

Mentorship Program Fall Cohort Registration Open, New Guide for Real Estate Professionals, New Large DG Case Study

August 21, 2026

Coming up in Illinois Shines

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

- **Key Dates**
 - **August 25** – Part II Verification Cut Off for August
 - **August 28** – [Mentee](#) and [Mentor](#) Registration for the 2026-27 Mentorship Program Fall Cohort Closes
 - **August 31** – AV/Designee Feedback for Subscriber Management Portal Feature Due
 - **September 4** – Consumer Protection Working Group
- **Deadlines**
 - **August 20** – Election Deadline – Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (For September 3, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **August 24** – Re-Batching Opens for AVs (For September 10, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **August 26** – Election Deadline – Project Re-Batch or Withdrawal (For September 10, 2026, ICC Meeting)
 - **August 31** – CDCS Application Deadline for Program Year 2026-27

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – August 26, 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: ["Use the DG Project Application Checklist and other Program resources to avoid Need Info requests"](#)

Program News

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

- **New! Registration for 2026-27 Mentorship Program Fall Cohort Now Open** – [Mentee](#) and [mentor](#) registration opened for the 2026-27 Mentorship Program Fall Cohort on the [Mentorship Program](#) page and will close on August 28, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. CPT. AVs and Designees certified as EECs, AVs designated as Small and Emerging Businesses, and/or businesses that are minority-owned, woman-owned, veteran-owned, or disability-owned are encouraged to register as mentees. The Mentorship Program is also seeking mentor applications from experienced AVs and Designees, including those certified as EECs, willing to share insights into Program and solar industry-related topics with mentees. Space is limited, and both mentors and mentees will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see the [full announcement](#) for more information.
- **New! Requesting AV/Designee Feedback for Subscriber Management Portal Feature** – Earlier this year, the Program Administrator successfully delivered a new Subscriber Management portal feature, reflecting stakeholder input. The feature allows users to upload subscription data, edit and terminate subscriptions, and manage subscribed or unsubscribed Disclosure Forms, including project permissions for both AVs and Designees.

Resources for this feature can be found at the [Portal Updates](#) page. To continue supporting stakeholders, the Program Administrator seeks feedback from users of this feature via a [5-minute survey](#). Those interested in providing feedback should respond to the survey by August 31, 2026.

