

ICC Issues Final Order Approving 2026 Long-Term Plan, IPA Releases 2025 FY Annual Report, Part I Small DG Application Processing Update

February 20, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Key Dates**
 - February 26 – [Subscriber Management Webinar](#)
 - March 6 – [Consumer Protection Working Group](#)
- **Deadlines**
 - February 23 – Part II Verification Cut Off for February
 - February 27 – Close of AV/Designee Program Satisfaction Survey
 - March 2 – 45-Day CDCS Application Window Closes
 - March 3 – Re-Batching Opens for AVs (for March 19, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - March 5 – Election Deadline - Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (for March 19, 2026, ICC Meeting)

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – March 4, 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. 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.
 - **Ensure correct interconnection dates on the Part I application.** Part I Section 6 of the project application includes a text field for "Final Interconnection Approval Date (Actual or Estimated)." If the system will be interconnected in the future, please estimate the date of interconnection. If the system has already been built and interconnected, please use the interconnection date provided by the EDC on the Permission to Operate or Certificate of Completion. Review of the Part I interconnection date may include, but is not limited to, verification of compliance with ICC installer registration (if applicable), insight on the timeline of Designee engagement with the customer, and consideration when reviewing qualification for the expansion or co-location timing provision.

Program News

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

- **New! ICC Issues Final Order Approving 2026 Long-Term Plan** – On February 17, 2026, the ICC issued its [Final Order](#) approving the IPA's 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan. The IPA has 60 days from the date of the Order to publish a final Long-Term Plan that conforms to the ICC's Final Order. Additionally, the Agency will submit a compliance filing on June 1, 2026, updating the 2026 Long-Term Plan

as necessary to remain consistent with changes contained within P.A. 104-0458, marking the conclusion of this bi-annual process. The Plan details the goals and strategies for the IPA's renewable energy programs and procurements. Stakeholders can access the filed 2026 Long-Term Plan and Redline between the Draft 2026 Long-Term Plan and Filed 2026 Long-Term Plan on the [Program Documents](#) page on the website. Final versions of the Plan will be added when they become available. For more information, please visit the [Long-Term Plan](#) page on the IPA website.

- **New! IPA Releases 2025 FY Annual Report** – On February 17, 2026, the IPA released its Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report. This report meets statutorily mandated reporting requirements, includes an overview of clean energy development progress from the past year, and details the Agency's activities, strategic initiatives, notable events, and key accomplishments from FY 25 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025), as well as key developments occurring in the first half of FY 26. Complete with in-depth data visualizations and statistics, the report allows readers to take a deep dive into the Agency's work surrounding electricity procurements, carbon mitigation credits, renewable energy development, and equity. [Read the Full Report](#) or [view a one-page summary](#) of the Agency's key highlights and Program impact across FY 25 and beyond.
- **New! Part I Small DG Application Processing Update** – Following a spike in submission of Small DG project applications, 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](#).
- **New! October 31 TCS Final Scores and Project Selection** - Following the Program Re-Opening, on October 31, 2025, capacity for the 2025-26 Program Year was expanded and allocated for the TCS category. Following the application window closure, and completion of the Application Review and Scoring periods, [scores](#) for projects submitted October 31, 2025, were posted on the [Traditional Community Solar hub](#) page of the Program website. The published scores are final, and projects will be selected from highest to lowest score until the block capacity is filled. There are no tied scores, so a random selection event is not necessary to break any tied scores and order the waitlist. Full details on the schedule for application review and scoring were shared in [this announcement](#).
- **New! Illinois Solar Workforce Study Call for Study Participants** – The Climate Jobs Institute at the University of Illinois is conducting a [statewide study](#) to better understand working conditions and job quality in Illinois' solar industry. Current or former solar workers (especially installation and sales representatives), contractors, and business owners are invited to participate in one or both of:
 - [A 15-20-minute online survey](#) – participants will receive a \$15 gift card incentive
 - [A 1-hour virtual or in-person interview](#) – participants will receive a \$60 gift card incentiveParticipation is voluntary and confidential. Interviews and surveys can be completed in English or Spanish. The findings will help shape state workforce development and inform clean energy policies.
- **New! New to the Program Website** – The following key additions to the [Program website](#) have been shared:
 - [February Illinois Shines Data Report](#) ([Illinois Shines Data Report](#) page)
- **CDCS Case Study Now Available** – Through its case study series, the Program is sharing real-world examples of successful projects participating in Illinois Shines that are achieving important financial and environmental benefits for their communities. The Program's [newest case study](#) spotlights Rock Cut Solar, a Community-Driven Community Solar project in Rockford, Illinois. The study offers insights for project developers, policymakers, and community leaders interested in advancing Community Solar in Illinois, highlighting how the project's AV addressed community questions, built trust, and designed a project reflecting local priorities. To read this, and past case studies, please visit the [About](#) page on the Program website.

