

Small and Emerging Business Designation, June Consumer Protection Working Group, Last ICC Submission and Submission Pause

May 22, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Key Dates**
 - **May 26 – June 1** – Partial Portal Closure
 - **June 1** – Program Year 2026-27 Opens
 - **June 5** – Consumer Protection Working Group
- **Deadlines**
 - **May 31** – REC Transfer Deadline for 2025-26 Delivery Year – See revised item below for more information.

Stakeholder Support

- **New! Program Holiday Hours** – In observance of Memorial Day, the Program will have limited services and updates on Monday, May 25, 2026. On this day, the Program Call Center will be closed. Updates to the Block Capacity Dashboard, application tables, application project reports, and waitlists will resume the next business day.
- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – May 27, 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. Due to Memorial Day, *Need Info* request emails will not be sent Monday, May 25, 2026.

Program News

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

- **New! Small and Emerging Business Designation** – [As previously announced](#), beginning June 1, 2026, current and future AVs that meet the definition of either a “small” or “emerging” business will be able to apply for the Small and Emerging Business (SEB) designation. The [SEB designation](#) was developed with the passage of CEJA in 2021 to help new and small businesses navigate the solar energy landscape. The SEB designation was introduced in Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) in 2021 and the 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan established it in the Illinois Shines Program. The 2026 Long-Term Plan also added new benefits for SEBs across both programs, including: a lower batch threshold for project submittal, project selection benefits (ILSFA only), and collateral deduction from REC payments (ILSFA only).
- **New! June Consumer Protection Working Group – Invitation to Suggest Topics** – [As previously announced](#), the next Consumer Protection Working Group meeting will take place on Friday, June 5, 2026, and discuss market trends, best practices, consumer education, updates to Program requirements and

documents, and other consumer protection issues for both Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All. The Program invites stakeholders to submit suggested agenda topics to admin@IllinoisShines.com.

- **New! Last ICC Submission under 2024 REC Contracts and Pause in ICC Submissions** – On Monday, May 18, 2026, re-batching opened for the May 29, 2026, ICC meeting, which is the last submission to the ICC under the 2024 REC Delivery Contracts. The IPA worked with the ICC to organize this special ICC meeting to review and approve more project applications under the 2024 REC Delivery Contract. Any projects not submitted to the ICC for the May 29, 2026, ICC meeting will be placed on a 2026 REC Delivery Contract. To allow for the transition to 2026 REC Delivery Contracts, finalized on June 1, 2026, the Program Administrator will not submit to the June 4, June 24, or July 1, 2026, ICC meetings. Submission to the ICC will resume with the July 16, 2026, meeting. Re-batching for this meeting will open on June 29, 2026.
- **New! Welcome to Program Year 2026-27 Webinar Held** – [As previously announced](#), and to support stakeholders, the Program held an informational webinar on upcoming 2026-27 Program Year changes on May 21, 2026. Topics reviewed included 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, Project Labor Agreements, the Equity Accountability System, and more. A [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#) can be found on the [Webinars](#) page of the Program website. Q&A is forthcoming.
- **New! IPA Lifting Pause on Two Withhold Limit for Distributed Generation** – [As announced in August 2025](#), the IPA paused 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 for the July 16, 2026, ICC meeting, 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. This process is further outlined in Section 5.A of the [2026-27 Program Guidebook](#).
- **New! Community Solar Opt-In Batching** – CS projects will undergo the new opt-in batching process where 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 Section 5.A of the [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 be permanently withdrawn.
- **New! New to the Program Website** – Key additions to the [Program website](#):
 - [Small and Emerging Business Designation](#) information ([Become an AV or Designee](#) page)
 - [Advance of Capital One Pager](#) ([Program Help Guides](#) page)
 - [Annual Report Guide](#) ([Program Help Guides](#) page)
 - [Community Solar Co-Location Affidavit](#) and [Distributed Generation Co-Location Affidavit](#) ([Program Documents](#) page)
 - Welcome to Program Year 2026-27 [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#) ([Webinars](#) page)
- **Updated! 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. Ensuring REC transfers are complete will help minimize potential Drawdowns on posted collateral.

