

Release of 2026-27 Program Documents, CDCS 45-Day Application Window Scores Released, MES Compliance Webinar Held

April 16, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Key Dates**
 - **April 24** – [IPA Power Hour: Understanding Electricity Prices: Trends & Tools in the U.S. and Illinois](#)
 - **April 29** – [CDCS 45-Day Application Window Random Selection Event](#)
- **Deadlines**
 - **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
 - **May 3** – Part I Verification Deadline Under 2024 REC Contract

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – April 29, 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. See this week's tip, *Certified Transcript of Payroll (CTP) should note the Illinois Power Agency as the "Public Body"* at the [Program Help Guides and Application Tips](#) page.

Program News

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

- **New! Updated Program Guidebook and Consumer Protection Documents for Program Year 2026-27 to be Released Tomorrow** – On April 17, 2026, the IPA will publish updated versions of the Program Year 2026-27 Program Guidebook, Consumer Protection Handbook, and Distributed Generation (DG) and Community Solar (CS) Contract Requirements. These documents will conform with the ICC's Final Order on the IPA's 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan and other stakeholder feedback processes. Documents are published 45 days in advance of the start of the 2026-27 Program Year to provide transparency and time to review changes prior to the compliance period. Program participants are required to be compliant with requirements outlined in these documents when the Program Year begins on June 1, 2026, and throughout the 2026-27 Program Year.
- **New! CDCS 45-Day Application Window Scores Released** – 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. Following the application window closure and completion of the Application Review, Cure, Scoring, and Scoring Cure periods, [Scores](#) were published on April 15, 2026. AVs have until April 21 to submit appeals. The Program will hold a Random Selection Event on April 29, 2026, to break ties between projects that received

the same scores, as those scores would impact project selection or waitlist placement. Full details on the schedule for application review can be found in [this announcement](#). Please register for the Random Selection Event [here](#).

- **New! MES Compliance Webinar Held** – [As previously announced](#), the Program Administrator held an MES Compliance Webinar on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, to provide guidance to AVs and Designees on the [MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report](#) due on July 15, 2026, and [new MES requirements for EECs](#) that begin in Program Year 2026-27. A [recording of the event](#) and [presentation slides](#) are now available. Q&A will be forthcoming.
- **New! EEC Roundtable Interest Form** – The Program is excited to host a virtual Spring EEC Roundtable on May 13, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. CPT. The EEC Roundtable provides an opportunity for EEC participants to learn more about the *Minimum Equity Standard Combined Compliance Plan and Year-End Report*, share questions, feedback, and insights on Program challenges and market obstacles with members of the Program Administrator team, and connect with and learn from other EECs. To attend, EECs should complete the [2025-26 Spring EEC Roundtable Interest Form](#) by April 29, 2026. The expected time commitment is 60-75 minutes.
- **New! 2026 REC Contracts Rollout and Deadline for Part I Project Verification under 2024 REC Contract** – [As previously shared](#), following the ICC’s approval of the 2026 Long-Term Plan and the signing of the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act into law, the IPA will release the draft 2026 REC Contract on April 17, 2026 for stakeholder comment. All comments are due by May 1, 2026. The final versions of the 2026 REC Contracts will be posted on June 1, 2026. As specified in Section 6.B of the [draft 2026-27 Program Guidebook](#), the new 2026 REC Contract will be used for all applications approved by the ICC starting June 1, 2026, regardless of application submission date. **The final ICC meeting approving projects under the 2024 REC Contracts will be May 21, 2026. Projects must be Part I Verified (not just submitted) by May 3, 2026, to be included in this ICC submission.** While the Program is currently processing Part I applications within 10 business days, a spike in application submissions may result in longer processing times and the Program cannot guarantee verification of Part I applications by May 3. **Participating entities are encouraged to submit Part I applications for the 2024 REC Contract as soon as possible, and to be responsive to Need Info requests and all communication from the Program Administrator.**
- **New! New to the Program Website** – Key additions to the [Program website](#):
 - MES Compliance Webinar [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#) ([Program Year Webinars](#) page)
 - [Updated Annual Report and REC Performance Evaluation Walkthrough video](#) ([Help Guides](#) page)
 - [Updated Community Solar Parameters Evaluation Walkthrough video](#) ([Help Guides](#) page)
- **Financing Opportunities Webinar Held** – [As previously announced](#), the Program Administrator held a webinar on Thursday, April 9, 2026, to provide information on financial resources and financing opportunities, including grant and loan programs, Illinois Shines vendors can pursue, with presenters from HACIA, NLR, CEJF, and the Ameren Market Development Initiative. A [recording of the event](#), [presentation slides](#), and Q&A from the webinar are available at the [Program Year Webinars](#) page.
- **IPA Hosts Roundtables on Elective Pay Across Illinois** – The IPA conducted an eight-city Elective Pay roadshow across Illinois to support public and nonprofit entities in accessing federal clean energy tax credits. Participants received practical guidance on the mechanics of Elective Pay, its application to specific projects, and information on financing (such as the [Illinois Finance Authority EERLF bridge loan](#)). If you are a tax-exempt entity that missed these sessions, please contact IPA for direct assistance at IPA.ContactUs@illinois.gov. Please notify any tax-exempt entities in your network that the IPA continues to offer technical assistance, through the end of June, for free!
- **IPA Racial Disparity and Availability Study Consultant to Host Public Hearings** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA partnered with Griffin & Strong, P.C. to conduct a Racial Disparity and Availability Study to

measure the presence and impact of discrimination on minority- and women-owned businesses and workers in Illinois' clean energy economy. Griffin & Strong will host Public Hearing Sessions for the Study on [Wednesday, May 6, 2026](#), and [Thursday, May 7, 2026](#), at 6:00 p.m. CST. Please register for the proper session with the hyperlinks above.

- **Batch Fee Reporting Portal Feature Release** – [As previously announced](#), the Program launched a Batch Fee Reporting Portal feature allowing AVs to see details about the fees applied to their batches. AVs are now able to see the application fee per kW, credit card fees, and total batch fees updated dynamically as projects are added to the batch. For each batch, AVs are able to export a report with batch fee details, and a list of each project and project size originally included in the batch. This feature can support AVs in numerous additional ways, listed in the Program's previous announcements.
- **Part II Verification Cut Off for April** – The last Part II Verification date for April will be April 24, 2026. Applications that were Part II verified on or before April 24, 2026, will be included in the May invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between April 25 and April 30, 2026, will be invoiced in June 2026. Part II Verification Cut Off dates for each month have been added to the [Key Dates and Deadlines](#) page on the Program website.
- **IPA Power Hour - Understanding Electricity Prices: Trends & Tools in the U.S. and Illinois** – On April 24, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. CPT, 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, market developments shaping future costs, and strategies that states are deploying to navigate these evolving dynamics. Registration is required to attend. [Please register with this link.](#)

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 [Stakeholder Feedback](#) page of the Program website.

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Release	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
2026 REC Contracts	4/17/2026	5/1/2026	

- **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 June 1, 2026. 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)
4/21/2026	4/23/2026	5/7/2026
5/5/2026	5/7/2026	5/21/2026

- **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. 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](#). For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com.
 - Following a spike in Small DG applications, Part II application reviews have returned to the 10-day expected turnaround time.
 - On Tuesday, April 14, 2026, the Program sent out *Need Info* requests without notifying stakeholders. *Need Info* requests will continue to be sent on Mondays and Wednesdays unless otherwise announced.

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