

Frame2Finish Employee Handbook

I. Welcome to Frame2Finish

A. Our Mission, Vision, and Values

Welcome to Frame2Finish, a Toledo, Ohio-based company dedicated to transforming residential and commercial spaces through exceptional property maintenance and remodeling services. Since 2008, Frame2Finish has built a reputation as a trusted construction and building partner, grown primarily through client referrals. Our core mission is to deliver high-quality craftsmanship, uphold unwavering integrity, and provide unparalleled client service in every project we undertake.

At Frame2Finish, our values are the bedrock of our operations. We are committed to professionalism, ensuring that all interactions, from initial consultation to project completion, are conducted with the utmost respect and clarity. Quality workmanship is paramount, reflected in our meticulous attention to detail and adherence to the highest industry standards. This commitment extends beyond aesthetics to encompass the health and safety of both our dedicated team and our valued clients. The company's emphasis on "quality workmanship" translates directly into operational expectations, mandating strict adherence to building codes and project specifications. Similarly, the dedication to "personal & professional" client relationships dictates specific protocols for client interaction, ensuring transparency and responsiveness. Furthermore, the foundational value of "Health & Safety" is intrinsically linked to compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and safe handling of hazardous materials. This deep integration of values into daily operations ensures that the handbook is not merely a collection of rules but a living document that reflects the company's culture and operational excellence.

We believe that our success is fundamentally built on the loyalty and expertise of our in-house team, which includes skilled project managers, superintendents, and finish carpenters. This internal talent pool allows us to maintain rigorous quality control and efficient project management. We also cultivate strong, collaborative relationships with external designers, architects, engineers, and subcontractors, ensuring a seamless and integrated approach to every project from its inception through to its successful completion and beyond.

B. About Our Services

Frame2Finish offers a comprehensive suite of services designed to meet diverse construction and remodeling needs. Our expertise spans residential remodels, custom home construction, commercial property improvements, and specialized hospitality projects. We pride ourselves on offering customized solutions that cater to the unique requirements of each client, whether it involves building a dream home from the ground up or transforming an existing commercial space.

A cornerstone of our service delivery is the assurance that all our team members and tradespeople are fully qualified, certified, licensed, insured, and bonded. This commitment to credentialing ensures the highest standards of professional conduct and project execution, providing peace of mind for both the company and its clients. Beyond structural and aesthetic

considerations, Frame2Finish is deeply committed to sustainability and well-being. We strive to build energy-efficient, environmentally conscious, and healthy spaces. This includes offering various options that conserve precious resources, such as recirculation pumps for faster hot water, water-conscious plumbing fixtures, drought-tolerant landscaping, energy-efficient fluorescent and LED lighting, and low-emissivity (low-E) window glass to regulate indoor temperatures and reduce energy consumption. Furthermore, we prioritize indoor air quality by installing built-in humidistat controllers to prevent mold and mildew, and by utilizing low-VOC (volatile organic compound), water-based interior paints, wood stains, caulking, and adhesives, thereby protecting both building occupants and our installers.

II. Employment Basics

A. At-Will Employment Statement

Frame2Finish operates under the principle of "at-will" employment, a doctrine recognized by Ohio law. This means that, in the absence of a specific written employment contract or a collective bargaining agreement that explicitly states otherwise, the employment relationship can be terminated by either Frame2Finish or the employee at any time, with or without cause, for any reason that is not prohibited by law.

It is important to understand that while "at-will" employment provides flexibility, it is not an absolute right to terminate for *any* reason. Ohio law recognizes several significant exceptions to this doctrine. For instance, employment cannot be terminated for reasons that clearly violate public policy. This includes, but is not limited to, terminating an employee for whistleblowing (reporting illegal activities), or for exercising a legal right, such as serving on a jury. Furthermore, an employer's right to terminate an otherwise at-will relationship may be limited by the existence of an implied contract. Such a contract can arise from verbal assurances of continued employment, long-term employment without performance issues, or specific termination procedures outlined in an employee handbook. Similarly, the doctrine of promissory estoppel may apply if an employer makes a clear and unambiguous promise of continued employment, on which the employee reasonably relies to their detriment. Beyond these, termination is explicitly unlawful if it is based on discriminatory reasons (as detailed in the Equal Employment Opportunity policy) or in retaliation for an employee engaging in legally protected activities. The existence of these exceptions means that Frame2Finish, to effectively manage its workforce and mitigate legal risk, must ensure that all termination decisions are based on legitimate, non-discriminatory business reasons and are thoroughly documented. This approach effectively means operating as if "cause" is often required for termination, even if the "at-will" doctrine theoretically allows for termination without cause. Managers and supervisors must therefore be trained to avoid making any promises of indefinite employment or assurances that could be construed as creating an implied contract, and to consistently apply company policies and procedures.