- **New! Illinois Shines Releases Guide for Real Estate Professionals Supporting a Home Sale with Illinois Shines** – The IPA prioritizes educating consumers about the decision to go solar and has developed a variety of resources to support Program understanding and encourage awareness of available consumer protections. In light of the growing number of homes with energized Illinois Shines projects, the Program published [Navigating a Home Sale with an Illinois Shines Project Installed: Guide for Real Estate Professionals](#). The Program prepared this guide following feedback from participating homeowners that navigating a home sale with an Illinois Shines solar project installed can be challenging. Homeowners reported feeling unsupported by their real estate agents, who often did not know how to work with a home with solar. The guide is designed to help Illinois real estate professionals navigate the distinct sale process and provides an overview of Illinois Shines, solar panel ownership models (including Purchase, Lease, and PPA), Renewable Energy (REC) Contracts, legal and administrative logistics of transferring a project, and more.
- **New! Large DG Case Study Now Available** – Through its case study series, the Program shares real-world examples of successful projects participating in Illinois Shines that are achieving important financial and environmental benefits for their communities. The Program's [newest case study](#) spotlights seven municipal solar projects in Harrisburg, Illinois, where the city government partnered with an Illinois Shines AV to develop solar through the Program's Large and Small DG categories. It also offers insights for municipalities, project developers, and community leaders interested in advancing distributed generation in Illinois, highlighting how local partnerships and visible project success can help build trust in solar and support long-term economic transition. To read this and other case studies, please visit the [Success Spotlights](#) page.
- **New! New to the Program Website:**
 - [Large DG Case Study \(Success Spotlights\)](#) page)
 - [Navigating a Home Sale with an Illinois Shines Project Installed: Guide for Real Estate Professionals \(Program Brochures & Other Resources\)](#) page)
 - Spanish [Program Year 2025-26 End-of-Year Report \(About\)](#) page)
 - Updated [Community Solar Co-Location Affidavit \(Program Documents\)](#) page)
- **Illinois Shines Publishes 2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey Focus Groups Report** – [As previously announced](#), the Program published the [2025 Consumer Satisfaction Survey Focus Group Report](#). This report details participation, feedback, and analysis across nine focus group sessions held in October and November 2025 on three distinct topics: Leases, the Illinois Shines website, and Disclosure Forms. These focus groups provided additional insights from DG customers following the [2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey](#). Please find the full Report on the [Consumer Protection & Support](#) page.
- **IPA Launches Expanded Clean Energy Dashboard** – [As previously announced](#), the IPA launched Phase II of the [Illinois Clean Energy Dashboard](#), a significant expansion of the online resource, featuring 23 interactive data dashboards that provide greater access to statewide clean energy data. Created and maintained by the IPA, the Illinois Clean Energy Dashboard is a public data resource that enables users to explore Illinois' renewable energy landscape and track the progress of the state's clean energy transition. Phase II introduces an enhanced user experience, including interactive dashboards, visualized datasets, searchable maps, and more. To learn more, users can view the [Phase II Release Notes](#) or the [How to Explore a Dashboard](#) web pages for tips on navigating the dashboards.
- **Annual Report Response Deadlines and Cure Period** – The Annual Report Cure Period has begun for all AVs. During the Cure Period, the Program Administrator will review Annual Report responses and contact AVs to address any report discrepancies. The Annual Report Cure Period concludes on October 13, 2026, for AVs that have not signed a REC Contract Amendment and on October 30, 2026, for AVs who have signed a REC Contract Amendment. At this point, the Program Administrator will calculate any potential Drawdowns for the annual REC

performance evaluations. Please review your portfolio to ensure that any contract status is correct and request any changes in a timely manner so the Drawdown calculations can be completed accurately. The Program Administrator created and posted on-demand resources to enable AVs to familiarize themselves with the requirements and understand how Annual Report data is utilized to assess REC performance in relation to contractual obligations. Please see the [REC Contract and Annual Report Help Guides](#) page for more information.

- **Reminder About Marketing Federal Credits** – Section I.C.1. of the [Consumer Protection Handbook](#) states that “any marketing to customers that mentions a federal investment tax credit (FITC) must be accurate based on current availability and limitations of any such credit and must not be misleading.” Although the residential tax credit has sunset, the commercial credit is still available and may be used by tax-exempt entities through Elective Pay. AVs and Designees generally should exercise caution when discussing tax credits with customers or projecting the amount the customer will receive. Please see [this announcement](#) for further details.

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)
8/24/2026	8/26/2026	9/10/2026
9/8/2026	9/10/2026	9/24/2026

DG projects are only 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 will be required to submit to the ICC or withdraw. See Section 5.A of the 2026-27 [Program Guidebook](#) for more detail.

- **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 [Portal Updates](#) page. Upcoming Portal enhancements include:

Development Focus	Details	Delivery
Subscriber Management: Data Export Now Allows Multiple Project Selection	Program Administrator, AVs, and Designees will now be able to export subscription timeline by selecting which project(s) they want to export the timeline for. Previously, only a large export of all projects or filtering on a single project was available. Users can now select one or more projects or all projects before exporting the timeline.	August 18, 2026

- **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.
- **Update on Part I and Part II Application Processing Following Submission Spikes** – [As previously announced](#), Part I application review time is 14 weeks and Part II application review time is 10 weeks. The Program Administrator is expanding the Application Processing team and implementing automated review enhancements to improve efficiency and increase application review capacity. The Program Administrator anticipates a return to the target two-week review time for Part I applications by mid-October and Part II by the end of November. Part II projects with a battery or storage component undergo additional technical review which may extend the initial



application review timeline. The Program has added 200+ hours per month for battery schematic review and anticipates moving battery schematic reviews to the Portal to reduce admin time and turnaround time for review. Please see [this announcement](#) for more details.

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