

# Flu season has Boston declaring health emergency

January 9 2013, by Bob Salsberg

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Massachusetts public health officials are reporting 18 flu-related deaths in the state already this season, and Boston has declared a public health emergency.

A spokeswoman for Mayor Thomas Menino says the city is working with health care centers to offer free flu vaccines and also hopes to set up public locations where people can go for vaccinations. The city is reporting four flu-related deaths, all seniors.

Menino said Wednesday there have been about 700 confirmed cases of the flu in Boston so far this season, compared with 70 all of last season.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health says the state is one of 29 reporting higher-than-normal rates of flu-like illnesses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned of a harsh flu season, which usually peaks in midwinter.

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