



CITY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
*Office of the Mayor*  
Thomas M. Menino

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Mayor Helps Working Families Put “Money in Their Pockets”**

### *Kicks Off EITC Campaign with Opening of 24 FREE Tax Prep Sites*

Mayor Thomas M. Menino, joined by members of the Boston Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition and IRS Tax Specialist Don Dill kicked off another tax season today. Menino announced that the Boston EITC Campaign has opened 24 free tax preparation sites (visit [www.bostontaxhelp.org](http://www.bostontaxhelp.org) for a list of sites) throughout the City to assist residents in filing their taxes and claiming the EITC. Additionally, Boston Public Health Commissioner Barbara Ferrer provided important information that tax payers may need to meet the new state law requiring people to prove they have health insurance.

The Boston EITC Coalition is dedicated to raising more awareness of this important cash benefit for working people. The coalition in Boston is recognized as a national leader in offering free tax prep sites for qualified EITC recipients and increasing the number of families accessing the EITC. When residents take advantage of the federal and state EITC, it brings significant benefits to the local economy as many families use that money to pay bills, buy groceries, or start a savings account.

“When working families do not claim the EITC, which they have worked hard for and are entitled to, money is lost to the entire community that could go towards job creation and boosting the economic activity of the whole city,” Mayor Menino said. “Last year, our free tax prep sites returned almost \$15 million in federal and state refunds to families across the city. Ultimately the EITC benefits all Boston neighborhoods and results in greater economic opportunity.”

Mayor Menino also urged employers to inform their workers about the underutilized tax credit. “The best way to get this money into the hands of the people who earned it is by getting the word out,” the Mayor said. According to national estimates, approximately \$8 million went unclaimed last year in Boston.

### **EITC Eligibility**

The EITC is a federal and state tax credit available to many low-to-moderate income working families and individuals. Eligible residents can qualify for up to \$5,000 in federal and state money, but many people are unaware of the EITC and therefore don't apply for it. Last year the Campaign returned \$15 million total tax dollars and served 9,000 Boston families. Through the direct efforts of the EITC Campaign, the dollars returned to hardworking families has increased \$5 million over the last two years. The number of households claiming the credit has increased by over 3%, yet there are still millions of unclaimed dollars.

With the help of volunteers, the Campaign aims to return millions in tax refund dollars to the pockets of Boston's low-to-moderate income families. Residents who qualify for the tax credit can go

to the tax prep site in their community and have their taxes done for free. All tax prep sites use E-file and allow tax filers to receive their tax refund within 7 to 10 days. They will also receive financial counseling and have a chance to learn about and access economic enhancements such as health care and foodstamps. Families and individuals may qualify for the earned income tax credit if they worked in the year 2007 and earned less than \$39,000 (visit the website for all income limit requirements). To find out if you qualify for the tax credit, call 617 918 5275 or visit [www.bostontaxhelp.org](http://www.bostontaxhelp.org).

The Boston EITC Campaign is a collaboration of government agencies, foundations, community-based, non-profit organizations, as well as the business community. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provides free software and training materials to the volunteer sites. Together, the Campaign and the IRS provide training to site staff and volunteers.

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