B. Employee vs. Independent Contractor Classification

Proper classification of workers as either employees or independent contractors is a critical aspect of compliance with both federal and state labor laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Misclassification can lead to significant financial penalties for the employer, including unpaid wages, overtime, benefits, and taxes.

Frame2Finish classifies workers based on the "totality of the circumstances" economic realities test. This approach holistically evaluates various factors to determine if a worker is economically dependent on the employer, rather than prioritizing any single factor. Recent guidance from the Department of Labor (DOL), specifically the 2024 Rule and the 2025 Bulletin, has reaffirmed this comprehensive approach, which generally leans towards classifying workers as employees. The property maintenance and remodeling industry frequently engages specialized tradespeople who might traditionally operate as independent contractors. However, the prevailing legal landscape, with its emphasis on economic dependence, indicates a heightened enforcement environment for worker classification. This necessitates a rigorous review of all current and future contractor relationships at Frame2Finish. Simply having a contract that labels an individual as an "independent contractor" is insufficient; the actual working relationship must align with the legal criteria, such as the degree of control Frame2Finish exercises over the work, the worker's genuine opportunity for profit or loss, and whether the worker truly operates an independently established business. This ongoing vigilance, potentially involving legal consultation, is essential to ensure compliance and avoid costly liabilities associated with misclassification.

C. Equal Employment Opportunity & Anti-Discrimination Policy

Frame2Finish is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are steadfastly committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In accordance with federal and Ohio state laws, Frame2Finish will not discriminate against any job applicant or employee based on their race, color, religion, sex (which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), national origin, ancestry, age (specifically 40 or older), disability, military status, or genetic information.

This comprehensive policy applies to all facets of employment within Frame2Finish. This includes, but is not limited to, recruitment and hiring practices, decisions regarding promotion and tenure, disciplinary actions and discharge, compensation and fringe benefits, opportunities for job training, employee classification, referrals for work, and any other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. Frame2Finish also prohibits any employment policy or practice that appears neutral on its face but results in a discriminatory impact on a protected class, unless such policy or practice is directly job-related and based upon a legitimate business necessity. It is important to note that while federal laws cover many protected classes, Ohio law explicitly extends protection to "ancestry" and "military status", and clarifies that "sex" encompasses "pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity". This means that Frame2Finish's policies and training programs are designed to be comprehensive, covering these specific Ohio-mandated protections, which may be broader than what some employers might assume based solely on federal law. This proactive and inclusive approach ensures full compliance with all applicable laws and fosters a truly inclusive and equitable workplace for all employees.

Ohio Protected Classes (Anti-Discrimination)

Protected Class	Description
Race or Color	Prohibition against discrimination based on racial or ethnic background.

D. Harassment Prevention Policy

Frame2Finish maintains a strict, zero-tolerance policy against harassment in the workplace. Harassment, in any form, is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation of

a hostile work environment (whether racially, sexually, or based on any other protected characteristic), verbally or physically abusive treatment, or requiring submission to sexual advances as a condition of employment.

All complaints of discrimination or harassment will be taken seriously and handled with the utmost discretion and professionalism. Frame2Finish is committed to investigating all complaints promptly and impartially, and appropriate corrective action will be taken to stop the behavior and prevent its recurrence. This commitment extends beyond merely addressing unlawful behavior. Frame2Finish recognizes that addressing any improper workplace behavior, even if it does not technically violate a specific law, is crucial for maintaining a positive and productive work environment. Such proactive measures can prevent minor issues from escalating into more severe problems, improve overall employee morale, and positively impact productivity, which is particularly vital for a referral-based business like Frame2Finish.

