

474.010 General rules of descent

**Section 474.010.1**

August 28, 2015

**General rules of descent.**

474.010. All property as to which any decedent dies intestate shall descend and be distributed, subject to the payment of claims, as follows:

(1) The surviving spouse shall receive:

(a) The entire intestate estate if there is no surviving issue of the decedent;

(b) The first twenty thousand dollars in value of the intestate estate, plus one-half of the balance of the intestate estate, if there are surviving issue, all of whom are also issue of the surviving spouse;

(c) One-half of the intestate estate if there are surviving issue, one or more of whom are not issue of the surviving spouse;

(2) The part not distributable to the surviving spouse, or the entire intestate property, if there is no surviving spouse, shall descend and be distributed as follows:

(a) To the decedent's children, or their descendants, in equal parts;

(b) If there are no children, or their descendants, then to the decedent's father, mother, brothers and sisters or their descendants in equal parts;

(c) If there are no children, or their descendants, father, mother, brother or sister, or their descendants, then to the grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles and aunts or their descendants in equal parts;

(d) If there are no children or their descendants, father, mother, brother, sister, or their descendants, grandfather, grandmother, uncles, aunts, nor their descendants, then to the great-grandfathers, great-grandmothers, or their descendants, in equal parts; and so on, in other cases without end, passing to the nearest lineal ancestors and their children, or their descendants, in equal parts; provided, however, that collateral relatives, that is, relatives who are neither ancestors nor descendants of the decedent, may not inherit unless they are related to the decedent at least as closely as the ninth degree, the degree of kinship being computed according to the rules of the civil law; that is, by counting upward from the decedent to the nearest common ancestor, and then downward to the relative, the degree of kinship being the sum of these two counts, so that brothers are related in the second degree;

(3) If there is no surviving spouse or kindred of the decedent entitled to inherit, the whole shall go to the kindred of the predeceased spouse who, at the time of the spouse's death, was married to the decedent, in like course as if such predeceased spouse had survived the decedent and then died entitled to the property, and if there is more than one such predeceased spouse, then to go in equal shares to the kindred of each predeceased spouse;

(4) If no person is entitled to inherit as provided in this section the property shall escheat as provided by law.

(RSMo 1939 § 306, A.L. 1955 p. 385 § 236, A.L. 1980 S.B. 637, A.L. 1996 S.B. 494) Prior revisions: 1929 § 306; 1919 § 303; 1909 § 332 Effective 5-23-96 CROSS REFERENCES: Adopted child, right to inherit, 453.090, 453.170 Escheats, generally, Chap. 470 Estates of suicides to descend as in cases of natural death, Const. Art. I § 30