

IPA Lifting Pause on Two Withhold Limit, May 31 REC Transfer Deadline, Complying with MES Reporting Requirements, Interim Capacity Reallocation and Portal Pause

March 27, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Key Dates**
 - **March 30 - 31** – Portal pause for Interim Capacity Reallocation
 - **April 1** – Interim Reallocation of Unused Capacity
 - **April 9** – [Financing Opportunities Webinar](#)
 - **April 15** – [MES Compliance Webinar](#)
 - **April 24** – [IPA Power Hour: Understanding Electricity Prices: Trends & Tools in the U.S. and Illinois](#)
- **Deadlines**
 - **April 7** – Re-Batching Opens for AVs (for April 23, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **April 9** – Election Deadline - Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (for April 23, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **April 21** – Re-Batching Opens for AVs (for May 7, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **April 23** – Election Deadline - Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (for May 7, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **April 24** – Part II Verification for April

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – April 1, 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://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/91402926068>. The schedule is available at the [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.
 - **Exact Project Values and Rounding in Project Applications** – Whenever possible, values for project details should be exact and consistent across the Program Portal, documentation, and applicable registries. For portal fields that do not allow for decimals, AVs should round to the nearest available value.
 - Rounding down - Digits 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 round down to the nearest applicable value. All digits that are on the righthand side of the rounding digit become 0.
 - Rounding up - Digits 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 round up to the nearest applicable value. All digits that are on the righthand side of the rounding digit will become 0.
 - For example: A site map lists an azimuth of 143.7 degrees; this value should be rounded up to 144 degrees, as the portal does not allow for decimals in the azimuth value. A system with a tilt of 33.4 degrees should be rounded down to 33 degrees, as the portal does not allow for decimals in the tilt value.

Program News

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

- **New! IPA Lifting Pause on Two Withhold Limit** - In [August 2025](#), the IPA announced that it was pausing the enforcement of the two withhold limit, from Part I application submissions to the ICC meetings for REC Contract approval, due to the Federal Reconciliation Bill (H.R.1) and the Executive Order issued on July 7, 2025. The pause will be lifted with the start of ICC submissions under the 2026-27 Program Year. After the start of the 2026-27 Program Year, DG projects will only be permitted to be **withheld twice** before they must be submitted to the ICC for REC Contract approval or permanently withdrawn from the Program. Projects that have been withheld more than two times already will be required to submit to the ICC or withdraw at the first ICC meeting submission after June 1, 2026.
 - CS projects will undergo the new opt-in batching process in which projects can **opt-out of ICC submission for up to four ICC meetings**. At the fifth ICC meeting the AV must opt-in to ICC submission or the project will be automatically and permanently withdrawn. This process is further outlined in the [Draft 2026-27 Program Guidebook](#). Projects that have already been withheld will start fresh under the new process and be allowed to opt-out of four ICC meetings before being required to opt-in or will be permanently withdrawn.
- **New! May 31, 2026, REC Transfer Deadline** - In preparation for the close of the 2025-26 delivery year and the upcoming Annual Report, the Program Administrator reminds AVs that **all REC transfers must be completed by 11:59 p.m. CPT on May 31, 2026**. RECs will be counted toward the 2025-26 Annual Report based on the date that their transfer is complete, NOT the day that their transfer is initiated or when they are generated. Ensuring REC transfers are complete will help minimize potential Drawdowns on posted collateral.
- **New! Resources and Guidance for Complying with MES Reporting Requirements and Upcoming Webinar** - [As previously announced](#), in response to stakeholder feedback, MES reporting, previously submitted in two separate reports, will be consolidated into one report due on July 15, 2026. This new combined report, the *MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report*, allows entities to simultaneously submit their 2026-27 MES Compliance Plan and their 2025-26 MES Year-End Report. All AVs and Designees participating in the Program are required to submit the *MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report*, [including EECs starting PY 2026-27](#). The Combined Report has two sections:
 - The MES Year-End Report looks backward and captures how your organization achieved the MES requirement for the 2025-26 Program Year.
 - The MES Compliance Plan is forward-looking and captures how your organization intends to achieve compliance with the MES requirement in the upcoming 2026-27 Program Year.

