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# Becoming Legal: Immigration Law And Mixed-Status Families



## Synopsis

There are approximately eleven million undocumented people living in the United States, and most of them have family members who are U.S. citizens. There is a common perception that marriage to a U.S. citizen puts undocumented immigrants on a quick-and-easy path to U.S. citizenship. But for people who have entered the U.S. unlawfully and live here without papers, the line to legal status is neither short nor easy, even for those with spouses who are U.S. citizens. *Becoming Legal:*

*Immigration Law and Mixed-Status Families* follows mixed-status couples down the long and bumpy road of immigration processing. It explores how they navigate every step along the way, from the decision to undertake legalization, to the immigration interview in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, to the effort to put together a case of "extreme hardship" so that the undocumented family member can return. Author Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz also discusses families' efforts to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of immigration processing--both for those who are successful and those who are not.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"*Becoming Legal* is a gripping book about a deeply disturbing and inhumane process faced by millions of largely working-class Latinos/as. Everyone should read this work to understand our flawed immigration system and how it affects millions of real lives. By combining individual cases and voices with explanations of the complex legal dimension, Gomberg-Muñoz is able to provide a clear picture of this heart-wrenching process."--Enrique C. Ochoa, California State University, Los Angeles  
"*Becoming Legal* will be a classic text for introductory courses on globalization and

migration, on the U.S. immigration system, and on 'the immigrant experience.' No other book that I know of examines the history of our current immigration control system and how it systematically penalizes Mexican immigrants. It is well written, well argued, and accessible."--Sarah Horton, University of Colorado, Denver

Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Loyola University Chicago. Her work has been published in *American Ethnologist*, *American Anthropologist*, *Human Organization*, and other journals. She is the author of *Labor and Legality: An Ethnography of a Mexican Immigrant Network* (OUP, 2010).

Excellent

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