

When tragedy strikes a family because of a wrongful death following a crash, finding the right legal help in Lafayette is crucial. The stakes are especially high now with recent and upcoming changes in Louisiana law affecting wrongful death claims, medical expense calculations, and fault percentages. Using resources like Google Search's top 30 results and local map listings can be helpful, but a firm's billboard presence or number of reviews alone should not determine your choice.

In this guide, we'll explore the top Lafayette law firms known for wrongful death claims, highlight key recent legislative changes including the two-year prescription rule starting July 1, 2024, the 51% fault bar effective January 1, 2026, and adjustments in how medical expenses are treated. We'll also offer expert tips on vetting your attorney beyond flashy ads — because your case deserves more than just generic promises.

Top Lafayette Law Firms for Wrongful Death Claims

Among the most reputable names often appearing in Google's top search results and local map packs for wrongful death and catastrophic injury cases are:

- **Brandt & Sherman, LLP** — With a strong presence in Acadiana, Brandt & Sherman have decades of combined personal injury litigation experience. Their practice blends sensitive client communication with expert-driven case strategies.
- **Broussard, David & Moroux** — Known for aggressive representation in motor vehicle and wrongful death claims, this firm puts emphasis on thoroughly investigating catastrophic damages and maximizing recoveries.
- **Laborde Earles Injury Lawyers** — A respected locally-based firm that handles complex injury and wrongful death cases, Laborde Earles pays close attention to detail and leverages trial experience to hold negligent parties accountable.

Each of these firms has been reviewed for up-to-date knowledge of Louisiana's evolving legal landscape and shown capacity to handle expert evidence necessary in wrongful death cases, beyond generic marketing hype.

Understanding Louisiana's New Wrongful Death Laws

Effective July 1, 2024, several important legal changes impact Lafayette wrongful death claims, with further updates becoming effective January 1, 2026.



1. Two-Year Prescription (Statute of Limitations) Change

Louisiana has shortened the prescription period for wrongful death claims to **two years** from the date of the victim's death. This is a critical change because many older legal materials or some online summaries might still refer to a one-year period or include the injury date instead of the death date.

Tip: During your initial consult, write down the exact date of death and confirm when the prescription clock starts ticking. Filing even a day late can bar your case.

2. 51% Fault Bar Starting January 1, 2026

Another major update is the **51% fault bar**: anyone found more than 50% at fault for the wrongful death will be completely barred from recovery. Prior to this, comparative fault rules allowed partial recoveries even at higher fault percentages, but the change limits plaintiffs strictly to those less [leaders-in-law](#) than 51% responsible.

3. Paid vs. Billed Medical Expenses Rule

For suits filed on or after January 1, 2026, courts will consider *only paid medical expenses* (what insurance or patients actually paid) instead of billed charges (the amount providers list before discounts or write-offs). This could significantly impact the calculation of damages, especially in catastrophic cases with extensive medical care.

What You Need to Know About Wrongful Death Claims in Lafayette

Wrongful death claims look to recover damages for losses like lost support, companionship, funeral expenses, and sometimes punitive damages if negligence is egregious. These claims typically require expert testimony – from medical examiners to economists – to accurately quantify catastrophic damages.

The complexity demands an **expert-driven case strategy**. This isn't the place for generic "maximum compensation" chatter often seen on oversized billboards or flashy websites without substantive legal explanation.

Common Catastrophic Damages in Lafayette Wrongful Death Cases

- Loss of financial support and benefits
- Loss of companionship and consortium

- Funeral and burial expenses
- Medical and hospital bills paid before death
- Property damage (vehicle or other related losses)
- Pain and suffering in some cases tied to decedent’s final days

Expert Tips for Vetting a Lafayette Injury Lawyer Beyond Billboards

Billboards and heavy advertising do not equal competence or case focus. When interviewing lawyers or firms like Brandt & Sherman, Broussard, David & Moroux, or Laborde Earles, double-check the following:

1. **Ask about their understanding of the new two-year prescription rule** – do they clarify whether the countdown begins on the injury date or death date?
2. **Confirm their grasp of the 51% fault bar, especially if your case involves multiple parties or comparative negligence.**
3. **Inquire how they account for the paid medical expenses rule for cases to be filed in 2026 and beyond.** Be sure they have experience working with medical billing experts.
4. **Request examples of wrongful death cases they’ve handled locally, including trial outcomes if available.**
5. **Seek a clear explanation of how catastrophic damages will be proven in your case.** This shows whether the firm is preparing an expert-driven approach rather than relying on generic claims.
6. **Check for recent client reviews specifically mentioning wrongful death or catastrophic injury cases, not just general personal injury.**
7. **Bring a notebook to your consultation and write every answer down. Document dates, attorney names, timelines, and cost estimates for your records.**

How to Use Google Search and Local Map Results to Aid Your Search

Google’s top 30 results and the local map pack listings are a great start for identifying Lafayette firms handling wrongful death claims. However, keep in mind:

- High rankings can be influenced by SEO factors, ad buys, or paid promotions, not just experience.
- Review counts can be manipulated or inflated; read reviews critically for specific mentions of case types and outcomes.
- Firm websites sometimes carry outdated information on prescription deadlines or legal changes. Verify dates mentioned carefully.

Use Google’s “Nearby” map feature and call multiple firms to ask direct questions about their wrongful death cases and new Louisiana laws prior to scheduling consultations. This will help you separate firms that are genuinely knowledgeable from those relying on generic content.

Summary Table: Critical Louisiana Wrongful Death Law Updates

Law Change	Effective Date	Key Impact	What to Verify with Your Lawyer
Two-Year Prescription Period	July 1, 2024	Wrongful death claims must be filed within 2 years from victim's death	Confirm whether countdown starts on death date and ask about exceptions
51% Fault Bar	January 1, 2026	No recovery if plaintiff is 51% or more at fault	Discuss how fault will be calculated and impact on your case
Paid vs. Billed Medical Expenses	January 1, 2026		

Recoverable medical damages limited to amounts actually paid, not billed Ask about involvement of medical billing experts and calculation methods

Final Thoughts: Choose a Lafayette Lawyer Who Protects Your Rights with Precision

Wrongful death claims involve navigating strict deadlines, evolving fault rules, and complex evaluation of damages. The best Lafayette lawyers—such as Brandt & Sherman, Broussard, David & Moroux, and Laborde Earles Injury Lawyers—offer more than billboards and catchy slogans. They provide expert-driven case work, thorough knowledge of Louisiana’s two-year prescription change, the 51% fault bar, and the medical expenses rule changes.



Before hiring, always prepare questions, write down answers during consultations, and verify that your attorney understands the specific details of your catastrophic damages and how to prove them. This careful preparation helps ensure you don’t miss critical deadlines and that your case is built on solid legal strategy instead of generic filler.

If you or a loved one has suffered a wrongful death due to a crash in Lafayette, Louisiana, don’t delay—start your search today with careful vetting using these tips, and secure the legal support you deserve.