Illinois Shines Program

Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Year-End Report

Program Year 2024-25

For Program Year 2024-25, at least 10% of the project workforce for each entity participating in the Illinois Shines program must be composed of. With the exception of Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs), all Approved Vendors (AVs) and Designees participating in the 2024-25 Illinois Shines Program Year must be in compliance with this requirement. For more information on the Minimum Equity Standard, please visit illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system/.

The MES Year-End Report is intended for your organization to document compliance with this requirement. Required data and information include:

- *AV/Designee Information*
- *Project workforce total*
- *Project workforce demographic information*
- *Equity Eligible Person total, including proof of EEP eligibility and any supporting documentation (e.g., for individuals that qualify based on residency in an EIEC, proof of residency)*
- *Outreach efforts employed to recruit EEPs*
- *Job training program graduate hiring data, Illinois-based workforce diversity data*

Please complete the form below to submit your MES Year-End Report for review by the Program Administrator. Asterisks indicate required sections. Any supplemental documents including Equity Eligible Person attestations and supporting documentation, should be uploaded to the form, or saved to your organization's secure SharePoint folder. Please reach out to mes@illinoisshines.com if you have trouble accessing your folder.

Failure to submit an MES Year-End Report by the July 15, 2025 deadline will result in escalation to the Program Administrator's Consumer Protection Team consistent with Sections X.C-D of the Consumer Protection Handbook. Failure to comply may risk future good standing in the Program and may result in disciplinary action.

Please note that the MES Year-End Reports, once submitted, will become public records that may be subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140); as such, if any information within this MES Year-End Report should be protected from disclosure, please indicate in response to question #X of this form what information, if any, is proprietary, privileged, or confidential, and the

disclosure of that information would cause competitive harm. Any personally identifiable or private information contained in EEP attestations and supporting documents will be held confidential and exempt from disclosure under Sections 7(b) and 7(c) of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act.

Submitting Company Name

Approved Vendor and/or Designee ID #(s)

Name of Person Completing Form

Job Title of Person Completing Form

Email of Person Completing Form

During the 2024-25 Program Year (June 3, 2024 – May 30, 2025), did your organization submit projects to Illinois Shines, perform construction on a previously Part I approved project, conduct any sales or marketing activity for projects that have been or will be submitted to the Program, manage subscriptions for a community solar project that holds a REC contract (including projects approved prior to the passage of CEJA), maintain a project on a waitlist, or otherwise conduct business on a project seeking or that holds a REC contract?

If you answer 'no', you do not need to complete the rest of the form. Choosing 'no' to this question will complete your submission. The Program Administrator will verify your entity's non-participation and, if confirmed, no further action in regard to the MES will be required from your organization for Program Year 2024-25.

During the 2024-25 Program Year (June 3, 2024 – May 30, 2025), did your organization hire any new employees that work on Illinois Shines? This can include full-time, part-time, contractors, or any other type of employee. If you answer no, the Program Administrator may request documentation verifying that your organization did not do any hiring or contracting activity during the Program Year.

- Yes
- No

If 'no', please provide an explanation of the circumstances that led your organization to not hiring during the Program Year. Be sure to indicate any efforts you made in contacting EEPs, even if it did not result in hiring.

Illinois-based, Illinois Shines Project Workforce Data

Please exclude employees/workers of Designees that your organization worked with on projects this year. For the purposes of the MES, "project workforce" includes: 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.

Workforce Diversity

Please enter all applicable answers numerically e.g. "0" instead of "none."

Total number of employees/workers on Illinois Shines projects during the 2024-25 Program Year.

Race

White - Total

Black or African American - Total

Hispanic or Latinx - Total

Asian - Total

American Indian or Alaska Native - Total

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - Total

Two or more races - Total

Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Gender Identity

Male - Total

Female - Total

Non-binary - Total

Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Disabled

Disabled - Total

Did not self-identify/not disclosed – Total

Employment Status

Full-Time - Total

Part-Time - Total

Temporary/Seasonal - Total

Independent Contractors - Total

Residential zip codes of all employees in the company's Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce.

