

Illinois Shines Media Kit

APRIL 25, 2025 VERSION
ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY



Contents

- About This Resource 2
- About Illinois Shines 3
 - The Renewable Portfolio Standard, FEJA, and CEJA3
 - Renewable Energy Credits (RECs).....5
 - Benefits of Solar, and Going Solar with Illinois Shines5
- Program Structure**.....6
 - REC Contracts and the “Approved Vendor” Model8
 - Illinois Shines Incentive Payments9
 - Illinois Shines Program Years9
 - Illinois Shines and the Equity Accountability System10
 - Consumer Protection and Support12
- Other Resources and Initiatives**12
- Illinois Shines Statistics and Trends**13
- Program Glossary**14
- Assets and References for Use by Reporters**..... 14
- The Illinois Power Agency** 15
 - IPA Goals and Objectives15
 - Illinois Power Agency – Select Officers and Leadership17
 - Illinois Solar for All (also overseen by the IPA).....17
- Program Administrator: Energy Solutions**..... 18
 - Program Administrator Responsibilities18

About This Resource

The *Illinois Shines Media Kit* is designed to provide short summaries of information commonly requested by journalists preparing stories about Illinois Shines, and to offer useful context, details, dates, definitions, data and visual assets for use in developing stories. In all cases, the Illinois Power Agency encourages interested parties to contact the Agency to discuss these or additional topics, including the Agency's work and priorities, in greater detail.

This kit will be updated periodically.

MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION

Jenny Whidden
Media Relations Specialist
Illinois Power Agency
Phone: 312-814-3299
Email: jenny.whidden@illinois.gov
180 N Wabash Ave, Suite 500
Chicago, Illinois 60601
ipa.illinois.gov

Mike Tancredi
Senior Marketing Manager
Energy Solutions (Program Administrator)
Phone: 510-482-4420 x462
Email: mtancredi@energy-solution.com
104 S. Michigan Ave, Suite 725
Chicago, IL 60603
www.energy-solution.com

About Illinois Shines

Illinois Shines (legislatively known as the Adjustable Block Program) is a state-administered solar incentive program created to promote and facilitate the development of new solar distributed generation (on-site) and community solar projects through issuing renewable energy credit delivery contracts, as required by Illinois law. The Program also advances important policy objectives including expanding priority access to the clean energy economy for historically excluded businesses and workers, providing important consumer protections, prevailing wage requirements, and more. Illinois Shines is overseen by the Illinois Power Agency, an independent state Agency overseeing policies, plans, and procurements for power in Illinois, implementing the Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard, and more. Energy Solutions is the Illinois Shines Program Administrator, a consultant responsible for running day-to-day operations of the Program.

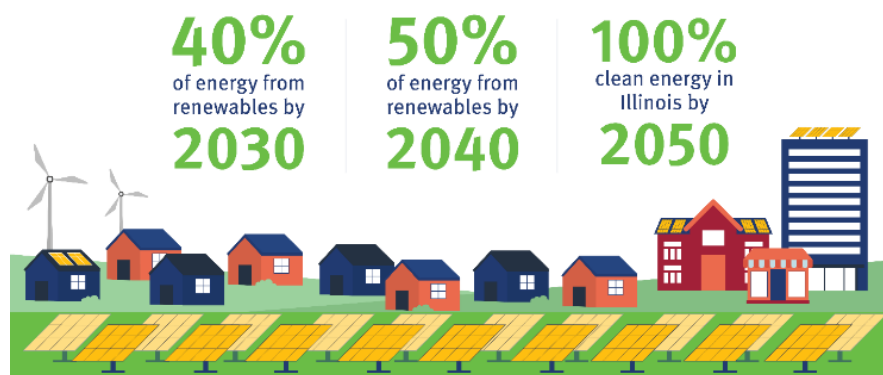
The Renewable Portfolio Standard, FEJA, and CEJA

Illinois Shines was established through state legislation in 2017 as part of an update to Illinois' Renewable Portfolio Standard ("RPS"). A RPS is a public policy designed to increase the use of renewable energy generated by projects such as solar panels, wind turbines, hydropower, and more. The Illinois RPS was established in 2007, with updates to targets through subsequent legislation. It is funded by Illinois ratepayers through a charge on their electricity bills. Illinois electric utilities use those funds to buy RECs, and by procuring RECs, demonstrate their compliance with the RPS.

Illinois has both "renewable energy" and "clean energy" goals which are defined differently in the state. Other states (and even different jurisdictions within states) define these terms still differently, which is important to keep in mind when discussing energy progress