- **Reminder: AV/Designee Program Satisfaction Survey Open Through February 27** – On February 2, 2026, the Program Administrator opened the [2025-26 Approved Vendor and Designee Program Satisfaction Survey](#) to gauge the satisfaction of AVs and Designees participating in the Program. All participating AVs and Designees are encouraged to complete the survey and multiple respondents per company are accepted. **The deadline for survey completion is February 27, 2026.** The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete, and all responses will remain anonymous. Survey results will be reported to the IPA and published in a [summary report of the survey results](#), including next steps to address identified concerns and opportunities. To view past reports, please visit the [About](#) page on the Program website.
- **Subscriber Management Portal Feature AV Action Items and Webinar** – Development of the Community Solar Subscriber Management Feature for the Program Portal continues with a planned March 2026 launch. The feature will replace the current manual workbook process in SharePoint and allow for improved subscriber data quality, the centralization of access, and give AVs and Designees the ability to view and manage subscriptions, view unsubscribed Disclosure Forms, and import and export subscription data. AVs will be able to manage project permissions and assign Designees to view/manage Community Solar projects. To support the transition, Community Solar AVs will be required to complete several action items prior to and after launch, which are detailed in a new section of the [Portal Updates](#) page, alongside resources and a full timeline. Additional information on these action items was sent to AVs this week. Stakeholders are also encouraged to register for the [Subscriber Management Webinar](#) on February 26, 2026, from 12:00 – 1:15 p.m. CPT.
- **First EAS Learning Series Webinar Held** – On February 3, 2026, the Program held the first webinar in the new Equity Accountability System (“EAS”) Learning Series, *Advancing Equity Through Inclusive Recruitment and Retention of EEPs*. This interactive session highlighted effective strategies for Recruitment and Retention of Equity Eligible Persons, how to scale workforce to meet increasing MES requirements, and how to scale organizations to meet the needs of a diverse workforce. An [audio recording](#) of the content, the [presentation slides](#), and the [one-pager](#) are available on the [Equity Accountability System Overview](#) page of the Program website.
- **IPA Publishes Energy Storage Webpage** – The Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act, signed into law by Governor Pritzker on January 8, 2026, directs the IPA to facilitate the procurement of energy storage resources and evaluate the potential for a “Storage for All” program. The Agency has published a new [Energy Storage webpage](#) to provide interested stakeholders with detailed information on the IPA’s work to bring 3,000 MW of energy storage projects online across Illinois by 2030.
- **Part II Verification Cut Off for February** – The last Part II Verification date for February will be February 23, 2026. Applications that were Part II verified on or before February 23, 2026, will be included in the March invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between February 24 and February 28, 2026, will be invoiced in April 2026. Part II Verification Cut Off dates for each month have been added to the [Key Dates and Deadlines](#) page on the Program website.

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)
3/3/2026	3/5/2026	3/19/2026
3/17/2026	3/19/2026	4/2/2026

- **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](#).

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