

Update on Small DG Verifications, Program Year 2026-27 Program Documents, Draft 2026 REC Delivery Contracts for Stakeholder Feedback

April 24, 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](#)
 - **May 1** – EEC Subcategory Merging
- **Deadlines**
 - **April 24** – Part II Verification for April
 - **May 1** – Draft 2026 REC Delivery Contracts – Stakeholder Feedback Deadline
 - **May 3** – Part I Verification Deadline for May 21, 2026, ICC Meeting
 - **May 5** – Re-Batching Opens for AVs (For May 21, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **May 7** – Election Deadline – Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (For May 21, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **May 14** – Part I Verification Deadline for May 29, 2026, ICC Meeting

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 [Application Tips and Tricks](#) to help support stakeholders avoid Need Info requests that delay application review and approval. See this week's tip: [Add Comments to the Application Overview to Help Prevent Need Info Requests](#).

Program News

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

- **New!** **Update on Small DG Part I Verification Deadlines, Processing Queue, and ICC Trade Dates** – [As recently shared](#), the Program has received a high volume of Part I Small DG project applications seeking approval under the 2024 REC Delivery Contract. In an effort to Part I verify as many project applications as possible under the 2024 REC Delivery Contract, the Program Administrator has added additional processing capacity through a combination of increased staff hours, deferring non-essential tasks, and contracting additional employees. These efforts nearly double the capacity to review applications and address *Need Info* case responses, while continuing to be mindful of Part II application processing demands. In support of stakeholders, the IPA requested and secured ICC approval for a new, additional ICC meeting on May 29, 2026, supported by a shortened, non-standard process schedule. Please see the full announcement for details. Please note that the new Part I Verification deadline is May 14, 2026.
- **New!** **Updated Program Documents for Program Year 2026-27 Released** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA published updated versions of the [Program Year 2026-27 Program Guidebook](#), [Consumer Protection](#)

[Handbook](#), [DG](#) and [CS](#) Contract Requirements, and updated [Stranded Customer REC Adder Categories](#). The published documents conform with the ICC's Final Order on the IPA's 2026 Long-Term Plan, the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act, and other stakeholder feedback processes. These updated documents take effect at the start of the 2026-27 Program Year commencing on June 1, 2026. Program participants are required to be compliant with requirements outlined in these documents throughout the 2026-27 Program Year and are encouraged to review Program changes. The Agency issued Rationale Documents, outlining its final decisions for the [Program Guidebook](#) and [Consumer Protection documents](#), respectively.

- **New!** **IPA Publishes Draft 2026 REC Delivery Contracts for Stakeholder Feedback** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA issued a [Request for Stakeholder Comments](#) on the draft 2026 [15-Year](#) And [20-Year REC Delivery Contracts](#). The draft REC Contracts have changes to conform with the ICC's Final Order on the IPA's 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, as well as the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act. Responses are due by May 1, 2026, and should be sent to IPA.Solar@illinois.gov with the subject line “[Stakeholder Name] – 2026 REC Contract Feedback.” Draft REC Delivery Contracts and redline comparisons between current contracts and proposed drafts can be found on the [Stakeholder Feedback](#) page of the Program website. 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.
- **New!** **Annual Report Process Launch** – The Annual Report provides the basis for verifying that RECs from projects are being delivered to the applicable utility. Failure to file an Annual Report by the deadline may jeopardize an AV's standing in the Program. The submission window will open on July 1, 2026, with deadlines of July 15, 2026, for AVs who have not signed the REC Contract Amendment and August 3, 2026, for those who have signed it. In preparation for the upcoming Annual Report submission process, the Program emailed AVs key information, deadlines, and forthcoming resources AVs can expect in the coming months. To ensure AVs and their teams have access to necessary documents in advance of the Annual Report Response Period, the Program Administrator will contact each AV individually and indicate who has access to their SharePoint folder, allowing for permission removals and additions.
- **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 more. **The EEC Spring Roundtable agenda has been updated to provide EECs an opportunity to share real-time feedback on the definition of the EEC Self-Performance Adder.** 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!** **Updates to Illinois Shines Portal's Disclosure Form API** – On May 26, 2026, the Program will update the Portal's Disclosure Form API to comply with 2026-27 Program Year changes. One new, mandatory field will require updates to existing API integrations to prevent rejection of Disclosure Forms submitted through the API. After this update, the previous API version will no longer be available, and all users will be required to comply with the new requirements. The Program expects to make the new version of the API available for stakeholder testing and provide documentation in mid-May. Additional information and action steps were sent to AVs and Designees who use the Program Portal's API to submit Disclosure Forms.
- **New!** **EEC Subcategory Merging** – As provided in the [2024 Long-Term Plan](#), the Program will open EEC subcategory capacity to the entire category 11 months into the Program Year and thereafter reallocate any uncontracted capacity in the category at the close of the Program Year. On May 1, 2026, the Program will merge the EEC CS and DG category capacity (maintaining Group A and Group B distinctions). This change will be reflected on the [Block Capacity Dashboard](#) page of the Program website. Regarding applicable waitlists, the Program will first review CS projects in the order in which batches are received, and thereafter, project

