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## Food stamps given boost

Benefits have not been increased in two years

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's 22 million food stamp recipients will get an average 8.5 percent benefit increase — their first in two years — on Friday as the government begins a new fiscal year.

But the start of fiscal 1983 will also usher in cutbacks and economy measures in other welfare programs and Medicare, the health insurance program for 28 million elderly and disabled Americans.

Many adults seeking Aid to Families with Dependent Children will be required to look for work first.

Medicare will no longer pay for private rooms in hospitals or skilled nursing facilities, unless the patient's condition requires seclusion. The health insurance program will only pay for semi-

private rooms, saving \$54 million.

Food stamp benefits have not risen since 1980. The boost on Friday will raise the average monthly benefits for a family of four by \$20 from \$233 to \$253.

Congress skipped last year's normal annual adjustment in the so-called "thrifty food plan" for food stamp recipients as part of

care providers, some advocacy groups fear the elderly will wind up paying a larger share of their medical bills out of their own pockets.

The tax bill also allows states to charge adult Medicaid patients a small fee for all non-emergency services. Pregnant women and children are exempt.

## Cuts in welfare and medicare could hurt 28 million people

Pres. Ronald Reagan's first round of budget cuts.

The lawmakers also refigured the formula to hold down this year's increase in the \$11.3 billion program. They ordered \$548 million in savings — including reduced payments to states with high error rates — in a bid to keep the fiscal 1983 costs under \$11 billion.

As part of the \$100 billion tax boost that Congress enacted in August, Medicare is putting new limits on hospital reimbursements to save \$480 million.

It also will pay radiologists and pathologists only 80 percent of their "reasonable" costs, instead of the full cost, to save \$145 million.

Although these and other changes in reimbursement rates are directed at hospitals, physicians and other health

Last Oct. 1, the Reagan administration and Congress instituted sweeping eligibility changes in the AFDC program, which costs \$15 billion and supports 11 million mothers and children and, in some states, unemployed fathers.

Last year's changes made it harder for people to stay on the AFDC rolls if they worked. The new rule changes will allow states to require job searches for AFDC applicants; currently, states can only require job searches for those on the rolls.

AFDC payments will be barred to families where the only reason for the parent's absence is that he or she is on military duty.

States also will be barred from making welfare payments retroactive to the first day of the month for new recipients.

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## Reagan to go on TV for news meeting

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan will hold a news conference in the White House East Room tonight at 7:30 EDT, deputy White House press secretary Larry Speakes announced Monday.

The session with reporters,

which the three networks, ABC, NBC and CBS, say they will broadcast live, will be Reagan's 13th since taking office. His most recent news conference was on July 28.

No information was available on the topic of the conference.

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