

Partial Portal Closure and Project Application Unavailability May 27 – June 2, 2025, Solar Restitution Program Launched, Small DG Soft Close Concluded

May 9, 2025

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

- **Events**
 - May 22, 2025 at 12:00 p.m. CPT - Welcome to Program Year 2025-26 webinar (Register at [this link](#))
 - May 27, 2025 at 8:00 p.m. CPT - End of Year Program Pause
 - June 2, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. CPT - 2025-26 Program Year Opens
- **Due Dates**
 - May 10, 2025 – May REC Invoicing Deadline
 - May 19, 2025 – Re-batching opens for AVs
 - May 21, 2025 – Election Deadline for Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal for June 5, 2025 ICC Meeting
 - May 26, 2025 – REC Contract Amendment signature is due AND Part II Verification Cut Off for May
 - May 31, 2025 – REC certificates transfer to Buyer for 2024-25 Delivery Year Annual Report deadline
 - June 2, 2025 – Program Year 2025-26 MES Compliance Plan due

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – May 14, 2025, from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, Portal, application, or other questions. <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/91402926068>
- **Application Tips and Tricks** - The Program Administrator publishes [Tips and Tricks](#) to help support stakeholders in avoiding project applications from resulting in a *Need Info* request and delaying their review and approval.
 - Part I Section 1 Project Location address:
 - The Part I Section 1 Project Location address should represent the physical location of modules, not the system's utility account address or interconnection point address. If a physical street address is not available, coordinates are an acceptable alternative.
 - For small variances in township or city names and zip codes, the [USPS Lookup tool](#) can be used to determine the accurate address for the application's Project Location address.
 - If address discrepancies are noticed after submitting an application, Approved Vendors may email admin@illinoisshines.com requesting a portal edit.
 - To avoid *Need Info* requests that can delay application review, provide an application comment (after uploading documents) to explain variances between the module location in the Part I Section 1 Project Location and the utility account address or interconnection point.

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

- **Partial Portal Closure and Project Application Unavailability May 27 – June 2, 2025** – As previously shared, the 2024–25 Illinois Shines Program Year will close on the evening of Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 8:00 p.m. CDT. Important Information:
 - All Disclosure Form functionality, including the ability to create and submit Disclosure Forms and obtain signatures, will be available during the pause between Program Years
 - Ability to create, revise, submit, and batch project applications will be unavailable in the Illinois Shines Portal from 8:00 p.m. CDT on May 27, 2025, through 8:00 a.m. CDT on June 2, 2025.
 - Project data may be exported from the Application Dashboard prior to the pause. To export data, navigate to Menu: Vendor -> Project Applications -> View). Then apply your preferred Search Filters in the column headings. When you're ready to export, select the "Export Project Data" button at the top of the page.

