

Illinois Shines Program Year 2026-27 Opens, New Program Year Updates for Community Solar, IPA Publishes Final 2026 Long-Term Plan and 2026 REC Delivery Contracts

June 5, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Deadlines**
 - **June 10** – Deadline to Report Subscribers Active During the 2025-26 Program Year – See item below for more information.

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – June 10, 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: "[Reminder: AVs must ensure applications are brought into compliance with new Program Year requirements](#)".

Program News

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

- **New! Illinois Shines Program Year 2026-27 Opens** – On June 1, 2026, the Illinois Shines 2026-27 Program Year opened with new capacity for project categories to continue the expansion of solar development in Illinois. Stakeholders are expected to comply with updated Program requirements effective immediately. New requirements and Program features, updated Program documents, new REC prices, new REC Delivery contracts and minimum contract requirements, stakeholder resources, and more, can be found in [this announcement](#). Many of these updates were summarized in the "Welcome to Program Year 2026-27" webinar. Please find a [recording of the webinar](#) and [presentation slides](#) on the [Webinars](#) page of the Program website. Q&A is forthcoming. Additionally, the [Block Capacity Dashboard](#) provides a breakdown of project capacity for each Illinois Shines project category updated daily.
- **New! New Program Year Updates for Community Solar** – With the new Program Year opening on June 1, 2026, the available 2026-27 block capacity allocation was not exceeded for either TCS Group A or B on the first day of the Program Year. As such, all applicant projects that otherwise qualify will be deemed acceptable and qualify for a REC Delivery Contract. Additionally, the 90-day application window for CDCS projects opened. CDCS projects will be reviewed and scored based on the scoring criteria as outlined in Appendix F of the [Program Guidebook](#), with projects selected from the application pool in the order of highest to lowest score until the available block capacity is fully allocated. [This announcement](#) provides details on updated capacity and waitlist details for each project category, following Part I application batching (including size) on June 1, 2026.

- **New! IPA Publishes Final 2026 Long-Term Plan** – [On June 1, 2026](#), the IPA published its final [2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan](#), which was approved by the ICC in [Docket 25-0945](#) on February 17, 2026, and modified to conform with the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA). Please visit the [CRGA implementation](#) page on the IPA website for more information about specific implementation activities. The Plan can be found on the [Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan](#) page of the IPA website, along with appendices and a redline comparison of this final modified Plan with the one filed on April 20, 2026. The final Plan outlines goals, strategies, and requirements for the IPA’s renewable energy programs and procurements, including program capacity and 2026-27 Renewable Energy Credit pricing for the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs. The Plan also covers renewable energy procurement and programmatic activities over the 2026-27 and 2027-28 Program Years.
- **New! IPA Publishes Final 2026 REC Delivery Contracts** – The 2026 REC Delivery Contracts have been updated pursuant to the final Long-Term Plan. These contracts are for use on projects approved in the 2026-27 and 2027-28 Illinois Shines Program Years. All projects approved by the ICC after June 1, 2026, will use the new 2026 REC Contracts, regardless of application submission date. The Program will provide an “off-ramp” option for any already-applied projects expecting to receive an award under the 2024 REC Delivery Contract that is unable to be developed under the updated 2026 REC Delivery Contracts. REC Delivery Contracts can be found at the [Program Documents](#) page of the Program website.
- **New! IPA Launches Phase II of the Solar Restitution Program and Expands Program Caps** – [As previously announced](#), on June 1, 2026, the IPA and Program Administrator launched Phase II of the Solar Restitution Program (SRP). The IPA launched Phase I of the SRP on May 6, 2025. Under Phase I, customers were eligible to receive restitution if they were promised a pass-through of the Illinois Shines REC payment by their AV, but they did not receive any portion of that payment (and they met other eligibility requirements). To date, 170 customers have received nearly \$473,000 in restitution from the SRP. In Phase II, the IPA is expanding the SRP to cover customers who were promised a pass-through payment but received only a portion of that payment. Customers who applied for restitution during Phase I of the program but were found to be partially or fully ineligible for restitution because they received a portion of their pass-through payment will automatically be reconsidered for restitution under Phase II. These customers do not need to submit another restitution claim, and they will receive an email from the Program notifying them of their eligibility within the next few weeks. Full details about eligibility requirements, applicable caps, and how to submit a restitution claim can be found on the [Solar Restitution Program](#) page of the Program website. Questions on the SRP should be directed to restitution@illinoisshines.com.
- **New! Part II Verification Cut Off for June** – The last Part II Verification date for June is June 24, 2026. Applications that were Part II verified on or before June 24, 2026, will be included in the July invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between June 25 and June 30, 2026, will be invoiced in August 2026. Part II Verification Cut Off dates for each month have been added to the [Key Dates and Deadlines](#) page on the Program website.
- **New! June REC Invoicing Open** – REC invoices and Quarterly Netting Statements were made available for download from AV SharePoint folders on June 1, 2026. Invoices must be submitted to the utility by June 10, 2026, to receive payment for the June invoice period. Any invoice amounts not submitted to the utility by June 10, 2026, will be carried forward and included in the September 2026 invoice period.
- **New! New to the Program Website** – Key additions to the [Program website](#):
 - [Final 15-Year Illinois Shines REC Delivery Contract](#), [Final 20-Year Illinois Shines REC Delivery Contract](#), and redline comparison versions ([Program Documents](#) page)
 - Updated [Guide to the Equity Accountability System & Illinois Shines](#) ([EAS](#) page)
 - New [Project Extensions and Renewals](#) page and Form
 - New [Success Spotlights](#) page