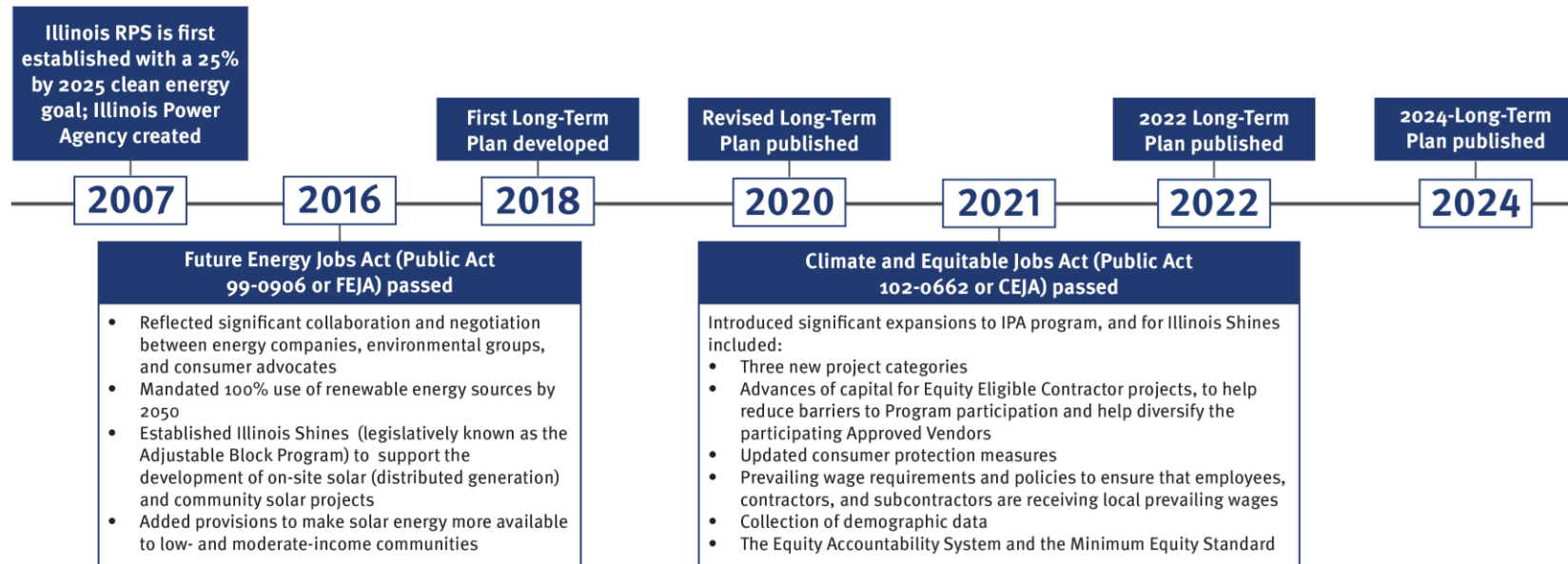
- In Illinois, **renewable energy** can only be generated by certain technologies defined in the IPA Act (solar, wind, hydropower in certain circumstances, anaerobic digestion, and crops and untreated and unadulterated organic waste biomass)
- **Clean energy** as defined in Illinois is merely "energy generation that is 90% or greater free of carbon dioxide emissions." Consequently, nuclear power—which does not produce carbon dioxide emissions—qualifies as clean energy, but not renewable energy in Illinois.

Illinois' current RPS requires electric utilities to obtain 40% of their electric power from **renewable** resources by 2030 and 50% by 2040 through the procurement of renewable energy credits ("RECs"), and CEJA established a 100% **clean energy** goal by 2050.



History of the Illinois RPS, FEJA, CEJA, Illinois Shines, and the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan ("Long-Term Plan")

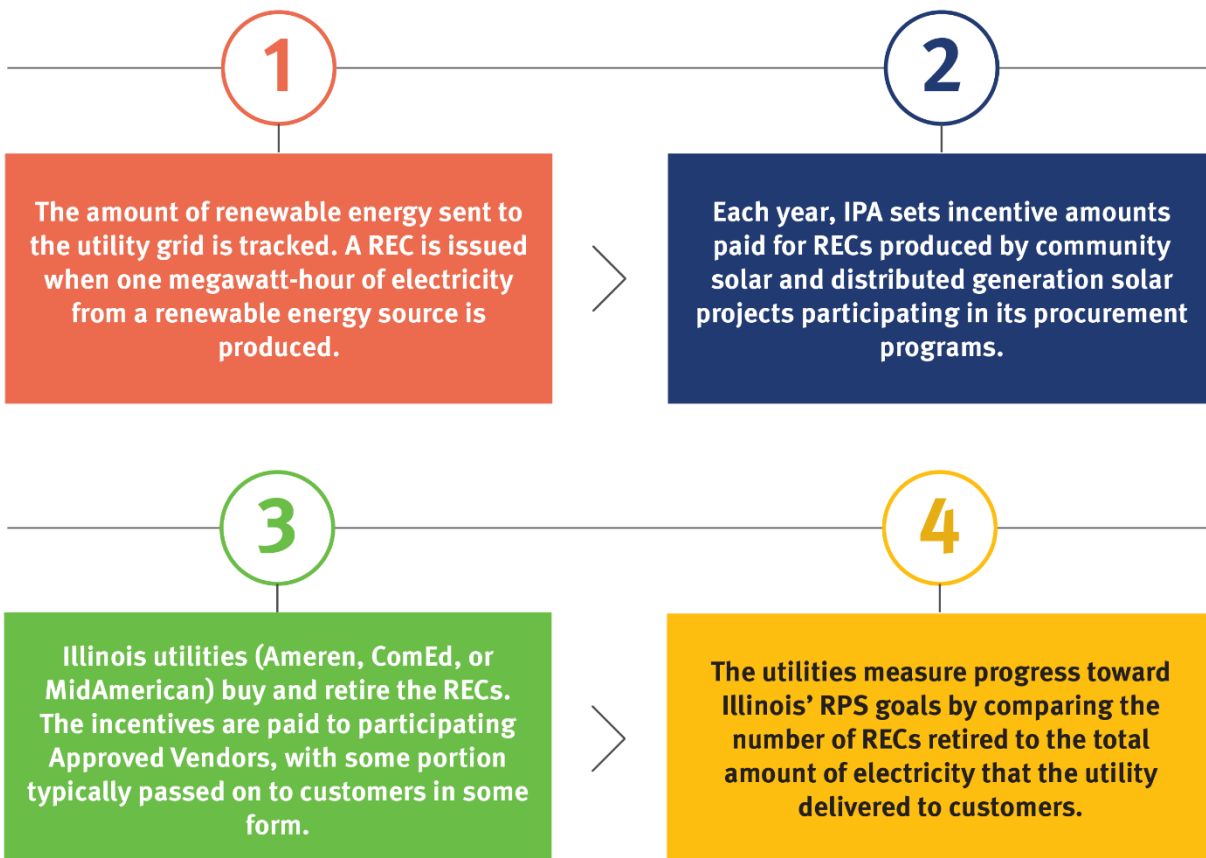
Updated biennially, the Long-Term Plan outlines how the Agency's renewable energy programs and procurements (including but not limited to Illinois Shines, Illinois Solar for All, utility-scale wind, utility-scale solar, and brownfield site photovoltaic projects) will implement activities to support the Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard, which saw substantial changes under CEJA.



Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)

In Illinois, utilities achieve RPS goals by procuring Renewable Energy Credits, or “RECs”. RECs are widely used certificates that represent the environmental benefits of electricity generated from renewable energy. The IPA develops plans, programs, and procurement events to bring RECs under contract by Illinois utilities and encourage the development of new renewable energy generation. REC prices are updated for each Program year, and follow a comprehensive Agency process including studies, stakeholder feedback, and analysis designed to improve the modeling used to set them.

HOW RECS ARE USED TO ACHIEVE ILLINOIS RPS GOALS



Benefits of Solar, and Going Solar with Illinois Shines

More consumers, businesses, and communities are choosing solar because of its many benefits, including:

- **Financial Benefits** – As solar technology costs decrease and incentives increase, customers may be able to lower utility bills by generating their own electricity, or by subscribing to a community solar project.

- **Environmental Impact** – Replacing fossil fuels with solar energy reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, helps fight climate change, and contributes to a healthy environment. Solar power, generated from a clean and renewable supply of sunlight, helps reduce demand for traditional power plants, which often use coal or natural gas.
- **Economic Growth** –Solar development creates local jobs and economic growth. Hundreds of solar companies operating in the state help build, sell, install, and service solar systems for customers, generating enormous economic activity.

Though customers can “go solar” on their own, the Illinois Shines program provides substantial, additional benefits for customers, including:

Illinois Shines is distinguished from other solar programs in its breadth and program features designed to widely promote solar development throughout Illinois and to achieve important policy objectives. The [Introduction to Illinois Shines: Solar Basics and More](#) at the Program website includes information on solar basics, going solar with Illinois Shines, exploring distributed generation and community solar projects, important questions to consider and to ask of prospective vendors, and more.



Program financial incentives that may be passed on to customers



Important consumer protections and support for participants, including educational resources, investigation of complaints against vendors, and support of harmed customers



Review and approval of participating Approved Vendors and ensuring their compliance with Program requirements



Equity provisions and opportunities supporting a diverse clean energy workforce and equitable community benefits

And more _____

Program Structure

Illinois Shines supports the development of new solar energy generation in Illinois. It provides value to participating customers by offering the following:





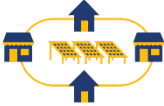

- Approved Vendors (further defined below) vetted by the Program
- Educational materials, resources, and consumer protection support
- Financial incentives that may be passed on by participating vendors, and more

For solar developers, including Approved Vendors and Designees, the Program incentivizes the development of solar projects through the generation and sale of renewable energy credits (RECs), and more.

Illinois Shines supports solar energy across two main project types:

- **Distributed Generation (“DG”):** Solar panels installed directly on the roof or land of a home, school, house of worship, business or other customer site.
- **Community Solar (“CS”):** A large, centralized solar project providing solar bill credits to subscribers who don’t have access to their own solar panels. This is a great option for renters or homeowners for whom installing solar panels isn’t practical or cost-effective.