If preferred, please upload a list or document containing zip codes of all employees to the field below.

Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs)

Total number of EEPs in your Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce for the 2024-25 Program Year.

An Equity Eligible Person ("EEP") is a person that "would benefit most from equitable investments by the State designed to combat discrimination," and CEJA provided four specific characteristics that would qualify a person as an EEP:

- *Graduates or current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, 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 multicultural jobs program created by FEJA*
- *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 eligible investment community*

Only individuals who fit within these criteria will count as Equity Eligible Persons.

Please provide the total number of EEPs in your Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce that qualify as EEPs based on each of the following eligibility criteria. For individuals that are self-registered as EEPs in the Energy Workforce Equity Portal, and for whom eligibility criteria is unknown to the employer, please include them in the final number. Make sure that the numbers provided in this section add up to the total number of EEPs in your Illinois project workforce provided in question #X. Please enter all answers numerically e.g., "0" instead of "none".

- Graduates or current or former participants of qualifying workforce training program(s)
- 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 eligible investment community
- Individuals self-registered in Energy Workforce Equity Portal, or eligibility criteria unknown

Please provide the total number of EEPs in your Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce that belong to each of the following demographic and employment classifications. Make sure that the totals provided in this section add up to the total number of EEPs in your Illinois project workforce provided in question #X. Please enter all answers numerically e.g., "0" instead of "none".

Race

White - Total

Black or African American - Total

Hispanic or Latinx - Total

Asian - Total

American Indian or Alaska Native - Total

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - Total

Two or more races - Total

Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Gender Identity

Male - Total

Female - Total

Non-binary - Total

Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Disabled

Disabled - Total

Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Employment Status

Full-Time - Total

Part-Time - Total

Temporary/Seasonal - Total

Independent Contractors - Total

Please complete the table below with names of all EEPs in your total project workforce, and indicate the method used to verify their eligibility. Please provide the full names of individuals in your total Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce who have registered as EEPs in the [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#) and provide the full name of individuals you would like to count as EEPs that have not registered as such in the Energy Workforce Equity Portal. Follow the directions below to ensure proper certification of those individuals as EEPs.

EEP Name	EEP Registered in Equity Portal	If the EEP is not registered in the Equity Portal, please upload the document(s) described below.	Qualification Criteria

*For any EEPs in your organization’s total Illinois-based Illinois Shines project workforce who are **not** registered in the Energy Workforce Equity Portal as EEPs, forward the attestation link below for signature by the EEP. **Completed attestations should be uploaded by the Approved Vendor/Designee within their form submission, or to their secure MES SharePoint folder by the Year-End Report deadline.** Please note: supplemental documentation is required for EEPs who qualify based on graduation from a participating workforce training program, or whose primary residence is located in an Equity Investment Eligible Community. Acceptable documentation is described below. All personally identifying information and private information will be held confidential.*

The EEP attestation can be downloaded here: [\[new link for Program Year 2024-25 to be added\]](#)

- For EEPs who qualify based on graduation or current participation in a qualifying workforce training program, please provide either an acceptance letter from the training provider or a certificate of completion, where available, from the training provider.
- For EEPs who qualify based on primary residence, please provide one of the following: the individual’s driver’s license, state ID, pay stub, utility bill, lease, mortgage agreement, or other similar documentation for the Program Administrator to verify the individual’s address.

I have uploaded all required EEP attestations and supplemental documentation above and/or have verified EEP registration in the Energy Workforce Equity Portal for all EEPs listed.

- Yes
- No

Job Training Graduate Hiring for Development of Illinois Shines Projects

Please enter all applicable answers numerically e.g. “0” instead of “none”.

This data is being collected for use by the Illinois Power Agency. Participation in these programs does not necessarily qualify an individual as an EEP. Note that participation in the Craft Apprenticeship Program does not qualify an individual as an EEP.