- **IPA and Illinois Shines Launch Solar Restitution Program** – On May 5, 2025 the IPA and Illinois Shines Program Administrator announced the launch of the Solar Restitution Program (“SRP”). The SRP, which is designed to provide economic compensation to customers harmed through their participation in Illinois Shines or Illinois Solar for All, was first outlined in the 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan and was further developed through a stakeholder process in the Fall of 2024; a [Rationale Document](#) responding to stakeholder feedback and explaining final design and implementation decisions was published on April 28, 2025. While most customers have a positive experience in connection with the Agency’s programs, there are unfortunately still entities that cause economic harm to customers, and the SRP is a new tool that allows the Agency and Program Administrator to help provide financial restitution to customers who have experienced such harm in certain circumstances. Phase I of the SRP will provide compensation to customers who were promised a pass-through of the Illinois Shines REC incentive payment by their Approved Vendor but did not receive the promised payment, in situations where the Approved Vendor in fact received the REC incentive from the utility. Later phases of the SRP will expand the scope to other types of harm. Additional information about the SRP can be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/solar-restitution-program/>.
- **Corrections to Program Year 2025-26 Program Guidebook** – On May 5, 2025, the Program announced updates made to the Program Year 2025-26 Program Guidebook released on April 18, 2025. There were no new requirements introduced in the update but rather clarifications to items already published in other documents as well as corrections of formatting issues in order to better delineate requirements. Please see [the full announcement](#) for details. On April 18 the Program published updated versions of the Program Year 2025-26 Program Guidebook, Consumer Protection Handbook, Distributed Generation (DG) and Community Solar (CS) Contract Requirements, and 2025-26 REC Prices, which conform with the Illinois Commerce Commission’s (ICC’s) Final Order on the IPA’s 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, dated February 20, 2024, and other stakeholder feedback processes. The [documents are published](#) 45 days in advance of the start of the 2025-26 Program Year in order to provide transparency and time to review changes prior to the compliance period, and Program participants are required to be in compliance with requirements outlined in the documents by June 2, 2025 and throughout the 2025-26 Program Year. **The April 18, 2024 versions of the Program Guidebook, the Consumer Protection Handbook, Distributed Generation (DG) and Community Solar (CS) Contract Requirements, and 2024-25 REC Prices remain the effective versions of the documents until the new Program Year commences on June 2, 2025.**
- **Minimum Equity Standard (“MES”) 2024-25 Year-End Reports and 2025-26 Compliance Plans** – On April 30, [the Program announced](#) that MES Program Year 2025-26 Compliance Plans opened for submission and are due on June 2, 2025. **Please refer to an email from the Program Administrator on April 30 for your organization’s secure submission link and access code, and email mes@illinoisshines.com if you are having trouble accessing the form.** On April 24, [the Program published](#) resources and guidance to support 2024-25 MES Year-End Report submissions, including key dates and details. The announcements followed an April 15 MES Compliance webinar providing guidance and schedule information for both Program Year 2024-25 Year-End Reports and Program Year 2025-26 MES Compliance Plans. Further information is available at the Program’s [Equity Accountability System hub](#), and a [recording of the webinar](#) and [presentation slides](#) can be found at the [Program Year Webinars](#) page; a Q&A document is forthcoming.
- **Small DG Soft Close Concluded; Waitlist in Effect** – On May 2, 2025, the Program announced that on May 1, 2025, the annual block of capacity for the Small Distributed Generation block was filled; for Program Year 2024-25, 208.17 MW of capacity was allocated for Small DG. Per the Program Guidebook, a soft close period was initiated, allowing the block to remain open for seven calendar days or when the next project application submitted to the block would exceed capacity by 10 megawatts. On May 6, 2025 the soft close period concluded when the limit of 10 additional megawatts of capacity was batched and submitted to the Program, and [a project waitlist](#) for the category took effect. Applications batched and submitted to the Program under the Small DG category will be added to the waitlist and posted [to the Program website](#). New capacity for the category is planned for the 2025-26 Program Year and expected to be available on June 2, 2025.
- **2025-26 Program Year Welcome Webinar** - June 2, 2025 marks the opening of the 2025-26 Program Year. In support of stakeholders, an informational webinar on the upcoming 2025-26 Program Year changes will be held on May 22, 2024 from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. CPT. The webinar will be recorded. The Program Administrator

and IPA will discuss the 2025-26 Program Year Program Guidebook, the 2025-26 Consumer Protection Handbook, updated REC capacity and prices, and more. Please use [this link](#) to register for this event.

- **Updated Designee Registration Form** – An updated [Designee Registration Form](#) is now available, incorporating the Maintenance and Repair Designee type for entities that perform routine maintenance, monitoring, and/or repair to a system after installation. The registration process for Designees and Nested Designees remains the same and Approved Vendors should expect a 2-4 week turnaround time for Designee registration requests.
- **New to the Program Website** – The following key additions to <http://www.IllinoisShines.com> have been shared:
 - [Updated Program Guidebook](#) following corrections ([Program Documents](#) page)
 - [Solar Restitution Program details](#) ([Solar Restitution Program](#) page)
 - [Updated MES 2024-25 Year-End Report sample](#) ([Minimum Equity Standard](#) page)
 - [Updated Designee Registration Form](#) ([Become an AV or Designee](#) page)
 - New videos at “REC Contract and Annual Report Help Guides” tab at [Program Help Guides](#) page
 - [Annual Report and REC Performance Evaluation Informational Training Video](#) (May 7, 2025)
 - [REC Performance Evaluation Calculation Walkthrough](#) (May 7, 2025)
 - [Community Solar Parameters Evaluation Informational Training Video](#) (May 7, 2025)