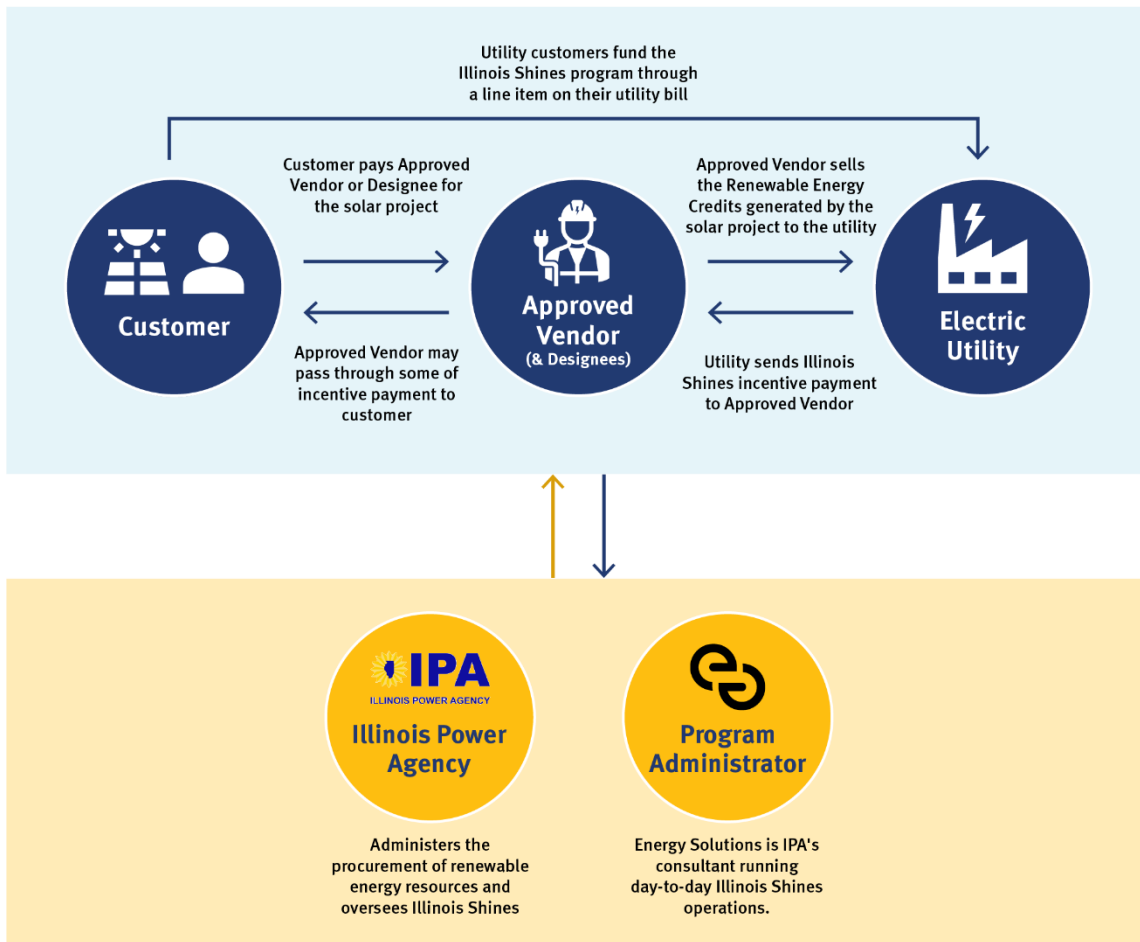
Within these project types, Illinois Shines currently supports six project categories. Further details about each project category can be found in the [Program Guidebook](#), and the IPA is available to support reporters developing stories about different project categories:

 Small Distributed Generation DG projects up to and including 25 kW in size, such as systems on a residence, small business, or other structures with a smaller energy load.	 Large Distributed Generation DG projects greater than 25 kW in size up to and including 5 MW, such as larger businesses, schools, factories, and other buildings with a larger energy load.	 Public Schools Includes any solar project, whether Small or Large DG or CS projects that serve a public school in Illinois.
 Traditional Community Solar Community solar projects up to and including 5 MW in size.	 Community-Driven Community Solar Includes CS projects up to 5 MW intended to provide a more direct and tangible connection and benefits to the communities in which they operate, including community ownership or wealth-building, meaningful project involvement and engagement from community members, nonprofit organizations, or public entities, and more.	 Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs) Includes DG and CS projects submitted by EEC Approved Vendors. EECs are certified by the Program and are the only Approved Vendors able to utilize the capacity made available for this Program category, to ensure better participation and access.

Approved Vendors are entities approved by the Program Administrator to submit Illinois Shines project applications, which result in Illinois Shines contracts in which they are counterparties to utilities. The process for becoming and remaining an Illinois Shines Approved Vendor includes a detailed application reviewed by the Program Administrator, and meeting and complying with rigorous Program requirements and guidelines. Vendors found to have violated Program requirements are subject to disciplinary action including suspension.

Designees are third party entities who work on behalf of Approved Vendors and interact directly with customers, taking actions including sales and marketing activities, supporting Disclosure Forms, installing solar systems, managing community solar subscribers, and more.

Together, customers, Approved Vendors (and their Designees and subcontractors), utilities, the Illinois Power Agency, and its Program Administrator develop solar projects through Illinois Shines. Further support comes from legislators, community-based organizations, the Illinois Commerce Commission and other stakeholders.