Solar Training Pipeline Program - Total

Craft Apprenticeship Program - Total

Multi-Cultural Jobs Program - Total

Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program - Total

Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program - Total

Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program - Total

Other - Total

Employment Status

Full-Time - Total

Part-Time - Total

Temporary/Seasonal - Total

Independent Contractors - Total

Average Wage (\$/hour in format 00.00) - Total

Partnerships and Outreach

If your company is an Approved Vendor, please list any Designees your company works with.

If your company is a Designee, please list any Approved Vendors or Nested Designees your company works with.

Please list any subcontractors your company works with.

Did you partner with Equity Eligible Contractor Approved Vendors, Designees or Subcontractors for project applications associated with your organization?

Equity Eligible Contractors are designated as such on the AV/Designee directories found on our Program website: <https://illinoisshines.com/find-an-av-or-designee/>

- Yes
- No

If yes, please list the name(s) of the EEC AVs, Designees, and/or Subcontractors.

Please report steps taken to implement the plan for local outreach to increase the utilization of EEPs and EECs as outlined in the organization's MES Compliance Plan submitted in June, 2024. Please also report any ways in which the approach outlined in the Compliance Plan changed over the course of the Program Year.

Narrative Feedback

Please use this opportunity to share your feedback with the Program Administrator and Illinois Power Agency.

What efforts has your organization undertaken to recruit/hire trainees from FEJA and CEJA training programs? Please include any particular challenges or successes you had.

Did you hire graduates from any training programs other than those listed above (Solar Training Pipeline Program, Craft Apprenticeship Program, and Multicultural Jobs Programs)? If so, please list which programs the graduates came from.

What efforts has your organization undertaken to hire EEPs or engage EECs? Please include any particular challenges or successes you had.

How has your company approached meeting the MES? Have there been any obstacles?

Please identify which responses in this form (#X-XX) contain proprietary, privileged or confidential information, the disclosure of which would cause competitive harm.

Please upload any additional supplemental documentation you would like to attach to your MES Year-End Report. This may include documentation showing good faith effort to comply with the MES, as described in the Safe Harbor guidance (for small businesses with less than 10 employees that hired new staff during the Program Year).

(Upload field)

Appendix T - Equity Eligible Contractors Year-End Report for Minimum Equity Standard Reporting

PLEASE NOTE – THIS TEMPLATE IS NOT TO BE USED TO SUBMIT A YEAR-END REPORT. THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR WILL RELEASE A DIGITAL FORM FOR SUBMISSIONS. THIS TEMPLATE IS SIMPLY TO PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ON THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH THE FUTURE-RELEASED FORM.

Illinois Shines Program Program Year 2024-25 Equity Eligible Contractors Year-End Report for Minimum Equity Standard Reporting

The Year-End Report for Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs) is intended for your organization to document your workforce and demographic information during your participation in the Program. Required data and information include:

- *AV/Designee Information*
- *Project workforce total*
- *Project workforce demographic information*
- *Business type and majority-owner demographic information*
- *Job training program graduate hiring data, Illinois-based workforce diversity data*
- *Other data previously collected during the AV Annual Report (AVs only)*

Please complete the form below to submit your Year-End Report for review by the Program Administrator. Asterisks indicate required sections. Any supplemental documents should be uploaded to the form, or saved to your organization's secure SharePoint folder. Please reach out to mes@illinoisshines.com if you have trouble accessing your folder.

Failure to submit a Year-End Report by the July 15, 2025 deadline will result in escalation to the Program Administrator's Consumer Protection Team consistent with Sections X.C-D of the Consumer Protection Handbook. Failure to comply may risk future good standing in the Program and may result in disciplinary action.

Please note that the Year-End Reports, once submitted, will become public records that may be subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140); as such, if any information within this Year-End Report should be protected from disclosure, please indicate in response to question #X of this form what information, if any, is proprietary, privileged, or confidential, and the disclosure of that information would cause competitive harm. Any personally identifiable or private information contained in EEP attestations and supporting documents will be held confidential and exempt from disclosure under Sections 7(b) and 7(c) of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act.