applications received on or after May 1, 2026, will be added to the current waitlists in the order in which they are received.

- **New! Clarification of EEC Group B Developer Cap Size** – During the [April 1, 2026 capacity reallocation event](#), 50% of the unallocated EEC Group B category capacity was reallocated and as a result, the EEC Group B category block decreased in size. Nonetheless, the 20% developer cap for EEC Group B was retained at 61.12 MW, the highest the cap calculated during the 2025-26 Program Year, to avoid unintended consequences resulting from the block size decrease. This cap will be in effect through the end of the 2025-26 Program Year.
- **New! Welcome to Program Year 2026-27 Webinar** – The Illinois Shines 2026-27 Program Year will commence on June 1, 2026. To support stakeholders during this transition, the Program will host an informational webinar on upcoming Program Year changes on May 21, 2026, from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. CPT. The IPA and its Program Administrator will discuss the 2026 Long-Term Plan, updates to the Program Guidebook and Consumer Protection Handbook, updated REC Contracts, updated DG and CS contract requirements, new REC prices, REC reporting, Portal development, Prevailing Wage, the Equity Accountability System, and other important topics. The webinar will be recorded. All stakeholders are encouraged to attend the webinar, with the following [registration link](#), or view the recording to gain important updates regarding the upcoming Program Year.
- **New! IPA Racial Disparity and Availability Study Public Hearings, Stakeholder Anecdotal Interviews** – [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. On April 22, [the Program shared](#) that Griffin & Strong will conduct one-on-one interviews with clean energy business owners to better understand their experiences navigating opportunities within the state's clean energy sector. Program participants, including AVs and Designees, will be randomly selected to participate in interviews and may be contacted via phone and email. The IPA strongly encourages AVs and Designees to participate in the process and to kindly respond to inquiries.
- **New! New to the Program Website** – Key additions to the [Program website](#):
 - Program Year 2026-27 [Program Guidebook](#), [Consumer Protection Handbook](#), [DG](#) and [CS](#) Contract Requirements, and [Stranded Customer REC Adder Categories](#), redline comparison versions, and [Program Guidebook](#) and [Consumer Protection](#) Rationale Documents ([Program Documents](#) page)
 - Draft 2026 REC Delivery Contracts for Stakeholder Feedback ([Stakeholder Feedback](#) page)
 - Questions samples of [MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report](#), [EEC MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report](#), [Program Year 2026-27 MES Mid-Year Report](#), and [MES Compliance Plan for New Entities](#) ([MES](#) page)
 - [Revised 2025 Consumer Complaints and Disciplinary Actions Report](#) ([Annual Complaints Report](#) page)
- **CDCS 45-Day Application Window Random Selection Event** – 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. [Scores](#) were published on April 15, 2026. The Program will hold a Random Selection Event on April 29, to break ties between projects that received the same scores, as those scores would impact project selection or waitlist placement. Please register for the event [here](#).
- **MES Compliance Webinar Held** – [As previously announced](#), the Program Administrator held an MES Compliance Webinar on 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 available, with Q&A forthcoming. The Program has added questions samples of the [MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report](#), [EEC MES](#)

[Combined Compliance and Year-End Report](#), [Program Year 2026-27 MES Mid-Year Report](#), and [MES Compliance Plan for New Entities](#) from the the 2026-27 Program Guidebook at the MES page. Further information about the release of the Combined MES Compliance and Year-End Report is forthcoming.

- **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!

Reference and Reminders

- **Request for Stakeholder Feedback** – This table outlines current feedback requests. Details on these and previous feedback requests can be found at the [Stakeholder Feedback](#) page of the Program website.

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

- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** – AVs must indicate any requests to withdraw or withhold projects from ICC submission during a 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.** 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)
5/5/2026	5/7/2026	5/21/2026
5/18/2026	5/20/2026	5/29/2026

- **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](#) on the Program website. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com.

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