REC Contracts and the “Approved Vendor” Model

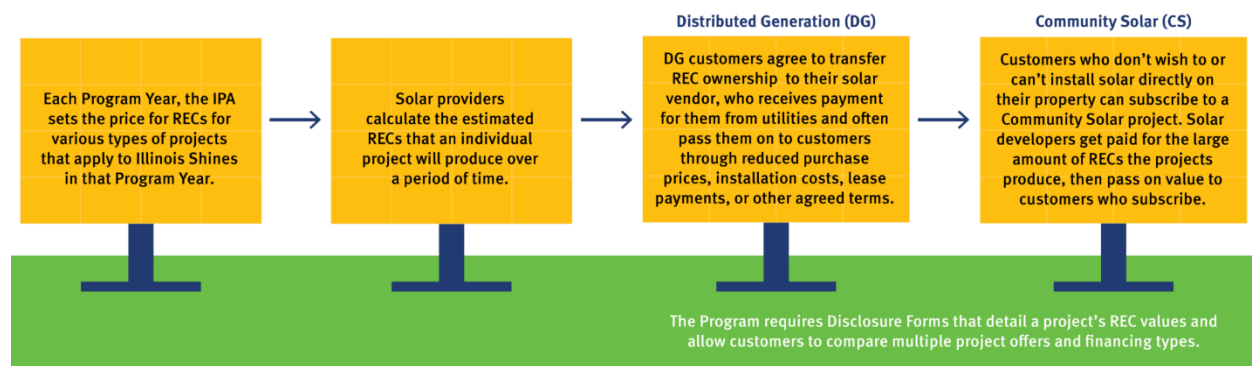
Illinois Shines uses an “Approved Vendor” model, where Approved Vendors contract with utilities, not customers, and receive REC incentive payments. In the Approved Vendor model, customers agree to transfer ownership of RECs generated by their solar project to their AVs, who sell the RECs to utilities and receive the state-administered incentive funds. AVs often then pass the value of incentive payments on to customers through a discounted purchase price or installation costs, lease payments, or other methods agreed upon in a contract.

The Approved Vendor model was adopted after careful consideration of both benefits and risks to customers, and an extensive stakeholder process and regulatory proceeding. Ultimately, the Approved Vendor model was adopted because the [IPA Act](#) requires that sellers of RECs manage contractual complexities and meet ongoing collateral requirements and provisions deemed appropriate by the Agency, and because it provides the basis for important policy objectives, supports business model flexibility that benefit consumers, and more.

Illinois Shines Incentive Payments

As described above, renewable energy credits or “RECs” are certificates that represent the environmental benefits of electricity generated from renewable energy generation. With RECs, the amount of renewable energy sent to the utility grid is tracked, and a REC is issued when one megawatt-hour of electricity from a renewable energy source is produced. Illinois Shines sets incentive amounts paid by utilities, for RECs produced by participating solar projects. The incentives are paid to participating Approved Vendors and savings are often passed on to customers, which can take the form of reduced community solar subscription costs, or reduced equipment, installation, lease or power purchase costs for distributed generation projects.

HOW DOES A CUSTOMER PARTICIPATING IN ILLINOIS SHINES SEE SAVINGS FROM REC INCENTIVES?



Illinois Shines Program Years

The Illinois Shines Program Year runs from the first business day of June through the following May 31. At the core of the Program is the concept of a “block”, which constitutes a pre-established amount of program capacity for a certain project type at a transparent, administratively set REC price or prices, which differ slightly depending on project attributes. Each Program Year, as detailed in the Program Guidebook and set forth by the Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan,¹ Illinois Shines allocates available electrical capacity (in megawatts) across the Program’s six project categories, and “groups” (designated geographical areas aligned with respective utilities). Capacity for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 Program Years was approved in the 2024 Long-Term Plan.

Updates to available capacity are visible at the Program’s [Block Capacity Dashboard](#) which is continuously updated based upon project application submissions and approvals. Each project category remains open until its capacity is exhausted for the Program Year. This is sometimes erroneously described as the Program “running out of budget” or “no longer accepting applications” but neither is accurate. When a project category reaches capacity, a waitlist is developed, and

¹ The Agency’s [Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan](#) covers all Agency activities related to the Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard, and outlines goals, strategies, and requirements for the IPA’s renewable energy programs and procurements, including program capacity and renewable energy credit pricing for the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs. 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.

projects on the waitlist are the first to be awarded capacity when the new Program Year opens each June. Though approval of Illinois Shines applications for ICC review must wait until the following Program Year, customers may still purchase, install, and finance solar projects, and vendors may continue to submit Illinois Shines applications.

Illinois Shines and the Equity Accountability System

CEJA put diversity, equity, and inclusion at the forefront of the clean energy economy and amended the IPA 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.” In response, the Agency developed an [Equity Accountability System](#) and which includes:



Two components specific to the Illinois Shines program structure are detailed here:

MINIMUM EQUITY STANDARD

A Minimum Equity Standard (“MES”) requires the project workforce of each participating Approved Vendor and Designee to comprise a required minimum percentage of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs). For Program Year 2024-25, the required EEP percentage is 10%, and increases to 14% for Program Year 2025-26 and will continue to rise, with this required percentage increasing to 30% by 2030.

Definitions of project workforce and Equity Eligible Persons, and details on required MES Compliance Plans, Mid-Year Reports, Corrective Action Plans, and Year-End Reports are available at [the Program website](#) and in the [Guide to the Equity Accountability System](#). Approved Vendors that fail to meet the Minimum Equity Standard are subject to Program discipline including suspension and withdrawal from the Program, and inability to receive incentive payments.

