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Hopkinsville family files federal lawsuit over "Morgue" show

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Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- The family of a homicide victim whose nude body was shown briefly on The Learning Channel has sued the cable network, the Nashville medical examiner, the city and others.

The lawsuit claiming invasion of civil and privacy rights is the latest in a string of complaints from the families of victims whose deaths were featured on TLC's "True Stories from the Morgue" without the relatives' permission.

The federal lawsuit was filed in Nashville by the family of Misty Perkins Norman, a Hopkinsville, Ky., woman who was strangled and pushed off a room balcony at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in 2001.

Authorities concluded her husband, Torre Norman, was trying to make her death look like an accident but died himself when he fell while trying to throw her body over the balcony.

Beside TLC and the city, the lawsuit names as defendants Nashville medical examiner Bruce Levy; the hotel and its owner, Gaylord Entertainment; Principal Films, the London-based film company that shot the series; TLC's parent company, Discovery Communications; two of Levy's employees; Levy's company, Forensic Medical Management Services; and three film crew employees.

The victim's parents, Clarence and Celeste Perkins, and her sister, Kimberly Beeny, all of Madisonville, Ky., claim in the lawsuit they turned on TV one night "to watch in horror and shock" as Norman's injuries were reviewed by Levy.

The family is asking for an unspecified amount of damages.

The cable network indefinitely canceled the series this week.