Furthermore, retaliation against any employee who complains about discrimination or harassment, files a charge, testifies, assists, or participates in any investigation or proceeding related to discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any employee found to be engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

E. Background Checks and Drug Testing

Background Checks

Frame2Finish may conduct background checks on job applicants and employees as part of its commitment to maintaining a safe and trustworthy work environment, especially given that employees often work in clients' homes. These checks may include, but are not limited to, criminal history, verification of previous employment, confirmation of educational qualifications, and review of driving records. For positions that involve significant financial responsibility, credit checks may also be conducted, but only with the explicit written consent of the applicant or employee.

In Ohio, criminal convictions can be reported indefinitely on background checks. However, Frame2Finish is committed to adhering to federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requirements, which provide important protections for individuals. These requirements mandate that Frame2Finish obtain written consent from the applicant before conducting a background check, provide a clear disclosure form that is separate from the job application, and issue a pre-adverse action notification if Frame2Finish contemplates taking negative action based on information contained in the report. If a background check reveals criminal history, Frame2Finish will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Instead, an individualized assessment will be conducted to determine if the conviction history has a direct and adverse relationship with the duties and responsibilities of the job sought. This assessment will consider the nature and gravity of the offense, the time that has passed since the offense or completion of the sentence, and the specific nature of the job in question. This approach balances the legitimate need for client safety and trust with fair hiring practices, thereby minimizing discrimination risks while protecting the business and its clients.

Drug Testing

Frame2Finish is authorized under Ohio law to conduct drug tests in various circumstances. These include situations following a workplace accident, when there is reasonable suspicion of

impairment, and as a condition for an employee to return to work after a positive test result. Given the inherent safety risks associated with property maintenance and remodeling activities—such as working at heights, operating heavy equipment, and handling hazardous materials—drug testing is considered a critical component of Frame2Finish's safety program. Beyond ensuring a safe work environment, implementing a comprehensive drug testing policy may also allow Frame2Finish to qualify for workers' compensation discounts. This financial incentive underscores the strategic importance of maintaining a robust drug testing policy, linking safety protocols not only to legal compliance but also to sound financial management and risk mitigation.

III. Compensation and Work Hours

A. Pay Periods and Pay Statements

Frame2Finish employees are paid semi-monthly, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §4113.15. Specifically, wages earned during the first half of the preceding month (ending on the 15th day) will be disbursed on or before the 1st day of the current month. Wages earned during the second half of the preceding month will be paid on or before the 15th day of the current month.

Effective April 9, 2025, Frame2Finish will comply with Ohio's Pay Stub Protection Act, codified as Ohio Revised Code Section 4113.14. This legislation mandates that Frame2Finish provide each employee with a written or electronic pay statement for each pay period. This statement will include specific, detailed information to ensure transparency and accuracy in compensation. The required information includes the employee's gross wages earned, net wages earned, and a clear listing of the amount and purpose of each addition to or deduction from the wages paid during the pay period. Additionally, the pay statement will specify the date the employee was paid and the exact pay period covered by that payment. For employees paid on an hourly basis, the statement will also detail the total number of hours worked in that pay period, the hourly wage rate at which the employee was paid, and the employee's hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a single workweek. The explicit mention of this recent legislation highlights a critical, forward-looking compliance requirement for Frame2Finish. This means that the company must proactively update its payroll systems and processes to meet these new specifications. Failure to provide the required detailed information on pay stubs can lead to penalties and investigations by the Ohio Director of Commerce, emphasizing the necessity for continuous monitoring of legislative changes and timely adaptation of internal processes.

B. Minimum Wage and Overtime Regulations

Frame2Finish adheres to all Ohio state regulations concerning minimum wage and overtime compensation.

Ohio Wage & Hour Quick Reference

Category	Rate/Frequency	Relevant Details
Minimum Wage (Non-Tipped)	\$10.70/hour	Effective January 1, 2025, applies to businesses grossing over \$372,000 annually.
Tipped Minimum Wage	\$5.35/hour	Applies to tipped employees.
Overtime Rate	1.5x Regular Hourly Rate	For all hours worked over 40 in

Category	Rate/Frequency	Relevant Details
		a workweek for non-exempt employees.
Pay Frequency	Semi-monthly	Wages paid on or before the 1st and 15th of each month.

