

## 45-Day CDCS Application Window Open, Equity Accountability System Webinar, Call for Stakeholder Input for New IPA Resources

January 23, 2026

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### Coming up in Illinois Shines

2026 Program events and due dates can be found at the [Key Dates & Deadlines webpage](#).

- **Key Dates**
  - **January 27** - [Resource Adequacy Study Mitigation Plan Workshop](#)
  - **February 3** - [First EAS Learning Series Webinar](#)
- **Deadlines**
  - **January 26** - Part II Verification for January
  - **January 28** - Re-Batching Opens for AVs (for February 17, 2026, ICC Meeting)
  - **January 30** - Election Deadline - Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (for February 17, 2026, ICC Meeting)

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### Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – January 28, 2026, 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 every two weeks, and the schedule is available on the Program website's [Key Dates and Deadlines](#) page.
- **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.
  - **Proof of Interconnection for Large DG Applications** - Large DG applications (including EEC and Public Schools) must include Proof of Interconnection as evidence of an agreement with the utility for future interconnection, or proof that interconnection has already taken place. Proof of Interconnection must show the interconnection address, through but not limited to:
    - An Interconnection Agreement signed by both the interconnection customer and the interconnecting utility prior to the date of Part I application submittal (batch submission).
    - Utility portal screenshot displaying interconnection approval, utility name, project address, project size, and approval expiration date.
    - If a project is already energized prior to application, a Certificate of Completion of Interconnection will be accepted in lieu of an executed Interconnection Agreement or proof of interconnection approval.

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### Program News

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

- **New! IPA, ICC, and IEPA Announce Resource Adequacy Study Mitigation Plan Workshop** - The Illinois Power Agency (“IPA”), Illinois Commerce Commission (“ICC”), and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (“IEPA”) will host a stakeholder workshop on the Resource Adequacy Study Mitigation Plan on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CPT. [Please register with this link](#). Registration is required to

attend the workshop. The IPA, ICC, and IEPA issued the Resource Adequacy Study Report on December 15, 2025, in response to the directive in Section 9.15(o) of the IEPA Act. The upcoming stakeholder workshop will present study findings, outline next steps and subsequent phases of work, and introduce the Mitigation Plan's process and timeline. Following the workshop, the Agencies will open a stakeholder feedback period, seeking written comments to inform the development of the Mitigation Plan. Please find the executive summary, final study, data, and appendices on the [Resource Adequacy Study web page](#) on the IPA website. Stakeholders are encouraged to subscribe to the [Resource Adequacy Study email distribution list](#) to receive regular updates.

- **New! New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to the [Program website](#) have been shared:
  - Updated [Consumer](#) and [Vendor](#) FAQs ([Consumer FAQs](#) and [Vendor FAQs](#) pages)
- **Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act** - On October 31st, 2025, the Illinois General Assembly passed the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act ("CRGA"). The bill was signed into law as [Public Act 104-0458](#) by Governor J.B. Pritzker on January 8th, 2026, and is set to take effect on June 1, 2026. CRGA is a comprehensive energy bill addressing a wide range of energy issues facing the State. The Act has many provisions that directly affect Illinois Shines, including, but not limited to:
  - Changes to Community Solar provisions, including a project labor agreement requirement for applications over 3MW.
  - Change in REC contract structure for Small Distributed Generation and Public Schools Distributed Generation projects.
  - Minimum Equity Standard requirements for Equity Eligible Contractors.
  - New co-location and consumer protection requirements.

Additional information about CRGA implementation will be released in the coming months.

- **45-Day CDCS Application Window Now Open** - [As previously announced](#), as a result of the Modified 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Program opened an additional 45-day Community-Driven Community Solar ("CDCS") application window on January 16, 2026. The application submission deadline for the CDCS 45-day window is March 2, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. CPT. Applications will not be accepted after the close of the 45-day window. Any project that is submitted during the 45-day application window, and qualifies for the waitlist, will be placed behind projects submitted during the initial 90-day application window, regardless of score. For the 90-day CDCS application window, final scores and random selection event results are located on the Program [website](#).
- **Call for Stakeholder Input for New IPA Resources** - The IPA seeks help to continue building its resource library. Illinois Shines recently published the Homeowner Handouts [Buying a Home That Has an Illinois Shines Solar Project](#) and [Selling Your Home That Has an Illinois Shines Solar Project](#) in both English and [Spanish](#). In continuation of this series, the Program hopes to publish handouts for real estate agents to ensure they are prepared to support current and potential solar customers. The Program is conducting brief surveys for [AVs](#) and [Designees](#) to support the buildout of these resources. Stakeholder expertise will directly inform the design of these resources, to ensure they respond effectively to real-world needs. All responses will remain anonymous; the IPA may share anonymized, summary-level insights with companies participating in Illinois Shines and the general public. **The surveys close February 6, 2026.** For any questions, please contact [IPA.Solar@illinois.gov](mailto:IPA.Solar@illinois.gov).
- **New EAS Learning Series** - Please join us in a new opportunity to equip vendors with resources and support to meet and exceed equity requirements within the Illinois Shines Program. The first webinar in the new The Illinois Shines Equity Accountability System ("EAS") Learning Series will highlight effective strategies for Recruitment and Retention of EEPs. This is a great conversation for leaders who are looking to scale workforce to meet increasing MES requirements, and scale organizations to meet the needs of diverse workforce! *Advancing Equity Through Inclusive Recruitment and Retention of EEPs*, will take place on [Tuesday, February 3, 2026](#), at 12:00 p.m. CPT. Please register with this link. For questions, please contact the Program Administrator at [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com).

- Part II Verification Cut Off for January** - The last Part II Verification date for January will be January 26, 2026. Applications that were Part II verified on or before January 26, 2026, will be included in the January invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between January 27 and January 31, 2026, will be invoiced in February 2026. Part II Verification Cut Off dates for each month have been added to the [Key Dates and Deadlines](#) page.
- Notice of Multi-Factor Authentication for SharePoint Users** - The Program Administrator will begin to require the use of a multi-factor authenticator (“MFA”) to access Illinois Shines SharePoint folders by all AVs and Designees, and other stakeholders, including utilities. Stakeholders will be notified when MFA access is applied to their folders, and the Program Administrator will be available to provide support. Please contact [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com) with any questions about the MFA process.

## 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)
1/28/2026	1/30/2026	2/17/2026
2/17/2026	2/19/2026	3/5/2026

- 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 at [IllinoisShines.com/Portal-Updates](http://IllinoisShines.com/Portal-Updates).

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
Enhancement		
Disclosure Form Export: Export by Designees contains Disclosure Forms created by AV and Other Designees	Disclosure Forms included in exported list did not always match the list displayed on screen when exported by a Designee. This has been corrected and the row counts should now match. The Disclosure Form dashboard can be accessed from the main Menu under Disclosure Forms -> View.	January 20, 2026

- 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 using the [Project Look Up Tool](#).

**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.