

45-Day CDCS Application Window Opens January 16, New EAS Learning Series, Part II Verification Cut Off for January

January 9, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Key Dates**
 - **January 16** - 45-Day CDCS Application Window Opens
- **Deadlines**
 - **January 20** - Re-Batching Opens for AVs (for February 5, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **January 22** - Election Deadline - Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (for February 5, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **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)

Stakeholder Support

- **New! Need Info Email Pause Due to Holiday** - The Program will not be sending *Need Info* emails on January 19, 2026, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. *Need Info* emails will resume on January 21, 2026.
- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – January 14, 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.
 - **Make sure to provide all relevant Certified Transcripts of Payroll (“CTPs”) for each contractor and subcontractor under contract for project construction activities.** Prevailing Wage is a minimum compensation level set by the Illinois Department of Labor (“IDOL”), by county, for construction activities related to public works. All Illinois Shines projects, with few exceptions, are subject to [Prevailing Wage](#). CTPs are the documentation required at the Part II application for Illinois Shines projects to demonstrate that Prevailing Wage was paid appropriately. The Illinois Shines program requires CTPs from IDOL. CTPs from the United States Department of Labor are not accepted unless the AV can prove the project is subject to the [Davis Bacon Act](#). No other documentation, including affidavits, is accepted for this requirement and should not be submitted.

Program News

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

- **New! 45-Day CDCS Application Window Opens January 16** - [As previously announced](#), as a result of the Modified 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Program will open 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 are not 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 can be found on the Program [website](#).

- **New! New EAS Learning Series** - To highlight the importance of equity in the clean energy economy and within the Illinois Shines Program, the Program Administrator and the IPA DEI Team are launching the Illinois Shines Equity Accountability System (“EAS”) Learning Series. This series will offer virtual trainings and resources designed to support AVs and Designees in advancing equity focused best practices across their organizations. The first webinar in the EAS Learning Series, *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@illinoishines.com.
- **New! 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 on the Program website.
- **New! 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@illinoishines.com with any questions about the MFA process.
- **New! New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to the [Program website](#) have been shared:
 - [January Illinois Shines Data Report](#) ([Illinois Shines Data Report](#) page)
- **Annual Report Draft Drawdown Results** - The Program Administrator has performed the REC Performance Evaluation and Community Solar Parameters Evaluations following the close of the Annual Report Cure Period on October 30, 2025. These evaluations may result in collateral Drawdowns for system underperformance or failure to maintain Community Solar subscription rates. Evaluation results were provided to the utilities in mid-November, and the Program Administrator shared draft results with impacted AVs, via SharePoint, on December 16, 2025. Formal notice is expected to be provided by the contracting utility, the week of January 12, 2026.
- **Elective Pay Webinars’ Recordings Published** - [As previously announced](#), the IPA hosted webinars on Elective Pay on December 3, 2025, for municipalities, public school districts, nonprofits, and other tax-exempt organizations, and December 17, 2025, for AVs working with tax-exempt entities that have placed a clean energy project in service in the last year or so, or will soon do so. The recordings, along with more information on elective pay can be found on the [IPA website](#).
- **Portal Maintenance to Address Disclosure Form Visibility Issue** - [As previously announced](#), the Program Administrator became aware of an issue following a recent portal update release in which some DFs associated with one of an AV’s DF Designees may have been temporarily accessible to other DF Designees operating under the same AV via the Program Portal’s DF Report export functionality. The Program Administrator is developing a solution designed to fix the issue and has temporarily removed the DF Report export functionality from the portal until the fix is complete. The Program Administrator will be updating the portal to ensure appropriate DF access and expects to restore access and export functionality in the coming weeks. In the interim, AVs and Designees may request support directly from the Program Administrator if they require an exported DF report.



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)
1/20/2026	1/22/2026	2/5/2026
1/28/2026	1/30/2026	2/17/2026

- 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.
- 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. 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](#).
- Reminder - Phishing Attempts** - The Program reminds stakeholders to remain vigilant against email phishing attempts and avoid opening unexpected emails or clicking suspicious links that appear to be from the Illinois Shines program, its Program Administrator, or the IPA. Official correspondence from these parties will only come from email addresses ending in @illinoishines.com, @energy-solution.com, @illinoisabp.com, or @illinois.gov – please check our [Contact Us](#) page for more guidelines.

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