

Jackie Lacey

District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Shiara Davila-Morales, Chief
Media Relations Division

213-974-3525

SDavila-Morales@da.lacounty.gov

TWITTER: @LADAOoffice

Feb. 21, 2014

Woman Sentenced to Prison in Death of Foster Child

A woman convicted of fatally beating her 2-year-old foster daughter was sentenced today to 25 years to life in state prison, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Kiana Barker, 34, was found guilty by a jury on Oct. 18, 2013 of one count each of second-degree murder, assault on a child causing death and child abuse. Jurors also found true allegations of great bodily injury resulting in death and use of a deadly and dangerous weapon, a belt.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Pak Kouch of the Family Violence Division. Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Sam Ohta imposed the defendant's sentence at a morning hearing.

The defendant's then-boyfriend, James Dewitt Julian, 42, pleaded no contest Dec. 29, 2011 to one felony count of accessory after the fact and was sentenced to three years in county jail.

The child victim, identified in court documents as Viola V., suffered extensive blunt force trauma caused by "multiple repeated blows by an adult, exerting maximum force," according to a motion filed with the court at sentencing.

Ultimately, the child died from massive bleeding in her chest cavity, the prosecutor said.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department, Juvenile Division.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Annually, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](http://da.lacounty.gov) prosecutes more than 60,000 felonies and 140,000 misdemeanor crimes.