Submitting Company Name
Approved Vendor and/or Designee ID #(s)
Name of Person Completing Form
Job Title of Person Completing Form
Email of Person Completing Form

During the 2024-25 Program Year (June 3, 2024 – May 30, 2025), did your organization submit projects to Illinois Shines, perform construction on a previously Part I approved project, conduct any sales or marketing activity for projects that have been or will be submitted to the Program, manage subscriptions for a community solar project that holds a REC contract (including projects approved prior to the passage of CEJA), maintain a project on a waitlist, or otherwise conduct business on a project seeking or that holds a REC contract?

If you answer 'no', you do not need to complete the rest of the form. Choosing 'no' to this question will complete your submission. The Program Administrator will verify your entity's non-participation and, if confirmed, no further action will be required from your organization for Program Year 2024-25.

Illinois-based, Illinois Shines Project Workforce Data

Please exclude employees/workers of Designees that your organization worked with on projects this year. For the purposes of the MES, "project workforce" includes: 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.

Workforce Diversity

Please provide total numbers of individuals in your total Illinois-based, Illinois Shines project workforce that belong to each of the following demographic groups. Make sure that the totals provided in this section add up to the total project workforce number provided in question X. Please enter all answers numerically e.g., "0" instead of "none".

Total number of employees/workers on Illinois Shines projects during the 2024-25 Program Year.

Race

White - Total
Black or African American - Total
Hispanic or Latinx - Total
Asian - Total
American Indian or Alaska Native - Total
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - Total
Two or more races - Total
Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Gender Identity

Male - Total
Female - Total
Non-binary - Total
Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Disabled

Disabled - Total
Did not self-identify/not disclosed - Total

Employment Status

Full-Time
Part-Time

Temporary/Seasonal
Independent Contractors

Residential zip codes of all employees in the company's Illinois project workforce.
If preferred, please upload a list or document containing zip codes of all employees to the field below.

Job Training Graduate Hiring for Development of Illinois Shines Projects

*Clearly differentiate between information that is not available ("N/A") and where the response is that no one was hired ("0"). Please enter all applicable answers numerically e.g. "0" instead of "none".
This data is being collected for use by the Illinois Power Agency.*

Solar Training Pipeline Program - Total
Craft Apprenticeship Program - Total
Multi-Cultural Jobs Program - Total
Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program - Total
Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program - Total
Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program - Total
Other - Total

Employment Status

Full-Time
Part-Time
Temporary/Seasonal
Independent Contractors
Average Wage (\$/hour in format 00.00) - Total

Majority Owner Demographic Information and Business Type(s)

Please indicate the demographic of your majority-owner Equity Eligible Person (EEP).

Majority-owner Gender

Male
Female
Other/Non-Binary
Employee preferred not to answer

Majority-owner Race

White
Black or African American
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
Hispanic or Latino
Multiracial
Employee preferred not to answer

Please select any of the following categories that apply to your business

Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
Disabled-owned Business Enterprise
Veteran-owned Business Enterprise
Small business
None

Other (fill in text box)

Please identify which responses in this form (#X-XX) contain proprietary, privileged or confidential information, the disclosure of which would cause competitive harm.

Appendix U - Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Non-Compliance Corrective Action Plan

PLEASE NOTE – THIS TEMPLATE IS NOT TO BE USED TO SUBMIT A CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN. THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR WILL RELEASE A DIGITAL FORM FOR SUBMISSIONS. THIS TEMPLATE IS SIMPLY TO PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ON THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH THE RELEASED FORM.

Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Non-Compliance Corrective Action Plan For Compliance in Program Year 2024-25

Meeting the MES is a legal requirement which ensures Program participants provide priority access to the clean energy economy for businesses and workers from communities that historically have been excluded from economic opportunities in the energy sector.

The Illinois Power Agency (IPA) is committed to supporting entities in meeting the Minimum Equity Standard (MES) and upholding the spirit of the law. All participants in the Program are expected to implement a variety of recruitment strategies to engage Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) and Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs). Employer cooperation is essential for fostering an inclusive and equitable clean energy workforce.