To ensure compliance and prepare for the upcoming MES reporting season, Illinois Shines AVs and Designees are invited to join the Program's upcoming MES Compliance Webinar on **Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. CPT**. This webinar will provide guidance on preparing and submitting the *MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report*. Register for the webinar [here](#).

- **New! Interim Capacity Reallocation Details and Portal Pause** - [As previously shared](#), on October 31, 2025, the IPA published an updated 2024 Long-Term Plan that conformed with the ICC Order in [Docket 23-0714](#). Changes from the 2024 Long-Term Plan Re-opening impacting Illinois Shines include imposing an interim reallocation of 50% of remaining unused capacity on April 1, 2026, distributed among waitlisted projects as the waitlist exists on April 1, 2026. To reallocate capacity by April 1, the Program will pause for two business days, from March 29, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. CPT through April 1, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. CPT, to undertake data and reporting updates necessary to reallocate program capacity, make updates to the Program website and the Program Portal, and allocate capacity to waitlisted applications. Please see [this announcement](#) for further details of the process and impacts to the Program Portal during the Program pause.

- **New! Consumer Protection Working Group Moving to Quarterly Schedule** – [As previously announced](#), the Program Administrators and IPA proposed changing the cadence of the Consumer Protection Working Group to a quarterly schedule for a richer agenda and more robust discussion from stakeholders. Requests for feedback were due March 25, 2026. Effective June 2026, the meetings will shift to a quarterly schedule, occurring on the first Friday of March, June, September, and December. The next meeting is on Friday, June 5, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. CST. Should circumstances require, the Programs and IPA can schedule a special meeting outside of this cadence and would endeavor to provide stakeholders with at least two weeks' notice of such a meeting.
- **New! IPA Power Hour - Understanding Electricity Prices: Trends & Tools in the U.S. and Illinois** - On April 24, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. CT, the IPA will host the educational Power Hour webinar, *Understanding Electricity Prices: Trends & Tools in the U.S. and Illinois*. The session will dive into how electricity prices are set, recent national and Illinois trends, key drivers behind price changes, and market developments shaping future costs. Attendees will also learn about tools and strategies that states are deploying to navigate these evolving dynamics. Featured speakers for this webinar include Will Gorman, Research Scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, who co-authored a Science Direct white paper on factors influencing recent retail electricity price trends; Nathan Miller, Senior Director at Energy + Environmental Economics, Inc., which collaborated with IPA and other Illinois state agencies on the Resource Adequacy Study; and James Rouland, IPA Planning & Procurement Chief. Registration is required to attend. [Please register with this link](#).
- **New! Stakeholder Feedback for Draft Program Guidebook and Consumer Protection Published** – The IPA released drafts of several key program documents for stakeholder feedback, including the [Draft 2026-27 Program Year Program Guidebook](#), the [Draft Consumer Protection Handbook](#), Illinois Shines [CS Contract Requirements](#) and [DG Contract Requirements](#), and the [2026 REC Adder – Categories of Stranded Customers Update](#) document. Stakeholder feedback was due March 20, 2026, and comments received have been published to the [Stakeholder Feedback](#) page. The Agency will release the final Program Guidebook and Consumer Protection documents for the 2026-27 Program Year on April 17, 2026, 45 days in advance of the start of the Program Year, to allow Program participants time to prepare for changes in the Program before the 2026-27 Program Year commences on June 1, 2026.
- **New! New to the Program Website** – The following key additions to the [Program website](#) have been shared:
 - [Program Guidebook Comments](#) (on [Stakeholder Feedback](#) page)
 - [Consumer Protection Documents Comments](#) (on [Stakeholder Feedback](#) page)
 - [2025-26 Mentorship Page Resources and Graduation Event Images](#) ([Mentorship Program](#) page)
 - Updated [English](#) and [Spanish](#) Solar Restitution Program Claims Forms ([Solar Restitution](#) page)
- **Expedited CDCS Application Review and Scoring Schedule for 45-Day Application Window** – As a result of the Modified 2024 Long-Term Plan, the Program opened an additional 45-day CDCS application window from January 16, 2026, to March 2, 2026. Any project submitted during the 45-day window that qualifies for the waitlist will be placed behind projects submitted during the initial 90-day application window, regardless of score. On March 20, the Program announced an expedited review and scoring schedule to prioritize the selection of projects in the 2025-26 Program Year. AVs should review the planned, [updated timeline](#) and ensure a timely response to the Program Administrator. Failure to respond to the Program Administrator by the end of each cure period may result in project removal. The last eligible ICC Meeting for the 2025-26 Program Year is May 21, 2026. Projects not selected for capacity during the Random Selection Event will remain on the waitlist until new capacity becomes available at the start of the 2026-27 Program Year and will be subject to all 2026-27 Program Year requirements and, if awarded capacity, will be placed on the 2026 REC Delivery Contract.
- **Financing Opportunities Webinar – April 9, 2026** – [As previously announced](#), the Program Administrator will host a webinar on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 12:00p.m. CPT to provide information on financial resources and financing opportunities, including grant and loan programs, Illinois Shines vendors can pursue. Presenters

