

## **DESMOND FATALITY INQUIRY WILL BEGIN NOV. 18**

Thursday, Nov. 14, 2019 (Halifax, NS) – The Fatality Inquiry into the deaths of Lionel Desmond and his family will begin hearing evidence in Guysborough, N.S., on Monday, Nov. 18, 2019.

The Inquiry proceedings will be livestreamed at [www.desmondinquiry.ca](http://www.desmondinquiry.ca). The archived video and the written transcripts of the proceedings will also be posted online.

Media and members of the public are welcome to attend the proceedings in person at the Guysborough Municipal Building, 33 Pleasant St., Guysborough, N.S.

Please note that public seating in the hearing room is limited and priority will be given to family members involved in the Inquiry. If needed, there is an overflow viewing room at the nearby Chedabucto Lifestyle Centre, 60 Green St. in Guysborough.

This session of the Inquiry is expected to sit for three weeks, followed by a recess. Additional sessions will be announced in due course. Unless otherwise noted, the proceedings will be held Mondays through Thursdays beginning at 10 a.m. The building will be open to media and the public starting at 8:30 a.m.

Visitors are asked to use the side entrance of the building. The hearing room is located on the main floor and the Media Room is downstairs. There are signs on site and a Deputy Sheriff will be on hand to help direct visitors.

There is free public parking in the lot behind the municipal building and along the road on Church Street. If needed, there is additional parking at the nearby Guysborough Historical Society on Pleasant Street.

There will be guest Wi-Fi available for media and other visitors attending the Inquiry. Temporary passwords are valid for up to five consecutive days and are available at the Inquiry Administration Office.

Members of the media covering the Inquiry are expected to review and abide by the attached Media Protocol. This document is also available on the Media Page of the Inquiry website at <https://www.desmondinquiry.ca/media.html>.

### **Background on the Inquiry**

On Jan. 3, 2017, the bodies of Lionel Desmond, a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, his wife Shanna, their 10-year-old daughter Aaliyah, and Mr. Desmond's mother Brenda, were found in a home in Upper Big Tracadie, Guysborough County. It is believed that Mr. Desmond took the lives of his family members, before he took his own life.

Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Matt Bowes, reviewed the circumstances of the deaths and recommended to the Minister of Justice that an inquiry be held under the province's [\*Fatality Investigations Act\*](#).

A recommendation under Sec. 26 of the Act requires the Minister to order that an inquiry be held. With that order, the Chief Judge of the Provincial and Family Courts of Nova Scotia appoints a Judge to conduct the inquiry and make recommendations on any issues identified in the order of the Minister.

The Inquiry's mandate is to determine the circumstances under which these deaths occurred, as well as some specific issues, including, but not limited to whether Lionel Desmond and his family had access to the appropriate mental health and domestic violence intervention services leading up to their deaths.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, Judge Zimmer will file a written report with the Provincial Court containing his findings and recommendations. His report will not contain any findings of legal responsibility. A copy of the report will be provided to the Minister of Justice.

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