Annual Report Response Window Open, Updated Office Hours Schedule, Public Schools Presentation Resources Now Available

July 3, 2025

Coming up in Illinois Shines *(Program events & due dates found at the Key Dates & Deadlines webpage)*
- **Events**
  - July 11, 2025 – Illinois Power Agency Power Hour "Load Growth: How is it shaping power markets?". Register here.

- **Due Dates**
  - July 10, 2025 – Feedback deadline for 2026 Long-Term Plan Stakeholder Feedback Request on Chapter 3 and Program REC Pricing.
  - July 15, 2025 – MES 2024-25 Year-End Report Submission Due and Annual Report Response Period Ends for AVs that have not signed REC Contract Amendment

Stakeholder Support
- **Upcoming Program Holiday Hours** - The Program will have limited services and updates on Friday, July 4, 2025, in observance of Independence Day. On this day, the Program Call Center will be closed. Updates to the Block Capacity Dashboard, application tables, application project reports, and waitlists will resume the next business day.
- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – July 16, 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. Please note: the schedule for Office Hours is changing, effective next week. Please see the full item below for details.
- **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.
  - The Program Administrator has observed a trend in data inconsistency between Part II project application data and documentation submitted to the Generation Attribute Tracking System ("GATS") Registry. Non-matching information will result in a *Need Info* request that delays application review and approval, and Approved Vendors are advised to ensure accurate, consistent information is provided on project applications and to the GATS registry. Here are a few items to check before submitting a Part II application:
    - GATS Standing Order – The GATS ID on the application must clearly correspond to GATS ID provided on the application.
    - The 'Proof of Irrevocable Transfer' uploaded as a Part II document must represent the project registered to the GATS ID noted in Part II Section 2 of the application.
    - The 'Standing Order' must align with the contracting utility noted on the application.
    - Projects are required to provide 'proof of having initiated an irrevocable Standing Order' which can be modeled with a status of 'Pending' or 'Approved.'
    - 'Standing Orders' must have a 'Certificate %' of 100% and be marked as 'Irrevocable.'
    - GATS Registry Details – In coordination with GATS, the Program Administrator has enhanced their review of the GATS project data against the project application.
    - The address associated with the 'Standing Order' must align with the 'Project Location' provided on the application.
    - The 'System Characteristics' detailed in the GATS Registry must align exactly with the array details provided in the Part II application. Each characteristic is confirmed by the Program Administrator: System size, module quantity, module size, tilt, orientation, and array type.
    - The AC size is not required in GATS; however, if the AC size is listed in the registry, it cannot differ from the AC size listed on the application.

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

- **Annual Report Response Window Opened July 1** – The Annual Report response window opened on July 1, 2025, with response submission by Approved Vendors due to the Program Administrator by 11:59 PM CPT on July 15, 2025 (for those who have not signed a REC Contract Amendment) or by 11:59 PM CPT on August 1, 2025 (for those who have signed a REC Contract Amendment). Approved Vendors with an active REC contract are required to submit an Annual Report and were sent a link to respond via email. Please keep in mind that submission of an Annual Report is a Program requirement, and failure to submit an Annual Report is an Event of Default under the REC Contract.

  Following the conclusion of the Annual Report cure period on October 30, 2025, the Program Administrator will calculate any potential Drawdowns for the annual REC performance evaluations. The calculation will include any finalized batch or contract assignments, REC delivery obligation reduction requests, or Force Majeure requests that are reported before October 30, 2025. Please review your portfolio to ensure that any contract status is correct and request any changes in a timely manner so the Drawdown calculations can be completed accurately.

  The Program Administrator created and posted training videos at the [Program website](#), in support of the close of the 2024–25 delivery year and the start of the Annual Reporting period, including:
    - [Annual Report and REC Performance Evaluation Walkthrough](#) video
    - [Community Solar Parameters Evaluation Walkthrough video](#).
      - Please refer to the [Community Solar System Parameters Evaluation (Annual Subscriber Evaluation) guide](#) as a supplemental resource.
    - [REC Performance Calculation Evaluation Walkthrough video](#)
    - [2024-25 Approved Vendor Annual Report Guide](#)

  These on-demand resources enable AVs to familiarize themselves with the requirements and understand how Annual Report data is utilized to assess REC performance in relation to contractual obligations.

