

## CDCS Program Year 2025-26 Scores Released, Program Holiday Hours, IPA Webpage on Utility-Scale Projects

November 21, 2025

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### Coming up in Illinois Shines

2025 Program events and due dates can be found at the [Key Dates & Deadlines webpage](#).

- **Key Dates**
  - **December 3** - IPA Elective Pay Webinar
  - **December 8** - Public Schools AV Roundtable
  - **December 11** - Equity Eligible Contractor AV Roundtable
- **Deadlines**
  - **December 1** - Closure of 180- Prioritization for Public Schools and Designee Renewal and Mentee Registration for AVs and Designees for the 2025-26 Mentorship Program Winter Cohort Opens
  - **December 2** - Re-Batching Opens for AVs (For December 18, 2025, ICC Meeting)
  - **December 4** - Election Deadline – Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (For December 18, 2025, ICC Meeting)
  - **December 10** - December REC Invoicing and Subscriber Data for 20 Year Contracts

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### Stakeholder Support

- **New! Program Holiday Hours** – In observance of Thanksgiving, the Program will have limited services and updates on Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28, 2025. On these days, 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. No program announcement will be released on Friday, November 28, 2025.
- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – November 26, 2025, from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, Portal, application, or other questions. Join link: <https://energysolution.zoom.us/j/91402926068>. Office hours are held weekly.
- **Application Tips and Tricks** - The Program Administrator publishes [Tips and Tricks](#) to help support stakeholders avoid *Need Info* requests that delay application review and approval.
  - **Complete separate Certified Transcripts of Payroll (CTPs) for each project, even if the projects are co-located.** Prevailing wage is a minimum compensation level set by the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL), by county, for construction activities related to public works. With the enactment of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, projects receiving incentives through Illinois Shines are classified as “public works” and therefore subject to the Prevailing Wage Act, and AVs are subject to applicable requirements, including submitting CTPs. When submitting, it is best practice to complete separate CTPs for each project, even if the projects are co-located, because the program treats each project separately from a processing perspective, though they are considered co-located from a contracting perspective.

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## Program News

All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#).

- **New! CDCS Program Year 2025-26 Scores Released** - As outlined in Section 5 of the Program Guidebook, the CDCS application window closes 90 days after the start of the Program Year. Following the application window closure and completion of the Application Review, Cure, Scoring, and Scoring Cure periods, Preliminary Scores were shared with AVs on October 31, 2025. [Program Year 2025-26 Scores were published](#) on November 21, 2025. Next steps include:
  - **Scores published** – AVs wishing to appeal their project score will have two weeks from the receipt of scores to submit an appeal to the Program Administrator (*November 21 – December 5*)

Full details on the schedule for application review and scoring were shared in [this announcement](#). Additionally, as [previously announced](#), a second CDCS application window will open in January due to expanded capacity.

- **New! IPA Webpage on Utility-Scale Projects** - The Agency's new [Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Projects](#) webpage provides detailed information on the IPA's work to bring more utility-scale renewable energy projects online across Illinois. This new resource aims to demystify the underlying mechanics of utility-scale renewables projects and competitive procurements. The webpage includes information about the Indexed REC pricing structure, the procurement process, and features links to procurement results, relevant fact sheets, and other targeted resources. With this webpage, the IPA hopes to enhance understanding of competitive procurements for large utility-scale projects. For more information, please visit the [Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Projects](#) webpage.
- **New! New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to the [Program website](#) have been shared:
  - [November Illinois Shines Data Report](#) (on [Illinois Shines Data Report](#) page)
  - [Spanish CS](#) and [DG Lease](#) Disclosure Forms (on [Disclosure Forms](#) page)
  - [Consumer Protection Working Group Meeting Minutes](#) (on [Consumer Protection Working Group](#) page)
  - [Program Year 2025-26 CDCS Scores](#) (on [Community-Driven Community Solar](#) page)
- **Updates Following 2025-26 Program Year Re-Opening** - Following the [Order on the 2024 Long-Term Plan Re-Opening](#), a brief Program pause occurred to undertake data and reporting updates, and to allocate capacity to waitlisted applications. The pause concluded on October 31, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. CPT. The [2025-26 Program Year Re-Opening announcement](#) provided stakeholders with key documents, initial updates, and resources. Additional updated information was released Friday, November 7 and can be found in [this announcement](#).
- **Winter Mentorship Registration Opening Soon** - Mentee registration for AVs and Designees for the 2025-26 Mentorship Program Winter Cohort will open on December 1, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. CPT on the [Mentorship Program](#) page. Registration will close on December 12, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. CPT. The Mentorship Program provides virtual courses and trainings covering the Illinois Shines program processes and requirements and facilitates opportunities to network with other market stakeholders. Please note that space is limited. Both mentors and mentees will be selected on a first-come, first served basis. For more information visit the [Mentorship Program](#) page. For questions about the Mentorship Program, please contact [eec@illinoisshines.com](mailto:eec@illinoisshines.com).
- **Program Releases MES Year-End Report Implementation Report** - The [Minimum Equity Standard](#) ("MES") is a key pillar of the Equity Accountability System. The Program has published an [MES Year-End Report Implementation Report](#) to share and summarize stakeholder compliance. As set forth in the Long-Term Plan and the Program Guidebook, in Program Year 2024-25, at least 10% of the project workforce for each AV and Designee participating in the Illinois Shines program must be composed of Equity Eligible Persons. The full

