



Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion

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Notice 2026.4

Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion

Date: April 1, 2026

To: Purchasing Entity Procurement Staff
Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Vendor Community
BEP Liaisons

Cc: Commission on Equity and Inclusion (CEI) Staff and Commissioners
Procurement Policy Board
Chief Procurement Office for General Services
Chief Procurement Office for Higher Education
Chief Procurement Office for Capital Development Board
Chief Procurement Office for the Department of Transportation

From: Alexandria Wilson, Executive Director

Re: New BEP Utilization Plan and Waiver Forms

This notice is effective immediately and applies to all future, unpublished procurements subject to the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act (BEP Act).

CEI is launching four new BEP forms:

- BEP Utilization Plan
- BEP Waiver Request and Review Form
- BEP Utilization Plan Review and Determination Form
- BEP Utilization Plan Cure Notice Template

Purchasing entities subject to the BEP Act must use (and include in the procurement file) the new BEP Utilization Plan (U-Plan) and BEP Waiver Request and Review Form on applicable procurements.

- The BEP U-Plan standardizes how prime vendors demonstrate compliance with the BEP participation goals by requiring them to document their commitment to meeting contract-specific BEP goals, identify certified subcontractors, submit subcontractor participation agreements, and request waivers if applicable, ensuring transparency, accountability, and consistent reporting under the BEP Act.
- The BEP Waiver Request and Review Form standardizes the process for prime vendors to document and demonstrate their good faith efforts to engage BEP-certified vendors before requesting a waiver from contract participation goals, ensuring consistent evaluation by the purchasing entity and final determination by CEI, in compliance with Section 7(3) of the BEP Act.

CEI recommends that purchasing entities use the BEP U-Plan Review and Determination Form and BEP U-Plan Cure Notice Template as additional resources to ensure BEP compliance.

- Starting July 1, 2026, purchasing entities will be responsible for reviewing BEP U-Plans submitted with bids and offers. The BEP U-Plan Review and Determination Form assists reviewers with their BEP U-Plan reviews. After July 1, 2026, purchasing entities will be expected to use and include this complete form in the procurement file.
- The BEP U-Plan Cure Notice Template provides purchasing entities with a template to notify vendors of their curable U-Plan deficiencies, the due date for the revisions, and their adequacy determination.

New BEP Forms Training

Companion training is also available on CEI's website at: <https://cei.illinois.gov/purchasing-entity-resources/compliance.html>.

New BEP Form Implementation Extension

To support a smooth transition to the new BEP forms, CEI will allow a limited implementation extension opportunity for purchasing entities that are not currently using CEI's BEP U-Plan template. Eligible purchasing entities may submit a formal request for a temporary extension to implement and begin using the new BEP forms.

To request an implementation extension, purchasing entities must submit a formal written request via email to the CEI BEP Compliance Unit at cei.bep.compliance@illinois.gov by April 15, 2026. The request must:

- Use the subject line "BEP Forms Implementation Extension Request – [Agency/Entity Name]".
- Include the following information:
 - The BEP U-Plan template that the entity is currently using, and confirmation that CEI's BEP U-Plan is not in use.
 - A clear explanation of the entity's current BEP U-Plan and waiver processes.
 - A detailed justification outlining why the entity is unable to immediately implement the new BEP forms.
 - A proposed implementation timeline, including the date by which the entity will fully transition to and begin using the new BEP forms.

All requests will be reviewed by CEI, and CEI will follow up with the requesting entity to discuss the proposed timeline and establish mutually agreed-upon implementation expectations.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact CEI's BEP Compliance Unit at CEI.BEP.Compliance@illinois.gov.