

If you've recently been injured in Louisiana and started searching for legal help, you might have heard from some lawyers that the deadline to file your lawsuit is "one year." That simple statement can cause unnecessary panic—or worse, lead to missed deadlines. However, if your attorney tells you this without first asking the date of your accident, it's a red flag that the information you're getting may be based on **an outdated legal rule**.

In this article, we'll explain why knowing the exact accident date is crucial, highlight major upcoming changes in Louisiana law effective July 1, 2024, and share practical tips on how to **find a current firm** that understands these new rules. We'll also look at how well-known local firms like *Brandt & Sherman, LLP*, *Broussard, David & Moroux*, and *Laborde Earles Injury Lawyers* are adapting—and how to spot legal marketing that's stuck in the past.

Why Does the Accident Date Matter More Than Just "One Year"?

For many years, it was common to hear Louisiana injury cases must be filed within one year of the accident—this was the prescriptive period for many personal injury claims. But Louisiana law is nuanced, and a simple "one-year deadline" isn't accurate for all scenarios.

The most important first step for any lawyer—or anyone looking to understand their rights—is to ask, **"When did your accident occur?"** The exact date unlocks the correct prescription and identifies which law applies, especially with upcoming reforms on the horizon.

Don't Just Take Notes — Write Everything Down During Your Consult

When consulting with a lawyer, carry a notepad or use your phone to jot down important dates and instructions. Many firms may overlook clarifying the accident date but insist on the deadline. Writing it down ensures you have a record and protects you against miscommunication or outdated advice.

Louisiana's Prescription Changes Effective July 1, 2024

As of July 1, 2024, Louisiana has extended the prescriptive period for many personal injury claims from one year to **two years**. This is a major shift that not every lawyer or website is updated about—especially when searching Google.

What This Means For Your Injury Case

- If your accident occurred on or after July 1, 2024, you generally have two years to file suit.
- If your injury happened before July 1, 2024, the previous laws likely apply—but you must confirm the exact date with your attorney.
- This change is designed to give plaintiffs more time to evaluate their case, gather evidence, and seek proper medical care before filing.

Verify whether your chosen firm is aware of and applies this cutoff. Firms like *Brandt & Sherman, LLP* and *Laborde Earles Injury Lawyers* have publicly updated their sites referencing the July 1, 2024 deadline as a sign they are current with the law.



Upcoming Major Law Changes Taking Effect January 1, 2026

Apart from the extended prescription period, Louisiana is implementing two other critical changes to personal injury lawsuit rules that every plaintiff should know now:

1. **51% Fault Bar:** Effective January 1, 2026, plaintiffs who are found greater than 50% at fault for their injury will be barred from recovering damages. This new fault threshold replaces previous comparative fault rules and significantly impacts case strategy.
2. **Paid vs. Billed Medical Expenses Rule:** Also starting January 1, 2026, only medical expenses *actually paid* by the plaintiff or their insurer will be considered in calculating damages—not the higher “billed” amounts. This can reduce the value of some claims substantially.

Many Google Business Profiles and top Google search results for Lafayette [more info](#) injury lawyers still omit these updates or mixture them incorrectly. When checking results on local map packs, review whether the profile explicitly discusses these laws—or if it’s just fluff about “maximizing compensation.”

How to Vet a Lafayette Injury Lawyer Beyond Billboards and Blue Logos

It’s tempting to choose a firm based on flashy billboard ads or the size of their Google review count, but this approach can be misleading and dangerous for your case.

Here’s What You Should Do Instead:

- **Ask Directly About the July 1, 2024, Prescription Change:** Does the lawyer know the new two-year rule? If they respond with a blanket “one year” without confirming accident date specifics, that’s a warning sign.
- **Check Their Website for Legal Updates:** Has the firm’s website been updated in the past six months? Are the changes for 2024 and 2026 mentioned with clear explanations?
- **Confirm Their Experience With New Fault and Medical Bill Rules:** Those firms that already explain the 51% fault bar and paid-versus-billed medical expenses changes signal they keep current and prepare cases

accordingly.

- **Use Google Search and Google Local Map Results Critically:** Top 30 Google results may include firms ranking due to marketing budgets, not legal expertise. Cross-reference client testimonials with real case history or references.
- **Watch Out for Generic Filler Content:** Phrases like “maximum compensation guaranteed” without any mention of the new legal frameworks are signs of outdated or shallow knowledge.

For example, *Broussard, David & Moroux* is known locally for thoughtful blog posts explaining upcoming changes—this transparency helps victims make informed choices.

Summary Table: Common Filing Deadlines and Law Changes

Law/Rule	Previous Rule	New Rule	Effective Date	Current Relevant Deadline	Prescription for Injury Claims
One year from accident date	July 1, 2024	Two years for accidents on/after July 1, 2024	July 1, 2024	Fault Bar	Comparative fault with no >50% bar
January 1, 2026	51% fault or greater bars recovery	Medical Expense Calculation Based on billed charges	January 1, 2026	Only paid medical expenses count in damages	

Final Advice: Write Down Dates and Questions During Consults

If you’re meeting with an injury lawyer, do not leave without clarifying the exact filing deadline based on your accident date. Always **write down** the answers they give. Double-check that they reference July 1, 2024 (the prescription change), and understand the 2026 laws coming into effect.

Your case and your compensation depend on accurate, up-to-date advice. If a lawyer just says “one year” right away or relies on old dates, don’t be afraid to ask for clarification or seek a second opinion from better-informed Lafayette injury firms.



Remember, reputable law offices like *Brandt & Sherman, LLP*, *Broussard, David & Moroux*, and *Laborde Earles Injury Lawyers* are good starting points but ensure they have the current law clearly explained in their consultations and materials.

Protect your rights by staying informed and choosing a knowledgeable, up-to-date lawyer.