The Agency manages the Energy Workforce Equity Portal at energyequity.illinois.gov, a public-facing tool to help develop a diverse pipeline of skilled and trained clean energy workforce. The portal may be used:

- By employers to connect to job seekers, register as a clean energy company, and post jobs
- By employers to identify graduates of [qualified job training programs](#) for which they are actively hiring Equity Eligible Persons to meet the MES

- By job seekers to connect to employers, explore jobs, and apply to register as Equity Eligible Persons
- To help identify if communities and individuals reside in an identified Equity Investment Eligible Community (“EIEC”) using the [Equity Investment Eligible Community Map](#)
- To become certified as an Equity Eligible Person if currently employed at a clean energy company

EQUITY ELIGIBLE CONTRACTORS

The Equity Eligible Contractor category with Illinois Shines reserves Program capacity for projects (either Distributed Generation or Community Solar) submitted by EEC Approved Vendors, which are businesses certified by Illinois Shines and which are majority-owned by eligible persons, a nonprofit or cooperative that is majority governed by eligible persons, or is a natural person (i.e., an individual, not a legal person) that is an eligible person offering personal services as an independent contractor. EECs may be EEC Approved Vendors, EEC Designees, or EEC Subcontractors.

Equity Eligible Contractors	EEC Designees & Subcontractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are able to submit applications into a separate, reserved block of project capacity available only to EEC Approved Vendors • May request an Advance of Capital to the lesser of \$750,000 or 50% of the REC contract value per project • Are exempt from meeting the Minimum Equity Standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May utilize their EEC status to appeal to interested customers or Approved Vendors that wish to partner with EECs • Contribute additional points toward projects in the Traditional Community Solar and Community-Driven Community Solar categories (thus increasing the chance of moving forward and obtaining a REC contract) • Are exempt from meeting the Minimum Equity Standard

More information on the distinctions between these three types of EECs can be found on the [Become an EEC](#) webpage.

Additional Illinois Shines Equity Efforts

CEJA also provided a path for communities to prioritize community solar with meaningful community involvement and local ownership. For example, the Community-Driven Community Solar category within Illinois Shines includes solar projects up to 5 MW that are intended to provide more direct and tangible benefits to the communities in which they operate. These benefits can include community ownership or wealth-building, meaningful project involvement and engagement from community members, nonprofit organizations, or public entities, and more.

In addition, community solar project scoring opportunities are available for projects developed by or with Equity Eligible Contractors, and/or with contractual commitments for use of EECs, EEC Designees, or EEC subcontractors, for projects sited in Equity Investment Eligible Communities, and more.

Consumer Protection and Support

The IPA takes consumer protection very seriously. Most customer experiences in the program are overwhelmingly positive, with details available from the Program. Efforts to protect and support consumers are some of the key benefits the Agency's programs provide to customers, and Illinois Shines' consumer protections include:

- A thorough application and screening process for solar developers applying to participate as Approved Vendors
- Rigorous requirements outlined in the Consumer Protection Handbook.
 - The Program maintains a [customer complaint center](#), allowing customers to file complaints against entities participating in Illinois Shines, including potential violations of Program requirements. The Program actively investigates complaints, which are noted in the Consumer Complaint Report. Disciplinary action taken against vendors found to have violated Program requirements are detailed in a [Program Violations Report](#), which lists all companies that have been suspended in the history of the Program. Marketplace monitoring to proactively enforce Program requirements includes regular review of Approved Vendor's marketing materials such as websites and social media, to check for misleading statements or other marketing violations.
- The required use of standardized [Disclosure Forms](#) prior to the execution of a REC contract (DG) or subscription agreement (CS). Disclosure Forms allow customers to understand details of the proposed solar project, including project details, expected project performance, costs, expected financial benefits, and more. Disclosure Forms also allow consumers to compare offers from different solar companies on an "apples-to-apples" basis.
- Supporting Distributed Generation (on-site solar) customers who may have become "stranded" because their 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 Illinois Shines program, due to limited or ceased operations, inability to meet Program requirements, or suspension due to disciplinary action taken by the Program.

Other Resources and Initiatives

Following the ICC approval of the [2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan](#), the Program is developing initiatives in the 2024-25 Program Year to add further consumer protection guardrails and support, including an Escrow Process, a Solar Restitution Program, and a Stranded Customer REC Adder. More information about [these initiatives](#), as well as the [Consumer Protection Working Group](#), is available at the Program website.

Consumers who are interested in going solar and participating in the Illinois Shines program are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Program and to take advantage of available materials and use the materials to educate themselves, consider questions to ask themselves and solar developers, research companies, and more. The Program website includes a variety of resources including [brochures](#), the [Homeowner Handout series](#), [Disclosure Form Deep Dives](#), and more.

Illinois Shines Statistics and Trends

Based on data from the IPA, industry trade associations, the federal Energy Information Administration and other sources, Illinois is a leader in solar development across the Midwest. While the state trails other states that aggressively pursued pro-solar policies earlier than Illinois, [the Solar Energy Industry Association \(SEIA\) estimates](#) that as of Q4 2024, Illinois has 5,441 MW of installed solar capacity, and other data evidences the state's leadership: Illinois is also generally viewed as a leader in community solar development, both in terms of volume of projects and especially around community empowerment associated with projects. In January 2024, the nation's largest community solar provider Nexamp [announced its intentions to set up its second national headquarters in Illinois](#). Illinois' thriving solar market is driving other economic growth including a growing and diverse solar workforce of developers, installers, manufacturers, and more.