Tip for Compliance Success: *Please be prepared to collect and document efforts demonstrating you have implemented your Corrective Action Plan. These documents may be requested to substantiate good faith efforts to achieve compliance. Examples may include job postings, emails demonstrating outreach efforts, communication logs, job fair sign-up lists, etc.*

The goal of a Corrective Action Plan is for the entity to complete required activities. These activities should be completed within a short period of time in order to be reinstated in the Program and should take no longer than 6 months.

*Indicates Required Question

1. Name of Entity Submitting Corrective Action Plan* (Text)
2. Name of individual completing the Corrective Action Plan* (Text)
3. Does your entity use union labor?* (Choice)
4. If this Corrective Action Plan 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. Please write N/A if not applicable. * (Text)
5. Please list the projects associated with your entity.* (Text)
6. Has your entity previously submitted a waiver request from the Minimum Equity Standard (MES)? (Choice)

The following activities are required for all entities that submit a complete Corrective Action Plan. Prioritization of these requirements is necessary for future reinstatement into the Program.

1. Conduct outreach and recruitment with [EEP-qualifying workforce development programs](#)

2. Conduct outreach to workforce training programs and community-based organizations that work with individuals who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system and/or who were formerly incarcerated
3. Conduct outreach with workforce training programs and community-based organizations that work with individuals residing in EIEC Communities
4. Review of previous applicant records to identify individuals who may be contacted for future project employment opportunities
5. Participate in job fairs (virtual or in-person) and related community events to expand recruitment efforts
6. Register on the [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#) as a Clean Energy Company
7. Post jobs on the [Energy Workforce Equity Portal](#)
8. Conduct outreach to [Equity Eligible Persons](#) listed on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal looking for employment opportunities
9. Engage in direct and extensive outreach to trade associations or other relevant industry organizations to notify them of employment opportunities
10. Increase marketing efforts on platforms used to announce or publicize available employment opportunities, such as employment websites, alumni listservs, union halls, social media, etc.
11. Publicize employment opportunities on state-sponsored platforms, such as Illinois WorkNet (www.illinoisworknet.com) or Illinois Job Link (illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov)

Please sign your name here attesting that you will work to accomplish these required activities within 6 months of completing this form. [Type name here]

Please indicate any additional activities your entity will take to become compliant with the Minimum Equity Standard:

(Select all that apply)

- Identify percentage of the existing workforce that qualify as EEPs due to their primary residency within an Equity Investment Eligible Community ([EIEC](#))
- Conduct direct outreach to EECs listed on the Illinois Shines program website to explore subcontracting opportunities
- Engage with organized labor unions, community colleges, and community-based organizations to notify them of employment opportunities
- Meet with Program Administrator to review recruitment and hiring plans for current and upcoming opportunities
- Engage in EEP/EEC recruitment efforts (please describe in detail below)

Please provide detailed and actionable steps your entity will take to ensure compliance and support equitable access to the clean energy economy. Use the prompts below to guide your responses. For each action, specify expected outcomes, timelines, and methods of documentation to demonstrate progress.

(Example: Within two weeks, we will register on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal and post our available positions. We will document email confirmations of each job posting.)

Immediate Actions (Within two weeks): What specific steps will your entity take immediately to address non-compliance? Provide examples such as registering on required platforms or initiating outreach efforts. (TEXT)

Short-Term Goals (Within one-two months): What measurable actions will your entity complete in the next month or two to further align with MES requirements? Examples could include hosting recruitment events or formalizing partnerships. (TEXT)

Long-Term Strategies (Within six months): What broader strategies will your entity implement over the next six months to ensure sustained compliance and build an inclusive workforce? Describe plans like ongoing collaborations with job training programs or community-based organizations. (TEXT)

What's Next?

The IPA and the Program Administrator will review this Corrective Action Plan and notify the submitting entity of its sufficiency.

Once an entity implements its Corrective Action Plan it may apply for reinstatement in the Program.