- New [Small and Emerging Business application](#) ([Become an AV or Designee](#) page)
- [AV Application](#) and [AV Renewal Application](#) ([Become an AV or Designee](#) page)
- [EEC Application](#) ([Become an EEC](#) page)
- [Final Modified 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan](#) ([Program Documents](#) page)
- **Updated! Small and Emerging Business Designation Application Now Open** – [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). Please find the [SEB application](#) on the [Become an AV or Designee](#) page of the Program website.
- **Updated! New Energization Extension Request Process for PY 2026-27** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA introduced a new Illinois Shines Energization Extension Request Form for the 2026-27 Program Year that will replace the existing Extension Request process. The Extension Request Form is now live and can be accessed on the new [Project Extensions and Renewals](#) page of the Program website. Starting July 1, 2026, the IPA expects all Extension Requests to be made through the Extension Request Form and will not accept requests made via email. The Program has additionally published 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.
- **Updated! June Consumer Protection Working Group Held** – The Consumer Protection Working Group was held on Friday, June 5, 2026. The Working Group meets quarterly to 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. Please find information about the September Working Group on the [Consumer Protection Working Group](#) page of the Program website.
- **Updated! Forthcoming Subscriber Management Portal Feature Enhancement** – The current Subscriber Management Portal feature requires all updates to a subscription record to be made through the upload import template. The Program Administrator is developing an enhancement that will allow AVs and Designees to 1) edit individual subscriptions directly in the Portal and 2) report the history of a subscriber including subscription size changes, terminations, and re-activations that occurred prior to the latest subscription record. This enhancement is expected to be available in July, *after* the June 10, 2026, reporting deadline for the Annual Report. As a reminder, AVs and Designees must report all subscribers active at any point during the 2025-26 Program Year (June 1, 2025, through May 31, 2026), including all subscription size changes, terminations, and re-activations, by June 10, 2026. As the timing of the enhancement launch will not allow AVs to report subscriber history before the June 10, 2026, deadline, the Program Administrator will use the Annual Report cure period to collect any additional subscription data updates and recalculate daily average subscription rates, as applicable.
- **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) Combined Compliance and Year-End Report Opens** – [As previously announced](#), the *MES Combined Compliance and Year-End Report*, which includes the 2026-27 MES Compliance Plan and the 2025-26 MES Year-End Report opened for submissions on May 26, 2026. All registered AVs and Designees are required to submit this report, regardless of their participation status for the past Program Year. Organizations that did not participate in the Program in the 2025-26 Program Year, this can be reported at the beginning of the form. The Report is due on July 15, 2026. All Program participants should have received an email from the Program Administrator with a link to their secure MES submission portal. Please use the link and credentials within the email to complete and submit your

MES Report. If you do not see the email, please reach out to the Program Administrator at mes@illinoisshines.com.

- **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](#).
- **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.

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. 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. A series of portal enhancements were added via the April 28, 2026 release including:
- **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.
 - Following the spike in submissions related to the change in REC payment structure for Small DG projects, review of 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. 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](#) on the Program website.

- **Reminder: Phishing Attempts** – The Program reminds stakeholders to remain vigilant against email phishing attempts and avoid opening unexpected emails or clicking suspicious links that appear to be from the Illinois Shines program, its Program Administrator, or the IPA. Official correspondence from these parties will only come from email addresses ending in @illinoisshines.com, @energy-solution.com, @illinoisabp.com, or @illinois.gov – please check our [Contact Us](#) page for more guidelines.
-

Other Opportunities

- **Overview of Financial Resources for Small Businesses Webinar Series** – The Office Economic Equity & Empowerment invites entities for an online conversation and the latest updates on financial resources, federal, state, and local government programs, as well as other opportunities. Participants will be able to ask Business Development Managers questions about their business in both English and Spanish. Topics discussed will include access to financial capital, such as grants and loans, and an overview of business services presented by the Illinois Secretary of State. [Register with this link](#). Multiple webinar dates are available. Additionally, please see [this document](#) for a complete list of funding opportunities and resources. Please visit the [Other Opportunities](#) page of the Program website for more information.
-

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