Illinois Shines makes it easy and attractive for businesses to participate in the state's solar energy market. Illinois Shines offers an opportunity for businesses to receive the financial benefits from the installation of renewable energy and participate in the growing solar market in Illinois. Just like homeowners, Illinois Shines offers businesses:

- Access to REC incentives for a variety of project types and sizes, throughout the state
- A streamlined process for participating, submitting project applications, and energizing projects
- A way for businesses to keep their energy costs low while participating in the growth of the renewables sector in the state

Illinois Shines and the Illinois Power Agency publish a large, diverse array of reports to detail progress in the generation of clean energy in Illinois, within and outside of the Agency's procurements, including:

- [Illinois Shines Data Report](#) – presents select project, participation, and impacts data for the current Program Year to date and Illinois Shines lifetime program data to date. Updated monthly.
- [Program Year End of Year Report](#) – an annual report graphically presenting quantitative and qualitative achievements during the prior Program Year.
- [State of the Program Report](#) – a semi-annual update on Program progress and efforts resulting from continuous improvement efforts and feedback solicited from stakeholders.
- [Illinois Clean Energy Dashboard](#) – maintained by the Illinois Power Agency, this educational tool for stakeholders and legislators tracks the progress and impact of renewable energy development across Illinois, including projects within and outside of the Illinois RPS (cleanenergy.illinois.gov).

Program Glossary

A glossary [at the Program website](#) defines some commonly used terms in program materials about Illinois Shines participants, project and program terminology, and legal and program references and requirements, including:

Program Participants	Project and Program Terminology	Legal and Program References and Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved Vendor • Contracting Utility • Designee • Equity Eligible Contractor (“EEC”) • Equity Eligible Persons • Equity Investment Eligible Community/Eligible Community • Illinois Commerce Commission (“ICC”) • Illinois Power Agency (“IPA”) • Program Administrator • Service Utility • Stranded customer • Subscriber 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance of Capital • Block Capacity Dashboard • Community Solar • Distributed Generation • Group • Illinois Shines • Illinois Solar for All (“ILSFA”) • Interconnection Agreement • Project Categories • Renewable Energy Credit (“REC”) • System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (“CEJA”) • Consumer Protection Handbook • Equity Accountability System (“EAS”) • Illinois Clean Energy Dashboard • Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan • Minimum Equity Standard • Net Metering • Prevailing Wage • Program Guidebook • Renewable Portfolio Standard (“RPS”)

The IPA or its Program Administrator are available to provide further definitions when helpful.

Assets and References for Use by Reporters

The Agency and its Program Administrator can furnish Program and Agency logos and select other artwork to support reporters wishing to integrate them into stories. The Program also maintains brand guidelines and writing style guide documents that can be provided.

Requests for Illinois Shines or Illinois Power Agency visual assets, participant references, or support for stories about the program should be made to the Media Contacts listed in this guide.

The Illinois Power Agency

IPA Goals and Objectives

The Illinois Power Agency (“IPA” or “the Agency”) was established in 2007 by Public Act 95-0481. Its mission is commitment to the planning and procurement of reliable, efficient, and cost-effective electricity for residents and businesses in an ethical and objective manner, insulated from improper influence. The IPA also administers incentive programs and procurements to promote renewable and zero-carbon energy generation, while building an equitable clean energy future for all Illinoisans. Specific goals and objectives include:

<p><u>Developing annual electricity procurement plans</u> to ensure adequate, reliable, affordable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable electric service at the lowest total cost over time, for residential and small commercial customers of Ameren, ComEd, and MidAmerican.</p>	<p>Develop a Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan and implement the programs and procurements contained in the Plan, including <u>Illinois Shines</u> (legislatively known as the Adjustable Block Program) and <u>Illinois Solar for All</u>.</p>	<p>Supply electricity from any Agency facilities at cost to one or more of the following: municipal electric systems, governmental aggregators, or rural electric cooperatives in Illinois. [Not currently active]</p>
<p>Develop electric generation and co-generation facilities that use indigenous coal or renewable resources, or both, financed with bonds issued by the Illinois Finance Authority. [Not currently active]</p>	<p><u>Conduct competitive procurement processes</u> to procure the supply resources identified in the procurement plan.</p>	<p>Develop and implement a <u>Zero Emission Standard Procurement Plan</u>.</p>

IPA is an independent agency subject to the oversight of the Executive Ethics Commission and must ensure that power procurement is conducted ethically and transparently, immune from improper influence. The Agency strives to operate in a structurally insulated, independent and transparent manner so nothing impedes its mission to secure power at the best prices the market will bear, provided it meets all applicable legal requirements. Interested parties are encouraged to sign up for Agency announcements and the quarterly newsletter [here](#).

Recent critical activities of the Agency include but are not limited to:



January 2023 launch of the Energy Workforce Equity Portal, providing an online source to help connect clean energy companies with Equity Eligible Persons looking to work in the clean energy sector in Illinois.