- **Portal Maintenance to Modify Disclosure Form File Naming Convention** – As [previously announced](#), the Program is remediating an issue stemming from the use of identical Disclosure Form file names in the Program portal. The Program Administrator implemented a solution to block download of signed Disclosure Form PDFs on records identified as potentially impacted by the file naming/save-write conflict issue, and implemented a solution to ensure that moving forward, each uploaded Disclosure Form receives a unique name regardless of how the stakeholder named the file. On June 27, 2025, the Program Administrator emailed Approved Vendors with impacted Disclosure Forms to provide support and answer questions.

- **Reminder: Current Request for Stakeholder Feedback on 2026 Long-Term Plan Development Due July 10** – On June 23, 2025, the IPA hosted a third virtual workshop to gather stakeholder feedback as it prepares to develop its 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan (Long-Term Plan). The workshop focused on the RPS Budget and REC Portfolio (Chapter 3 and associated workbooks to be included as Appendix B), and the methodology/approach to be used for calculating REC prices for Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All (Chapters 7 and 8 and the REC Pricing Model to be included as Appendices D and E). Slides from the workshop are available [here](#). Following the workshop, the Agency issued a [Stakeholder Feedback Request for the 2026 Long-Term Plan – Chapter 3: REC Portfolio, RPS Goals, Targets, and Budgets and Program REC Pricing](#). Details of the request and how to reply by the **July 10, 2025** deadline can be found [here](#).

- **Update to Illinois Shines Office Hours Schedule** - Since 2022, the Illinois Shines Program has hosted weekly office hours for participating and prospective entities, including subject matter experts from the Sector Strategy team to address questions ranging from Program requirements to technical support to project-specific or project-category assistance. Due to continued utilization of 1:1 appointments that entities may schedule with Sector Strategists, and reduced office hours attendance, the Program Administrator will begin hosting office hours every other week for the balance of the Program Year. Stakeholders are encouraged to contact the Program at admin@illinoisshines.com for support with general inquiries, or to contact individual Sector Strategists for support in specific project categories, using contact information at the [Project Category Hub](#) pages.

- **New Homeowner Handout Available:** *Solar Loan Financing* – In March, the IPA and its Program Administrators launched the Homeowner Handout series to help educate consumers about the decision to go solar and provide resources to help them make informed, confident decisions about going solar with Illinois Shines. The first resource in the series, *Selecting a Solar Company: Green and Red Flags* is available in both English and Spanish versions, and the latest resource, *Solar Loan Financing*, is now available, in both English and Spanish versions. Further Homeowner Handout resources are in development.
- **Helping Public Schools Go Solar With Illinois Shines – Recorded Presentation and Slides Available** – The Program has prepared a recorded presentation (presentation slides here) designed to help public schools explore solar energy opportunities through Illinois Shines. The presentation provides an in-depth overview of the Illinois Shines Program, project types including the Public Schools project category, financing options, and key considerations for public schools exploring solar energy. It complements a Public Schools Case Study the Program recently created. More information and resources can be found at the Public Schools hub page.
- **New to the Program Website** – The following key additions to http://www.IllinoisShines.com have been shared:
  - Spanish Homeowner Handout: Solar Loan Financing (Program Brochures & Other Resources page)
  - Helping Public Schools Go Solar With Illinois Shines recorded presentation and Presentation Slides (Public Schools hub page)

