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Date set for inquest into Terry Baker?s death

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A new date has been set for an inquest into the 2016 death of Terry Baker, an inmate who was serving a life sentence for her role in the torture and murder of an Orangeville teen, following months of delays.

Dr. Karen Schiff, the regional supervising coroner for the west region, announced in a Jan. 5 press release that the inquest into Baker's death had been scheduled to begin on Jan. 22.

Baker, who was serving a life sentence for her part in the 2002 murder of 16-year-old Robbie McLennan, died at St. Mary's General Hospital in Kitchener on July 6, 2016. She was transferred to the hospital from the Grand Valley Institution for Women after being found unresponsive in her cell.

In 2017, a coroner's inquest to examine the events surrounding Baker's death was announced by the then-regional supervising coroner for inquests, Dr. David Eden.

An inquest into Baker's death is mandatory under the Coroners Act. The inquest will examine the circumstances surrounding Baker's death, with the jury possibly providing recommendations aimed at preventing further deaths.

The inquest will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Jan. 22 and is expected to last up to 15 days. During that time the inquest will hear from approximately 18 witnesses. Dr. Eden will serve as the presiding officer, and Sidney McLean and Kristin Smith will be the inquest counsel.

The inquest will be conducted by video conference. Members of the public who wish to view the proceedings can do so live via ? firstclassfacilitation.ca/office-of-the-chief-coroner/inquest-into-the-death-of-terry-baker/.

Baker, who was 16 years old at the time of McLennan's murder in 2002, was convicted of first-degree murder in 2006 and handed a life sentence. Baker's then 20-year-old boyfriend, William Bronson Penasse, also pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in 2005 and was sentenced to life in prison without the eligibility for parole until 2030. Another 16-year-old ? never identified under the Youth Criminal Justice Act ? was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 18 months.