

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Illinois Shines Opens for 2022-2023 Program Year, Re-Opens for Applications**

*Newest phase of Program greatly expands availability of renewable energy incentives, implements Climate and Equitable Jobs Act targets*

**Chicago, IL, September 1, 2022** – Illinois Shines (also known as the Adjustable Block Program) opened today for the 2022-2023 Program Year to expand statewide solar access by resuming acceptance of both new solar project applications and Approved Vendor registrations. The Program, a state-administered incentive program implemented by the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), supports the development of new distributed generation and community solar projects across Illinois.

The re-opening concludes a temporary pause in application submissions that took effect July 1 and follows the recent approval of the IPA's 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Plan (Long-Term Plan) by the Illinois Commerce Commission. The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act provided for a significant expansion of the Program, reinforcement of the Program's consumer protection requirements, inclusion of prevailing wage requirements, and incorporation of policies to ensure an equitable transition to a clean energy future. During this pause the Program has also transitioned to a new third-party Program Administrator, Energy Solutions.

Furthermore, with the re-opening of the program in the coming year, the IPA expects that the Program will support the development of as many as 18,000 residential projects, 1,000 non-residential projects, 85 community solar projects, and additional projects located at public schools and developed by equity eligible contractors.

### **Key highlights of the new Program Year include:**

- Updates to three new project categories established by CEJA: projects located at public schools, Community-Driven Community Solar projects, and projects submitted by Equity Eligible Contractors
- A new option for projects from Equity Eligible Contractors to receive advances on capital, which will help reduce barriers to participation in the Program and help to diversify the participating Approved Vendors
- Additional consumer protection measures to ensure consumers are protected from unfair business marketing guidelines to simplify and consolidate requirements for Approved Vendors and Designees (solar developers and their subcontractors)
- Prevailing wage requirements for projects participating in Illinois Shines, ensuring that employees, contractors, and subcontractors are receiving local prevailing wages set by the Illinois Department of Labor

In addition, the new Program Year also brings a new Program Administrator, Energy Solutions, a clean energy consultancy and implementation firm that has experience successfully implementing distributed generation and community solar programs in other states. During the transition from the prior Program Administrator, Energy Solutions has been working with solar developers and installers, utilities, and other stakeholders to support an effective transition into the new Program Year. Those efforts include providing category/sector-specific support and forums, providing informational webinars and technical support forms, refining resource materials and web content, re-developing the program portal, and broadening consumer protection systems and working groups.

“This new Program Year provides an exciting opportunity for solar developers and contractors to bolster solar deployment in Illinois,” said IPA Director Anthony Star. “With the dedicated equity eligible contractor block, the program can help remove barriers to capital by facilitating submissions of renewable energy projects by equity eligible contractors.”

“Illinois is a leader in forward-thinking energy policies, and we’re excited to work with the IPA to advance the state’s admirable renewable energy goals and ensuring the benefits are shared equitably throughout the state,” said Tamara Perry, Director of Distributed Energy Resources at Energy Solutions. “We have a great team of partners who are committed to supporting an intensive program transition while rolling out system and support enhancements to benefit existing participants, and scale to welcome new participants.”

Since 2019, the Illinois Shines Program has supported the development of over 1,200 MW of solar projects in Illinois, including 39,000 residential projects and 2,200 non-residential projects. This also includes the development of 240 community solar projects, providing benefits to over 90,000 homes.

Learn more at [illinoisshines.com](http://illinoisshines.com) (For consumers interested in learning about going solar)

Learn more at [illinoisabp.com](http://illinoisabp.com) (For new solar developers and contractors interested in or already participating in the Program)

### **About the Illinois Power Agency**

The Illinois Power Agency (IPA) is an independent state agency established under Illinois law in 2007. It is charged with the development and implementation of energy procurement plans for residential and small commercial customers of Illinois electric utilities. The IPA is also responsible for the development and implementation of other procurement plans, including those to support new renewable energy development and the continued operation of nuclear plants. The IPA administers incentive programs and conducts procurements to promote renewable and zero-carbon energy generation to benefit all Illinoisans. Learn more at [ipa.illinois.gov](http://ipa.illinois.gov)

### **About Energy Solutions**

Energy Solutions focuses on big impacts, believing that creating solutions that align with the needs of the market is the most powerful way to deliver large-scale energy, carbon, and water-use savings. For 25 years, the company’s cost-effective solutions in energy efficiency, demand management, distributed energy resources, and codes and standards have delivered significant and reliable results for utility, government, and institutional customers. Learn more at [energy-solution.com](http://energy-solution.com)

### **About the Partners**

The Illinois Shines implementation team includes: Energy Solutions, EN Engineering, Energy Sciences, ERTHE Energy Solutions, Group O, Recurve, Ridgeline Energy Analytics, Sunesty, The Ortiz Group, and Viridis Consulting.