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

- **2026 Long-Term Plan Workshops Held** – The Illinois Power Agency hosted 2026 Long-Term Plan Workshops on April 30 (Chapter 8 – Illinois Solar for All) and May 1 (Chapters 7 and 10 – Illinois Shines and Equity Accountability System). The Agency and its Program Administrators appreciate the participation and thoughtful perspectives shared by stakeholders at the workshops. The Agency will release written questions for stakeholder feedback at a later date.
- **EEC Subcategory Merging Completed; Block Capacity Dashboard Updated** – As provided in the Long-Term Plan Section 7.4.6.4, [on May 1, 2025](#) the Program and Agency opened EEC subcategory capacity to the entire category 11 months into the Program Year, and thereafter reallocate any uncontracted capacity in the category at the close of the Program Year following the process outlined in Section 7.3.4. On May 1, 2025 the Program updated the Block Capacity Dashboard by merging the EEC capacity bars, combining CS and DG projects (maintaining Group A and Group B distinctions). Regarding applicable waitlists, the Program will first review Community Solar projects in the order in which batches are received, and thereafter, project applications received on or after May 1, 2025 will be added to the current waitlists in the order in which they are received.
- **Portal Updates: Revised Menu and End of Year Program Pause** – As previously shared, the Program Portal's main menu was updated in an April release, offering simplified navigation and main menu access to Disclosure Forms, project applications and batches, without need to expand AV or Designee folders to see these options. Dual-role users (acting as both AVs and Designees) have ability to navigate to a central location to access all Disclosure Forms via a single list of the AV IDs to select from. This menu change will enable more granular restrictions for this year's Program pause between the end of the 2024-25 Program Year and the launch of the 2025-26 Program Year. **The pause will begin on the evening of Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 8:00 pm CPT and run until the 2025-26 Program Year launch on Monday June 2, 2025, at 8:00 am CPT.** During the program pause, access to project applications and batches will be unavailable in the Portal, but all Disclosure Form functionality will be fully available.
- **Reminder: REC Contract Amendments Signatures Due May 26, 2025** – On March 24, REC Contract Amendments were distributed to utilities, who had until April 11, 2025 to sign them. Following utility signature, the documents are automatically routed via Docusign to each AV with an active REC Contract for their signature by May 26, 2025. **It is critical that AVs sign the amendment within 45 days, by 11:59 p.m. CPT on May 26, 2025. Failure to do so is considered a Program violation and may lead to suspension.** A [Frequently Asked Questions \(“FAQs”\) document](#) was created to support AVs. If you **did not received a request through the signature platform, Docusign, to sign the amendment**, are having technical difficulties, or if you have other questions or concerns, please email the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com as soon as possible.
- **Public Schools Case Study Now Available** – On May 1, the Program published its first case study, highlighting [how one Illinois school district turned to Illinois Shines](#) to achieve important financial and environmental benefits for its community. The case study describes the school district's motivations to consider solar energy,

its exploration of the benefits of doing so through Illinois Shines, and provides details about the process it undertook, the role of school board leadership and a project champion, its work with an Illinois Shines Approved Vendor, and information about the resulting system and its initial and expected impacts on energy and cost savings.

