

## Obama's uncle wins immigration battle, gets OK to stay in U.S.

By Julia Talanova , CNN

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**(CNN)** -- Onyango Okech Obama -- an uncle of President Barack Obama who has been in the United States illegally for decades -- has gotten a federal court's OK to stay in his adopted country, according to an attorney representing the uncle.

Federal immigration Judge Leonard I. Shapiro in Massachusetts agreed without argument Tuesday to allow the uncle, who has been living and working in U.S. for 50 years, to stay and obtain a green card, said attorney Margaret Wong.

At the hearing, Wong said, the judge looked at Onyango Okech Obama's character, reviewing his long-term employment with a grocery store in Framingham, Massachusetts, his tax records and his rent payments, and noting that he is not on any government assistance programs.

Shapiro also took into account federal immigration law that allows people who came to United States before January 1972 to apply for residency, Wong said, adding that her client has been living in U.S. since October 1963.

"I'm relieved, I represented the family for some time and it's really a relief," said Wong.

In his testimony before the judge, according to Wong, Onyango Okech Obama mentioned that Barack Obama stayed with him for three weeks during the future president's student days, after he was accepted into law school.

Wong called her client a proud, honorable gentleman who is quiet and very nice.

In 2011, Onyango Okech Obama was arrested on drunk driving charges, and ordered to regularly check in with immigration, according to Brian P. Hale, then director of public affairs for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

At the time of that arrest a federal law enforcement source who spoke on the condition of anonymity said the defendant was not legally in the United States and had been previously ordered removed from the country.

"I'm so thankful that everything is finished," said Wong.

However, federal immigration authorities have 30 days to appeal Shapiro's ruling.

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