report, including Program requirements, Program Year process improvements, and data analytics around Equity Eligible Persons and Contractors can be found on the Illinois Shines website.

- **Elective Pay Webpage Launched** - The IPA has launched a new [webpage](#) on Elective Pay (sometimes referred to as “direct pay”), which is a way for tax-exempt entities to claim federal tax credits for their investments in clean energy. Eligible entities include municipal governments, public school districts, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations. Elective Pay can be used for solar, geothermal, battery storage and other projects, and these projects can receive up to 30% of their project costs reimbursed.
  - The IPA invites municipalities, public school districts, nonprofits, and other tax-exempt organizations that have placed a clean energy project in service in approximately the last year, or will soon do so soon, to [register for the IPA’s first webinar on Elective Pay](#) on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at 3:00pm CPT. The IPA will be hosting a second webinar for AVs in the coming weeks, as well as conducting outreach and providing education on this new tool.
- **180-Day Prioritization Window for Public Schools Subcategories Closing** - As stated in the [Program Guidebook](#) Section 1.E, Public Schools capacity is allocated by Group, Tier, location, and project size subcategories. If any of the allocations are not filled within the first 180 days of the Program Year, Public School projects will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis regardless of Tier, Environmental Justice Community location, or project size. The 180-day prioritization window will close on December 1, 2025, at 11:59pm.
- **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Mid-Year Report Submissions** - Mid-Year Reports, which show progress toward meeting the MES for Program Year 2025-26, are due December 31, 2025. Participating AVs and Designees should submit their Mid-Year Report for review by the Program Administrator through [this form](#). If your organization faces challenges fulfilling these obligations, the Program Administrator is available to provide additional resources and guidance tailored to your needs. Failure to submit a Mid-Year Report may negatively affect an organization’s request for an MES waiver. For more information, please visit the [Vendor FAQ](#) page or view the [2025-26 Mid-Year Report questions sample](#).
- **Designee Renewals** - [As previously announced](#), Designees registered prior to the start of the 2025-26 Program Year will be required to renew their status in the Program or indicate their withdrawal from the Program by December 1, 2025. Designees received an email with a link to the form, a list of required uploads, and a unique code and password to access their renewal form on October 17, 2025. EEC Designees and Subcontractors will have the ability to renew their status and will receive an updated EEC certificate following renewal review. For more information, please reference the Designee Renewal section on the [Become an AV or Designee](#) page.

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## Reference and Reminders

- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** - To avoid late requests to withhold projects from submission to the ICC, 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 its discretion and submit eligible projects to the ICC. Please note that due to recent federal action, the Agency has temporarily paused enforcement of the two withhold limit from ICC meetings. This pause will be in effect until the Agency determines this pause is no longer necessary. AVs that do not wish to take advantage of these additional withholdings may send projects to the ICC during the re-batching window. Upcoming windows for re-batching are as follows:

Re-Batching Opens for AVs	Election Deadline – 12:00 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
12/2/2025	12/4/2025	12/18/2025
12/17/2025	12/19/2025	1/6/2026

- **Portal Maintenance and Releases** - Scheduled system maintenance occurs 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. Users working in the Portal should save their work prior to the 8:00 p.m. CPT start of system maintenance window. Any unsaved information will be lost when the system is moved into maintenance mode. The latest Portal updates and enhancements, a Portal Development Roadmap, and Portal help guides can be found [here](#).
- **Application Processing Tables and Updates** - Application processing tables are maintained [here](#). These tables are updated daily. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at [admin@IllinoisShines.com](mailto:admin@IllinoisShines.com). In addition to information available on the [Project Application Reports](#) page, the status of individual project applications can be checked with the [Project Look Up Tool](#).
- **Stakeholder Feedback** - This table outlines current and forthcoming proposals and feedback requests. Details on previous proposals and feedback requests can be found on the Stakeholder Feedback page of the Program website.

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

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