

What Part of Legal Immigration Don't You Understand?

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Illustrated by Terry Colon

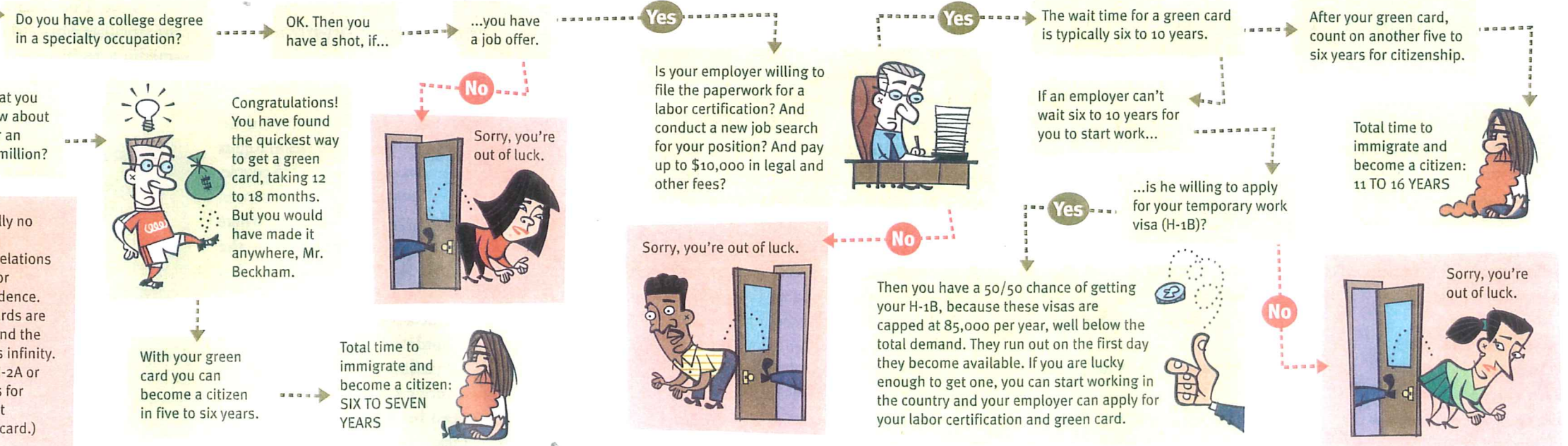
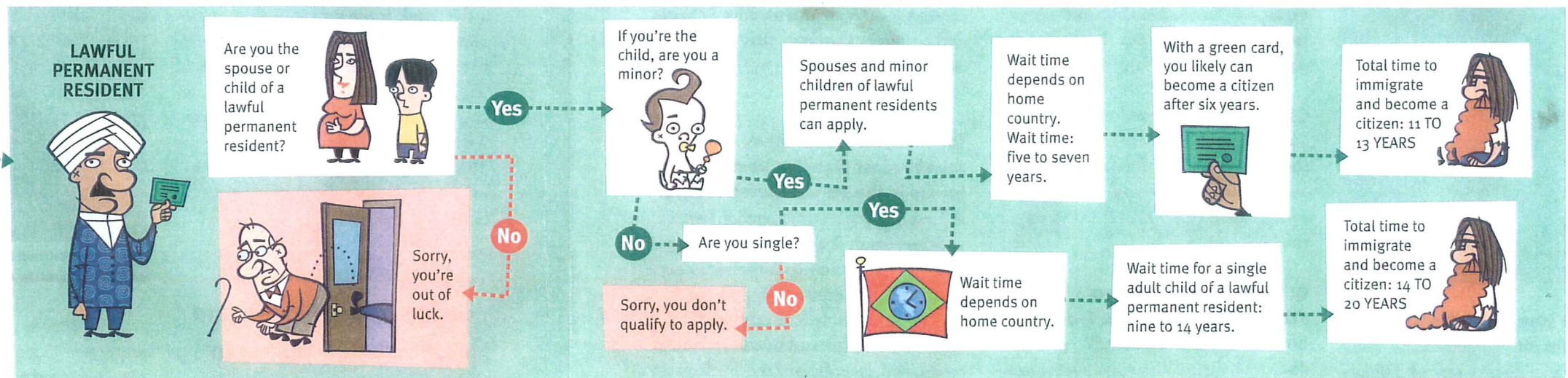
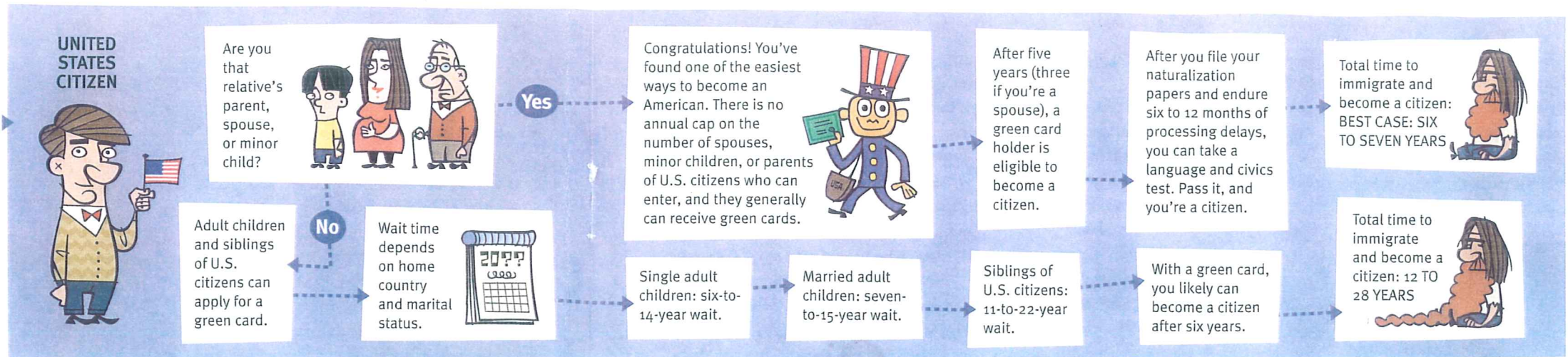
Opponents of illegal immigration are fond of telling foreigners to "get in line" before coming to work in America. But what does that line actually look like, and how many years (or decades) does it take to get through? Try it yourself!



Do you have family in the USA?
 Yes
 Is your relative a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident?

Are you skilled?
 Yes
 Do you have a college degree in a specialty occupation?
 Yes
 Can you prove that you are a genius? How about a star athlete? Or an investor with \$1 million?

Sorry! There is virtually no process for unskilled immigrants without relations in the U.S. to apply for permanent legal residence. Only 10,000 green cards are allotted every year, and the wait time approaches infinity. (Those who receive H-2A or H-2B temporary visas for seasonal work cannot transition to a green card.)



(Flynn is director of government affairs and Dalmia is a senior policy analyst at Reason Foundation. This chart was developed by Reason Foundation in collaboration with the National Foundation for American Policy.)