Effective January 1, 2025, Ohio's minimum wage for non-tipped employees is set at \$10.70 per hour. This rate applies to businesses that generate more than \$372,000 in annual gross revenue. For employees who receive tips, the minimum wage is \$5.35 per hour.

Regarding overtime, all non-exempt full-time and part-time employees of Frame2Finish are entitled to receive overtime pay. This compensation is calculated at a rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly rate for any hours worked beyond 40 in a single workweek. The increasing Ohio minimum wage directly impacts Frame2Finish's labor costs, which constitute a substantial portion of expenses in the property maintenance and remodeling industry. This is not merely a legal obligation but a fundamental business reality that necessitates accurate budgeting and financial planning. Furthermore, the severe penalties for minimum wage violations, which can amount to fines of up to \$500 per week of noncompliance, coupled with the mandatory payment of overtime, underscore the critical importance of maintaining meticulous timekeeping records and ensuring absolute payroll accuracy. This vigilance is essential to avoid substantial financial liabilities and maintain the company's financial health.

C. Meal and Rest Periods

Frame2Finish's policy on meal and rest periods differentiates between adult employees and minors, adhering strictly to Ohio labor laws.

Adult Employees (18 years and older)

Under Ohio law, employers are not legally required to provide meal periods or rest breaks for adult employees. However, if Frame2Finish chooses to provide meal breaks of 30 minutes or more, these breaks may be unpaid, provided that the employee is completely relieved of all job duties during that time. It is imperative that employees do not perform any work during an unpaid meal break, such as answering phones or remaining at their workstation, as this would render the break compensable. If Frame2Finish chooses to provide short rest breaks, typically ranging from 5 to 20 minutes, these breaks are considered paid working time. All breaks, whether paid or unpaid and if provided, must be offered in a non-discriminatory manner, ensuring fairness across all employee demographics.

Nursing Mothers

In compliance with federal law, Frame2Finish will provide reasonable break time for nursing mothers to express breast milk for up to one year after the child's birth. Additionally, a private, non-bathroom space will be made available for this purpose. This provision applies to non-exempt employees.

Minor Employees (under 18 years)

For minor employees (under 18 years of age), Frame2Finish is legally required to provide a

mandatory 30-minute uninterrupted meal break when they work 5 or more consecutive hours. This break can be unpaid, provided the minor is completely relieved of all duties during this period.

The significant difference in break requirements between adult employees (where breaks are largely discretionary) and minors (where specific, mandatory breaks apply) presents a potential compliance challenge for Frame2Finish, especially if the company employs a mixed-age workforce. A uniform, "one-size-fits-all" break policy would likely lead to violations concerning minor employees. This necessitates the implementation of clear, differentiated policies and robust training for supervisors to ensure that minor employees consistently receive their legally mandated breaks, irrespective of the practices for adult employees. Furthermore, if Frame2Finish decides to offer short breaks to adult employees, it must be aware that these periods are legally considered compensable time, which directly impacts payroll calculations.

D. Child Labor Laws (for employees under 18)

Frame2Finish may employ individuals aged 14 and older, subject to strict adherence to Ohio's child labor laws designed to protect young workers' education, health, and safety. All minors employed by Frame2Finish must obtain a valid work permit, also known as an age and schooling certificate, from their school district before they can begin employment. A copy of this permit must be kept on file by Frame2Finish for the duration of the minor's employment. Prior to a minor commencing work, a written agreement outlining the specific wage rate and payment details must be established.

Ohio Child Labor Hour Restrictions (Ages 14-17)

Age Group	During School Weeks	During Non-School Weeks (e.g., Summer Break)	Work Permit Required
14-15 Years Old	Max 3 hours/day, 18 hours/week. Work between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.	Max 8 hours/day, 48 hours/week	Yes
16-17 Years Old	Max 4 hours/day on school days, 8 hours/day on non-school days. Max 28 hours/week. Work not before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m.	Max 8 hours/day, 40 hours/week. No time-of-day restrictions	Yes

Minors are strictly prohibited from working in occupations deemed hazardous for their age group. For a property maintenance and remodeling company, this is particularly relevant, as many tasks may involve heavy machinery, heights, or hazardous materials.