Program News – Previously Published Items *(All Program updates can be found on the Program Updates webpage)*
- **Illinois Shines Escrow Process Launches** – The Illinois Power Agency and Illinois Shines Program Administrator previously announced the launch of the escrow process, first outlined in the 2024 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan. The escrow process may be used when an Approved Vendor (AV) fails to make promised pass-through payments to customers. Through the escrow process, Illinois Shines incentive payments will be made to an escrow agent, rather than to the AV. The escrow agent will then disburse any promised payments to customers, with the remainder disbursed to the AV. With the official launch of the initiative, the escrow process is now available for use going forward, should the Program Administrator become aware of an AV that is not passing through promised payments to customers. Questions should be directed to the Program Administrator at admin@illinoisshines.com.
- **Part II Community Solar Subscriber Verification Timeline Updates** - The Part II application submission and subscriber verification timeline for community solar projects has been updated per Section 5.E. (Part II Submission Timelines for Community Solar Projects) of the Program Guidebook. Approved Vendors must submit Part II applications and update subscriber records earlier during the Quarterly Period to allow the Program Administrator sufficient time to process applications and complete subscriber verifications. These updates also highlight the minimum advance notice for utility subscriber report requests to the Program Administrator. Key dates to the updated timeline:
  - **Part II Application Submission:** 6 weeks prior to the end of the Quarterly Period
  - **Subscriber Data Submission:** 4 weeks prior to the end of the Quarterly Period
  - **Subscriber Utility Reports Requests:** 2 business days advance notice
Approved Vendors should work to follow these updated timelines for all Part II Verifications for community solar projects moving forward. The Program Administrator will prioritize subscriber verifications for projects submitted 6 weeks prior to the close of the Quarterly Period but will continue in our best effort to complete subscriber verifications and Part II verify projects submitted past this date. Emails will be sent out to all community solar Approved Vendors with more information.
- **MES 2024-25 Year-End Report Submission Due July 15, 2025** – On May 30, the Program opened the MES Program Year 2024-25 Year-End Report submission, which is due from all participating Approved Vendors and Designees on July 15, 2025. All Program Participants should have received an email from the Program Administrator with a link to their secure MES submission portal. Please contact mes@illinoisshines.com for assistance.
- **2025-26 MES Compliance Plans Past Due** – MES Program Year 2025-26 Compliance Plans were due from all Approved Vendors and Designees on June 2, 2025. The Program is following up with entities who have not submitted a 2025-26 Program Year Compliance Plan. Failure to submit could result in disciplinary action. Please contact mes@illinoisshines.com for any assistance.

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.
  - AVs may 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 submitted to the ICC in the next memo.
  - 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)
7/22/2025	7/24/2025	8/7/2025
8/5/2025	8/7/2025	8/21/2025
8/18/2025	8/20/2025	9/4/2025
9/2/2025	9/4/2025	9/18/2025

- **Part II Verification Cut Off for July** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for July will be July 25, 2025. Applications that were Part II verified on or before July 25, 2025 will be included in the August invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between July 26, 2025 and July 31, 2025 will be invoiced in September 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** - Following the May 7, 2025 conclusion of the Small DG soft close period, review of Part I applications has exceeded the 10-day expected turnaround time. The Program Administrator is working to bring application review back into the expected turnaround time and will continue to inform stakeholders of progress. In addition to information available at the Project Application Reports page, the status of individual project applications can be checked with the Project Look Up Tool.

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
2026 Long-Term Plan Development (Chapters 7, 8, 10)	May 19, 2025	June 11, 2025	Comments were published here
2026 Long-Term Plan Development (Chapter 3 and Program REC Pricing	June 25, 2025	July 10, 2025	Request for Stakeholder Feedback here. Please provide comments via email attachment to IPA.ContactUs@Illinois.gov with the subject **"[Responder's Name] – Response to IPA Workshop 3 Stakeholder Questions"** by July 10, 2025.

- **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.
- **Updated Email Address for Portal API Support** – The Program Administrating is migrating support for the Portal's API users to a new platform, necessitating an updated email address for users to access support. Effective immediately, users seeking assistance should contact the Program Administrator at il-api-support@illinoisshines.com, and discontinue using api-support@energy-solution.com.
- **IPA Power Hour – Load Growth: How Is It Shaping Power Markets?** – On July 11, 2025, join the IPA for an educational Power Hour webinar titled Load Growth: How is it shaping power markets? This webinar will provide an overview on load growth, explore its key drivers and impacts, and take a look at the evolving dynamics of load growth in Illinois. Attendees will gain insights into trends and challenges shaping load growth and how Illinois can prepare for the state's rapidly changing energy landscape. Registration is required to attend this webinar. Speakers for this webinar include IPA Planning & Procurement Chief Jim Rouland, World Resources Institute U.S. Clean Energy Specialist Ian Goldsmith, the Brattle Group Managing Energy Associate Akhilesh Ramakrishnan, and PJM Interconnection Executive Director of Government Services Jason Stanek. Register at this link.

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