- **Limited Exception to Production Reporting Requirement Due to Cessation of SDSI Operations** – [As previously announced](#), Solar Data Systems Incorporated (SDSI), which provided ANSI C.12 meters and electronic data reporting services for some Illinois Shines projects, has ceased operations. Though SDSI meters will still function, auto-reporting of production data is no longer supported as of April 30, 2026. In this limited circumstance, affected projects capable of remotely communicating meter readings from a non-ANSI C.12 certified meter (e.g. through the inverter) may report that production in preparation of the May 31, 2026, REC Transfer deadline for the 2025-26 delivery year. See [the full announcement](#) for additional details and Illinois Shines production reporting requirements.
- **New Energization Extension Request Process for PY 2026-27** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA is launching an Illinois Shines Energization Extension Request Form for the 2026-27 Program Year that will replace the existing Energization Extension Request process. This form will provide AVs a single entry-point for all Extension Request submissions and will automatically notify necessary stakeholders. The form will be shared with AVs via email and go live June 1, 2026; AVs should continue to use the existing process until then. The Program will additionally publish a guide to Extension Requests and updated FAQs on the subject and will offer dedicated support during office hours throughout the month of June. For any questions, please reach out to IPA.Solar@illinois.gov.
- **Partial Portal Closure and Project Application Unavailability May 26 – June 1, 2026** – [As previously shared](#), the Illinois Shines 2025–26 Program Year will close on the evening of Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. CPT. At that time, the ability for AVs to create, revise, submit, and batch project applications will be paused within the Portal until the launch of the 2026–27 Program Year on June 1, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. CPT. Please see the above linked announcement for full details.
- **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, semiannual subscriber verification process, and Quarterly Report process, the Program Administrator requires all AVs and Designees with Energized (Part II Verified) CS projects to ensure all Program subscriber records are up to date. **Updated subscriber data is due for all projects by 11:59 p.m. CPT on June 10, 2026.** The Program emailed AVs key information, deadlines, and forthcoming resources. To ensure AVs and their teams have access to necessary documents for 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. The Program Administrator has created the following resources in support of this process:
 - [Annual Report and REC Performance Evaluation Walkthrough](#)
 - [Community Solar Parameters Evaluation Walkthrough](#)
 - [REC Performance Calculation Evaluation Walkthrough](#)
- **Small DG Category Changes** – As noted in the [January 16, 2026, Program announcement](#), and the announcements regarding the [2026 REC Delivery Contracts](#) and [Program Year 2026-27 Program Guidebook](#), several Small DG category changes will be introduced in Program Year 2026-27, effective June 1, 2026, including a new payment schedule and Small-DG customer-owned REC Adder. To learn more about these items, reference this [past announcement](#).
- **Updated Circumstances Requiring New Disclosure Form Issuance and Signature Resource** – The Program has updated guidance on when a new Disclosure Form is required to reflect upcoming Program changes related to the new Small DG Customer-Owned REC Adder and ability for Community Solar providers to adjust subscribers' subscription sizes to meet changing needs (if their subscription agreements allow). The updated [Circumstances Requiring New Disclosure Form Issuance and Signature](#) resource was added to the

[Consumer Protection Requirements & Resources](#) page of the Program website; the above noted changes take effect June 1, 2026.

- **Draft 2026 REC Delivery Contracts Public Comments Posted** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA issued a [Request for Stakeholder Comments](#) on the draft 2026 [15-Year](#) and [20-Year REC Delivery Contracts](#) on April 17, 2026, with a May 1, 2026, deadline. Public comments received have been added to 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.

Reference and Reminders

- **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)
6/29/2026	7/1/2026	7/16/2026
7/14/2026	7/16/2026	7/30/2026

- **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. Due to a large recent influx of AV applications, review times in some cases are temporarily running slightly longer. The Program appreciates stakeholder patience as we work to return to typical review timelines. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com.

Other Opportunities

- **ComEd Incubator Program Applications Open** – The ComEd Incubator Program is designed to increase revenue for diverse contractors and positively impact local economic development by offering training on ComEd’s Energy Efficiency Program portfolio so businesses can become experts in energy efficiency and are eligible to join the ComEd Energy Efficiency Service Provider network. The free training provides one-on-one assistance with certification applications, support developing business growth plans, access to project financing resources, and networking opportunities in the energy efficiency field. Ideal Candidates would be licensed and insured contractors in business for at least two years. Registration closes June 5. [Register and learn more here](#).

- **Request for Feedback on the Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework** – The Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework within CEJA guides workforce training statewide. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is now updating this Framework to match current employer demands and make it more practical for grantees and partners. DCEO is seeking feedback from employers, industry associations, grantees, education boards, labor groups, organizations, and community stakeholders to help revise the Curriculum Framework before its adoption and release. All information provided by respondents will be made publicly accessible and may be utilized by DCEO to update the Curriculum Framework. Please submit your feedback through [this form](#) by May 31, 2026.
- **Revolution Workshop Chicago Contractor Open House** – Revolution Workshop will host a Contractor Open House at their East Garfield Park location on May 29, 2026, from 8:00 – 11:00 a.m., for contractors who may be looking to hire entry level talent for trade, warehouse, driver, project engineer, CAD design tech, project coordinator, and other positions. EECs are encouraged to attend, network with construction partners, and explore workforce and partnership opportunities. [Register and learn more here.](#)
- **East St. Louis Ameren MDI Solar Job Fair** – Ameren MDI and ISEA will host a solar job fair at the Jackie Joyner Kersee Center in East St. Louis on May 29, 2026, between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. IPA and Illinois Shines staff will be in attendance to present on Illinois’ solar incentive programs, the IPA’s equity portal, and EEP registration. Community residents, CEJA Job Hub cohort graduates, solar companies, and unions are encouraged to attend. [Register and learn more here.](#)

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