To be reinstated in the Program, the entity must demonstrate the steps taken to implement its Corrective Action Plan. An entity could also be reinstated to the Program via the following:

- File an updated Year-End Report for Program Year 2024-25 demonstrating compliance with the MES required percentage for Program Year 2024-25

If the updated Year-End Report also receives a 'fail' rating, [entity] will not be reinstated to the Program. Entities that show they are in compliance with the MES at the time of submitting the updated Year-End Report will be reinstated.

- Submit an MES Waiver request

If the Waiver request is denied, [entity] will not be reinstated to the Program.

In applying for reinstatement, the entity will be required to submit an attestation describing what implementation steps were taken and how these steps resulted in progress toward meeting the MES.

Appendix V - Certification of Qualification for Equity Eligible Person Status

Certification of Qualification for Equity Eligible Person Status

Name:

Telephone:

Email Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

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, or the solar training pipeline and multicultural jobs program created in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of Section 16-108.21 of the Public Utilities Act.
 - If you select this eligibility criteria, please attach either a certificate of completion or written communication from the training program administrator confirming participation.
- 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 select this eligibility criteria, please attach documentation that includes your address, such as your driver's license, state ID, utility bill, pay stub, lease, mortgage agreement, or other similar documentation.

Race/Ethnicity:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latinx
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White or Caucasian
- Two or more races
- Did not self-identify/Not disclosed

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Non-Binary
- Did not self-identify/Not disclosed

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.

Printed Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix W – Subscriber Verification Timelines

2019 15 Year REC Delivery Contract

Quarterly Period	Deadline to Update Utility Records (Last day of Quarterly Period)*	Program Administrator Downloads Utility Reports**	Quarterly Report (including subscriber data) Due Date**	Program Administrator Quarterly Report Review, Curing, and Post Verification Activities	REC Invoice Submission Period
June 1– August 31	August 31	September 1	September 10	September 11 – November 30	December 1 – 10
September 1 – November 30	November 30	December 1	December 10	December 10 – February 28	March 1 – 10
December 1– February 28 (or February 29 in leap years)	February 28 (or February 29 in leap years)	March 1	March 10	March 11 – May 31	June 1 – 10
March 1 – May 31	May 31	June 1	June 10	June 11 – August 31	September 1 – 10

* If the deadline to update utility records falls on a non-business day, utility records must be updated on the prior business day. Business Day means any day except a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal Reserve Bank holiday. A Business Day opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m. local time for the relevant Party’s principal place of business.

**All reports shall be downloaded or due on the deadline specified, or the next Business Day if such specified due date is not a Business Day. Business Day means any day except a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal Reserve Bank holiday. A Business Day opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m. local time for the relevant Party’s principal place of business.

2021, 2022, 2024 15 Year REC Delivery Contract

Month of Energization	Assigned Quarterly Payment Cycle*	Quarterly Period	Deadline to Update Utility Records**	Program Administrator Downloads Utility Reports***	First Quarterly Report Due Date***	Program Administrator Review, Curing, and Post Verification Activities	First REC Invoice Submission Period	Second, Third, and Fourth Quarterly Report Due Dates**
January	B	February-April	April 30	May 1	May 10	May 11- July 31	August 1-10	QR 2: August 10 QR 3: November 10 QR 4: February 10
February	C	March- May	May 31	June 1	June 10	June 11- August 31	September 1-10	QR 2: September 10 QR 3: December 10 QR 4: March 10
March	A	April- June	June 30	July 1	July 10	July 11- September 30	October 1-10	QR 2: October 10 QR 3: January 10 QR 4: April 10
April	B	May- July	July 31	August 1	August 10	August 11- October 31	November 1-10	QR 2: November 10 QR 3: February 10 QR 4: May 10
May	C	June-August	August 31	September 1	September 10	September 11- November 30	December 1-10	QR 2: December 10 QR 3: March 10