- **Upcoming REC Transfers in Preparation for the 2024-25 Annual Report** – As a reminder, RECs delivered between June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025 are considered to be within the “2025 delivery year.” AVs must successfully transfer RECs to the Buyer during this timeframe in order to be used to calculate any necessary collateral adjustments or contract default for the 2024-25 Annual Report. As AV’s prepare for the 2024-25 Annual Report, keep the following in mind:
 - The Buyer counts RECs based on when they are *successfully transferred*, **not** when they are generated.
 - Upload all available energy generation data to GATS **before May 23, 2025**, since data processing and REC certificate creation **may take up to seven days**. Once created, **transfer** the REC certificate **to the Buyer before 11:59 p.m. CPT on May 31, 2025**.
 - Ensure RECs are **delivered before May 31, 2025**, as any REC delivered after this deadline **will not count** toward the 2024-25 Delivery Year Annual Report.
 - For AVs with systems eligible for the 3-Year Rolling Average Collateral Drawdown process, upload all available energy generation data before May 23, 2025 **to minimize potential Drawdowns on posted collateral**.
 - *Although M-RETS processes Generation Data instantly (creating and transferring RECs per a standing order within moments), AVs should act early out of an abundance of caution.*
- **Illinois Shines Media Kit** – On April 26, 2025, the Program published the [Illinois Shines Media Kit](#) to support media inquiries regarding the Agency’s policy proposals and procurements, including Illinois Shines.

Ongoing Operations Updates

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

In advance of each submission of batches to the ICC for approval, AVs are provided the opportunity to withhold or re-batch projects. **AVs must indicate any requests to withdraw or withhold projects during the two-day re-batching window.** **In the absence of any action by an AV, the Program Administrator will re-batch the projects at their discretion and submit eligible projects to the ICC.**

- **It is extremely important that AVs review their re-batching files on SharePoint to indicate any re-batching preferences, but especially requests to withhold projects from submission.** The Program Administrator alerts AVs by email when they have projects that are eligible for re-batching and planned to be submitted to the ICC in the next memo. Unfortunately, sometimes these communications are missed, and projects are submitted to the ICC despite an AVs intent to hold a project back.
- The Program Administrator requests that AVs who believe they may want to withhold or re-batch projects mark their calendars and review SharePoint folders for re-batching templates. This way, if any email alerts are missed, AVs are still aware of the dates that re-batching opens and can check if any projects are in the upcoming ICC submission. Below are the next re-batching windows:

Re-Batching Opens for AVs	Election Deadline – 12:00 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
5/19/2025	5/21/2025	6/5/2025
6/2/2025	6/4/2025	6/18/2025
6/13/2025	6/17/2025	7/2/2025
6/30/2025	7/2/2025	7/17/2025

- **Part II Verification Cut Off for May** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for May will be May 26, 2025. Applications that were Part II verified on or before May 26,

2025 will be included in the June invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between May 27, 2025 and May 31, 2025 will be invoiced in July 2025.

Application Processing Updates

- **Application Processing Tables** - Application processing tables are maintained at IllinoisShines.com/project-application-reports/. These tables are updated daily. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com.
- **Application Processing Update** - Current application processing time is within the expected 10-day turnaround in all categories, which the Program Administrator expects to maintain for the foreseeable future.

Ongoing Program Portal Updates

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

Requirements and Reminders

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

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
Equity Eligible Contractor Certification	April 1, 2025	April 18, 2025	Comments to be published
Draft Program Guidebook	March 7, 2025	March 26, 2025	Corrected version of April 18, 2025 version ; compliance required by June 2, 2025.
Draft Consumer Protection Handbook	March 7, 2025	March 26, 2025	Final version released April 18, 2025 ; compliance required by June 2, 2025.
Draft DG Contract Requirements	March 7, 2025	March 26, 2025	Final version released April 18, 2025 ; compliance required by June 2, 2025.
Draft CS Contract Requirements	March 7, 2025	March 26, 2025	Final version released April 18, 2025 ; compliance required by June 2, 2025.
Draft REC Prices	March 7, 2025	March 26, 2025	Final REC Prices published April 18, 2025 .
CS Subscriber Management Function	Survey issued April 7, 2025	April 21, 2025	Results of stakeholder survey under evaluation by Program for requirements updates.

- **IPA Request for AVs and Installer Designees Interested in Serving Stranded Illinois Shines DG Customers** - As previously [announced](#), the Program seeks entities interested in serving stranded customers, and [updates the lists](#) of participating vendors on a rolling basis. The original announcements include details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.

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