Published the 2024 Electricity Procurement Plan, addressing provision of electricity for eligible retail customers of Ameren Illinois Company, Commonwealth Edison Company, and MidAmerican Energy Company.



Conducted Summer 2024 and Fall 2024 Indexed REC Procurement Events
Conducted Spring 2024 and Fall 2024 Block Energy & Capacity Procurements



Released final Policy Study analyzing three proposals: planning and procurement to support the development of energy storage systems, the development of an offshore wind project in Lake Michigan, and the construction of an underground high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line.



Hosted seven Power Hour educational webinars, covering a wide range of clean energy topics and featuring diverse panels of subject matter experts.



Released [Part I of the Equity Accountability System \(EAS\) Assessment](#), with a robust analysis of EAS implementation via analysis of data collected through the Agency's programs and procurements, stakeholder interviews, surveys, and other feedback, and [Part II of its Equity Accountability System Assessment](#), which provides a comprehensive analysis and discussion of Minimum Equity Standard (MES) compliance and gathers insights from the MES Year-End Reports, MES Waivers, workforce demographics, as well as annual reporting data. In addition, the report addresses recommendations to the EAS for continued improvement in ensuring its equity-driven impact is made.



Launched DEI Advisory Committee to provide a structured platform for stakeholders to engage in dialogue, provide input, and offer feedback on the Agency's equity initiatives.



Phase I launch of the [Illinois Clean Energy Dashboard](#), an educational tool for stakeholders and legislators to track the progress and impact of renewable energy development across Illinois, including projects within and outside of the Illinois RPS.



Launch of a [Small & Emerging Business Hub](#) to centralize and streamline industry-specific information to help these businesses connect with targeted programs and resources that meet their needs in entering the clean energy economy.



Led IPA Summer School, a four-session Lunch and Learn series for legislators, legislative staff, and government leaders to learn more about the IPA, its solar incentive programs and myriad clean energy initiatives.

Illinois Power Agency – Select Officers and Leadership

- **Brian Granahan, Director**
- **Rachel Granneman, Deputy Legal Counsel – Consumer Protection**
- **Megha Hamal, Chief Strategy and Communications Officer**
- **Kevin Hayes, Chief Financial Officer**
- **Chandrika Mital, Director of Renewable Energy Finance**
- **Whitney Richardson, Legislative Affairs Manager**
- **James Rouland, Planning & Procurement Bureau Chief**
- **Tanvi Shah, Chief DEI Officer**
- **Jennifer Schmidt, Senior Program Manager – Illinois Solar for All**
- **Anthony Star, Senior Advisor and Past Director**
- **Audrey Steinbach, Senior Program Manager – Illinois Shines**
- **Kelly Turner, Chief Legal Counsel**
- **Georgina White, Deputy Director**

Illinois Solar for All (also overseen by the IPA)

[Illinois Solar for All \(ILSFA\)](#) provides access to the benefits of solar energy to income-eligible homeowners and renters, as well as to non-profits and public facilities serving low-income or environmental justice communities.

- Income-eligible households (renters and homeowners) can participate by installing solar panels directly on their roof or mounting panels on their property through the Residential Solar subprograms.
- Income-eligible renters or homeowners can participate as a subscriber to an ILSFA community solar project.
- Nonprofit organizations and public entities can participate by installing on-site solar projects or as subscribers in community solar projects through the Non-Profit and Public Facilities sub-program. These non-profit organizations and public entities must be located in environmental justice or low-income communities.

Within the ILSFA Program, income-eligible participants often see no upfront costs, as well as a minimum specified savings, in which ongoing costs or fees to the participant do not exceed 50% of the value of energy produced by a participant's photovoltaic (PV) system, or in the case of community solar, a participant's subscription of the installed PV system.

Program Administrator: Energy Solutions

Program Administrator Responsibilities

Energy Solutions became the successor Illinois Shines Program Administrator effective July 1, 2022. In its role as Program Administrator, Energy Solutions:

- Supports Approved Vendor and Designee enrollment and registration, and ensures the successful and compliant participation of vendors including adherence to all Program requirements
- Maintains and supports the Program portal that supports customer Disclosure Forms and submission of solar project applications
- Reviews and approves project applications, supports submission to the Illinois Commerce Commission, and supports REC contracting and invoicing of verified projects, with associated reporting and monitoring processes and requirements
- Supports administration of the Equity Accountability System including the Equity Eligible Contractor project category, the Minimum Equity Standard, the Mentorship Program, and more
- Operates a support center for participating stakeholders, and provides technical materials, education, tools, and processes to support Program participation
- Develops and maintains consumer-oriented educational resources and collateral, and pays rigorous attention to consumer complaints against Approved Vendors and Designees including investigation, and where necessary, taking disciplinary action
- Supports stakeholder participation forums including AV Roundtables, both AV/Designee and Customer Satisfaction surveys, stakeholder working groups, weekly office hours, 1:1 vendor appointments and stakeholder feedback processes
- Supports required reporting of block capacity, project application processing, project lookup, and other project, participation, and impact reporting
- Provides stakeholder communications including announcements and program collateral, maintenance and enhancement of the Program website, support of stakeholder forums and feedback channels, development of stakeholder resource materials, and more
- Makes industry and public presentations to increase awareness and share progress
- And more