Month of Energization	Assigned Quarterly Payment Cycle*	Quarterly Period	Deadline to Update Utility Records**	Program Administrator Downloads Utility Reports***	First Quarterly Report Due Date***	Program Administrator Review, Curing, and Post Verification Activities	First REC Invoice Submission Period	Second, Third, and Fourth Quarterly Report Due Dates**
								QR 4: June 10
June	A	July-September	September 30	October 1	October 10	October 11-December 31	January 1-10	QR 2: January 10 QR 3: April 10 QR 4: July 10
July	B	August- October	October 31	November 1	November 10	November 11-January 31	February 1-10	QR 2: February 10 QR 3: May 10 QR 4: August 10
August	C	September-November	November 30	December 1	December 10	December 11-February 28 (or February 29 in leap years)	March 1-10	QR 2: March 10 QR 3: June 10 QR 4: September 10
September	A	October-December	December 31	January 1	January 10	January 11-March 31	April 1-10	QR 2: April 10 QR 3: July 10 QR 4: October 10
October	B	November - January	January 31	February 1	February 10	February 11-April 30	May 1-10	QR 2: May 10 QR 3: August 10 QR 4: November 10
November	C	December-February	February 28	March 1	March 10	March 11-	June 1-10	QR 2: June 10

Month of Energization	Assigned Quarterly Payment Cycle*	Quarterly Period	Deadline to Update Utility Records**	Program Administrator Downloads Utility Reports***	First Quarterly Report Due Date***	Program Administrator Review, Curing, and Post Verification Activities	First REC Invoice Submission Period	Second, Third, and Fourth Quarterly Report Due Dates**
						May 31		QR 3: September 10 QR 4: December 10
December	A	January- March	March 31	April 1	April 10	April 10- June 30	July 1-10	QR 2: July 10 QR 3: October 10 QR 4: January 10

*For Payment Cycle A, the invoice dates are the 10th of the month of January, April, July or October

For Payment Cycle B, the invoice dates are the 10th of the month of February, May, August or November

For Payment Cycle C, the invoice dates are the 10th of the month of March, June, September or December

** If the deadline to update utility records falls on a non-business day, utility records must be updated on the prior business day. Business Day means any day except a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal Reserve Bank holiday. A Business Day opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m. local time for the relevant Party's principal place of business.

***All reports shall be downloaded or due on the deadline specified, or the next Business Day if such specified due date is not a Business Day. Business Day means any day except a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal Reserve Bank holiday. A Business Day opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m. local time for the relevant Party's principal place of business.

This table outlines the first Quarterly Report due date and subsequent Quarterly Report due dates by Month of Energization. For example, if

project is Energized or Part II Verified in the month of January, its first Quarterly Report will be due May 10th. According to the table, the second Quarterly Report would be due on August 10th. The second Quarterly Report will follow the timelines of a project Energized in April which has its first Quarterly Report due on August 10th. As an example, for the second Quarterly Report, the deadline to update utility records would be July 31st, the date the Program Administrator downloads utility reports would be August 1st, and the Quarterly Report due date would be August 10th. The third Quarterly Report will follow the timelines of a project Energized in July which has its first Quarterly Report due on November 10th. The fourth Quarterly Report will follow the timelines of a project Energized in October who has its first Quarterly Report due on February 10th.

2021, 2022, 2024 20 Year REC Delivery Contract

Subscriber Verification Event	Deadline to Update Utility Records*	Program Administrator Downloads Utility Reports*	Subscriber Data Due Date*	Program Administrator Review, Curing, and Post Verification Activities
June Semiannual Verification	First Business Day of June	Second Business Day of June	June 10 or next business day	June 10-Aug 31
December Semiannual Verification	First Business Day of December	Second Business Day of December	December 10 or next business day	Dec 10-Feb 28 (or February 29 in leap years)

*Business Day means any day except a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal Reserve Bank holiday. A Business Day opens at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m. local time for the relevant Party's principal place of business.

Quarterly Period for REC Delivery	REC Invoice Submission Window	Subscription Rates Used
June - August	October 1st-10th	June (or Energization for first DY)
Sept - Nov	January 1st-10th	June (or Energization for first DY)
Dec - Feb	April 1st-10th	The greater of June (or Energization for first DY) and Dec
March - May	July 1st-10th	The greater of June (or Energization for first DY) and Dec