

# Understanding 'Pain and Suffering' Damages and How Courts Determine Their Value, Says Opelousas Injury Attorney

OPELOUSAS, LA, UNITED STATES, May 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In personal injury and workplace injury cases, compensation often includes a category known as "pain and suffering." This term refers to the non-economic damages awarded for the physical discomfort and emotional distress resulting from an injury. Unlike medical bills or lost wages, which can be documented with receipts and employment records, pain and suffering damages are subjective and more difficult to quantify.



[William P. Morrow](#), an attorney with [Morrow Law Firm](#) in Opelousas, Louisiana, explains how courts and insurance companies evaluate these non-economic damages and the factors that influence their calculation.

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*William P. Morrow*

“Pain and suffering refers to the impact an injury has on daily life, mental well-being, and physical comfort. It extends beyond financial loss and focuses on the human cost of injury,” said Morrow.

Morrow Law Firm is led by William P. Morrow, John Michael Morrow, Jr., and Stephen M. Morrow. The firm regularly handles claims involving physical injuries resulting from workplace incidents, motor vehicle accidents, and other forms of negligence.

Pain and suffering damages are considered part of a broader category of non-economic losses, which also includes emotional distress, anxiety, loss of enjoyment of life, disfigurement, and

psychological trauma. These damages are inherently more difficult to prove because they do not come with an invoice or price tag.

To assess pain and suffering, courts and insurers evaluate multiple elements:



### 1. Severity of the Injury

More serious injuries—such as fractures, traumatic brain injuries, or permanent disabilities—tend to result in higher pain and suffering valuations. The extent of medical treatment required, surgical interventions, and recovery time all factor into how the injury is perceived by decision-makers.

### 2. Duration of Recovery

The longer an individual suffers from an injury or remains under medical care, the greater the potential for pain and suffering damages. Temporary injuries with full recovery tend to result in lower awards, while chronic or lifelong conditions support higher damage assessments.

### 3. Type and Impact of Pain

Medical records often describe physical pain and its frequency, location, and intensity. Statements from healthcare providers and rehabilitation specialists may be used to establish the nature of the pain, its progression, and its response to treatment. This helps provide objective support for otherwise subjective claims.

### 4. Emotional and Psychological Effects

Post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbances may result from a physical injury. These symptoms are considered when assigning a value to pain and suffering. Testimony from mental health professionals and patient journals are sometimes introduced as supporting evidence.

### 5. Lifestyle Disruption

If an injury prevents someone from engaging in normal activities—such as working, exercising, driving, or caring for a family—this disruption contributes to the overall valuation. A clear connection between the injury and specific lifestyle changes strengthens the claim for non-economic damages.

### 6. Permanent Disfigurement or Disability

Visible scars, amputations, or impairments that limit mobility and independence are significant components of pain and suffering. These conditions not only affect the injured party's physical comfort but may also cause emotional distress due to altered appearance or reduced self-confidence.

## Methods of Calculation

There is no standardized formula for calculating pain and suffering, courts in Louisiana, which utilize civil law, often look at past awards, known as jurisprudence, when determining awards.

Insurance companies may offer lower estimates based on internal guidelines, while plaintiffs may present documentation and testimony to support higher valuations. Ultimately, when cases proceed to trial, juries may decide the amount based on the evidence presented.

## Documentation and Evidence

Establishing pain and suffering requires a combination of medical records, personal statements, photos of injuries, expert evaluations, and testimony from family members or co-workers. Consistency between medical history and the description of symptoms adds credibility to the claim. Gaps in treatment or exaggerated reports of pain can undermine the case.

Understanding how pain and suffering damages are calculated is essential for setting expectations in injury cases. These damages reflect the human cost of injury, emphasizing how an incident has affected daily life, comfort, and mental health. Proper documentation and a clear narrative are critical to recovering fair compensation.

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