include Illinois Shines partner organizations HACIA, NLR, CEJF, and the Ameren Market Development Initiative. The event will be recorded, with presentation materials shared afterward. [Please register here.](#)

- **East St. Louis CEJA Community Day** – CEJA grantees in East St. Louis are organizing a [Community Day](#) on Saturday April 4, 2026, from 11:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. at Wyvetter H. Younge Higher Education Campus and are seeking employer participation. The event will connect residents, businesses, and community partners to career opportunities, clean energy resources, and workforce education. Employer participation allows businesses to meet and recruit local talent, including EEPs, share information about industry pathways, and help strengthen the regional clean energy workforce ecosystem. [Visit the website](#) or contact info@ucmetroeast.org for registration, event details and logistics.
- **IPA to Host Information Sessions, Offer Technical Assistance on Solar Tax Credit Opportunity for Tax Exempt Entities** – [As previously announced](#), local governments, public school districts, and other tax-exempt organizations can now receive tax credit reimbursements for 30% or more of the costs of their clean energy projects from the federal government, on top of the solar incentives available at the state level through IPA’s two programs: Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All. [Sign up](#) for a series of information sessions hosted by the IPA to ensure that tax-exempt entities purchasing solar and other clean energy assets have the resources they need to make use of this new federal tool.
- **Portal Pause for Interim Capacity Reallocation** – [As previously announced](#), changes from the 2024 Long-Term Plan Re-opening included imposing an interim reallocation of 50% of remaining unused capacity on April 1, 2026, to distribute among waitlisted projects as the waitlist exists on April 1, 2026. **The Program will pause for two business days, from 12:00 a.m. on March 30, 2026, through March 31, 2026. The Portal is scheduled to reopen at 8:00 a.m. on April 1, 2026.** During the Portal closure, the Program will determine the amount of unused capacity and redistribute it in accordance with the prioritization for year-end reallocation set out in Section 7.3.4 of the 2024 Long-Term Plan, with the exception of the 25% rollover of unallocated Public Schools capacity. Developer caps currently in effect will continue to apply after capacity is added. Resulting project approvals and updated waitlists will follow.
- **Illinois Shines Honors Graduating Mentees of 2025-26 Mentorship Program Winter Cohort** – [As previously announced](#), the Illinois Shines 2025-26 Mentorship Program Winter Cohort concluded March 5, 2026, with an in-person graduation event for 16 mentees at Hire360 in Chicago. The event capped an eight-week Mentorship Program, from January to March, during which mentees completed virtual training courses and participated in live, interactive sessions with experienced AV mentors and the Program Administrator’s subject matter experts. A final report covering both the Fall and Winter cohorts will be issued in May 2026. For more information and resources, please visit the [Mentorship Program](#) page on the Program website.

Reference and Reminders

- **Request for 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 Release	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
Consumer Protection Documents	3/19/2026	3/20/2026	IPA is reviewing comments, which have been posted to the Program website.
Draft 2026-27 Program Guidebook	3/19/2026	3/20/2026	

- **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)
4/7/2026	4/9/2026	4/23/2026
4/21/2026	4/23/2026	5/7/2026

- **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. [As previously announced](#), the Portal will be closed from 12:00 a.m. on March 30, 2026, through March 31, 2026. The Portal is scheduled to reopen at 8:00 a.m. on April 1, 2026. 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](#).
 - **Small DG Application Processing Update** – Following a spike in submission of project applications, review of Small DG Part I and Part II 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.

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