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New date set for inquest into death of Terry Baker

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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.

Dr. Karen Schiff, regional supervising coroner for the west region, announced on Monday (May 15) that a motion hearing related to the pending inquest into the death of Terry Baker had been scheduled for May 23.

The coroner's inquest into Baker's death was originally set to begin in early April, with the inquest spanning two weeks and hearing from approximately 12 witnesses. A week before the coroner's inquest was set to begin, the Ministry of the Solicitor General announced that after hearing submission from the parties, the presiding officer had ruled the inquest be postponed.

Baker, who pleaded guilty to 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 there 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.

Dr. Eden will serve as the presiding officer for the inquest and the motion hearing. Sidney McLean and Kristin Smith will be inquest counsel. The motion hearing will begin at 1 p.m. on May 23, with parties making their submissions remotely.

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 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.