

31.06 Measure of Damages--Wrongful Death--Unmarried Adult Decedent--Lineal and Collateral Next of Kin Surviving

If you decide for the plaintiff on the question of liability, you must then fix the amount of money which will reasonably and fairly compensate the [lineal and collateral next of kin] of the decedent for the pecuniary loss proved by the evidence to have resulted to [the next of kin] from the death of the decedent.

“Pecuniary loss” may include loss of money, benefits, goods, services, [and] society [and sexual relations] as well as grief, sorrow and mental suffering.

Where a decedent leaves [lineal next of kin], the law recognizes a presumption that the [lineal next of kin] has sustained some substantial pecuniary loss by reason of the death. The weight to be given this presumption is for you to decide from the evidence in this case.

In determining pecuniary loss, you may consider what the evidence shows concerning the following:

[1. What (money,) (benefits,) (goods,) (and) (services) the decedent customarily contributed in the past;]

[2. What (money,) (benefits,) (goods,) (and) (services) the decedent was likely to have contributed in the future;]

[3. Decedent's personal expenses (and other deductions);]

[4. Decedent's age;]

[5. Decedent's health;]

[6. Decedent's physical and mental characteristics;]

[7. Decedent's habits of (industry,) (sobriety,) (and) (thrift);]

[8. Decedent's occupational abilities;]

[9. The grief, sorrow, and mental suffering of [next of kin];]

[10. The relationship between [next of kin] and [decedent].]

Instruction revised August 2026; Instruction and Notes on Use revised June 2021; Comment revised October 2007.

Notes on Use

Item 9 is a new addition to the instruction. Its inclusion is based on the 2007 amendment to the Wrongful Death Act, 740 ILCS 180/2. That amendment (P.A. 95-3) permits the recovery of damages for grief, sorrow, and mental suffering of the next of kin and applies to causes of action accruing on and after its effective date, May 31, 2007.

Use only those factors 1-10 which have a basis in the evidence.

This instruction should be used with IPI 31.09 which explains why the suit is brought in the name of the personal representative of the deceased.

This instruction should be used with IPI 31.11 defining “society” whenever loss of society is claimed.

Comment

See Comments to IPI 31.02 and 31.04.