Frame2Finish is required to maintain a comprehensive list of all employed minors, prominently posted in a visible location accessible to them. Additionally, accurate time records, including the precise start and end times of each work and meal period, and the wages paid per pay period, must be meticulously kept. These records must be made accessible to representatives from the Ohio Department of Commerce upon request.

The highly detailed and age-specific hour restrictions for minors, coupled with mandatory work permits, written wage agreements, and stringent record-keeping requirements, create a

substantial administrative and compliance burden for Frame2Finish if it chooses to employ individuals under 18. This complexity means that employing minors necessitates a dedicated and robust system for scheduling, oversight, and documentation to avoid frequent and potentially costly violations. Violations of child labor laws can result in significant penalties, including minor misdemeanors for infractions such as failing to provide legally mandated rest periods, non-compliance with age and schooling certificate requirements, or neglecting recordkeeping obligations. Continuous employment of a minor despite notification of a violation constitutes a separate misdemeanor offense for each day the violation persists.

E. Company Property and Vehicle Use

At Frame2Finish, company property, including vehicles, tools, and equipment, represents significant operational assets. Their proper use, maintenance, and security are paramount to ensuring operational efficiency, mitigating liability, and maintaining the company's reputation.

Company Vehicles

Company vehicles are the exclusive property of Frame2Finish and are provided to employees solely for authorized business use. Employees assigned a company vehicle bear significant responsibility for its safe operation, security, and strict adherence to all traffic laws and parking restrictions. Employees are personally responsible for any traffic violations or citations received while operating a company vehicle. Frame2Finish is responsible for ensuring that all vehicles are safe to drive, scheduling regular maintenance appointments, and maintaining appropriate insurance coverage.

Personal use of company vehicles may be permitted as an employee benefit, subject to specific company policy. However, it is important to understand that such personal use is considered a taxable fringe benefit and will be reported accordingly for tax purposes. Employees are required to report any issues, unusual conditions, or malfunctions with the vehicle immediately to their supervisor. Depending on the vehicle and role, daily vehicle inspection reports may be required to ensure ongoing safety and operational readiness.

Tools and Equipment

All tools and equipment provided by Frame2Finish are company property and must be used responsibly, safely, and exclusively for business purposes. Employees are required to conduct pre-operation checks and daily inspections of all equipment to identify any visible damage, malfunctions, or safety concerns before use. Any identified issues must be reported immediately to a supervisor, and the equipment must not be used until it has been deemed safe and repaired.

Regular maintenance and timely repairs are crucial for ensuring the longevity and safe operation of equipment. All employees who operate specialized tools or equipment must receive proper training and certification for their safe and effective use. Equipment must always be used in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and within its designated capacity to prevent overworking, which can lead to breakdowns, costly repairs, and shortened equipment durability. To prevent theft and financial losses, employees must adhere to all anti-theft measures, such as securing equipment in designated storage areas and utilizing physical locks or GPS tracking devices where applicable. For a property maintenance and remodeling company, company vehicles and specialized tools/equipment are not merely assets but are integral to core

operations. The detailed best practices for their use, maintenance, and security directly contribute to operational efficiency by reducing downtime and extending asset life. More critically, these practices are essential for significant liability mitigation, preventing accidents, theft, and the associated legal costs and fines. This underscores that proper management of these assets is a fundamental responsibility for all employees, directly impacting Frame2Finish's profitability and reputation.

IV. Time Off and Leaves of Absence

Frame2Finish understands the importance of work-life balance and provides various options for time off, adhering to Ohio state laws and federal regulations where applicable.

A. Paid Time Off (PTO) and Vacation Leave

Ohio law does not mandate that employers provide paid or unpaid vacation leave. However, Frame2Finish may, at its discretion, offer vacation leave as a benefit to its employees. If Frame2Finish establishes a written policy for vacation leave, any accrued, unused vacation time may be considered earned wages that must be paid upon an employee's termination of employment. This is a crucial point: a discretionary benefit, once formally adopted in a written policy, transforms into a legal obligation. Therefore, Frame2Finish's internal policy on PTO and vacation becomes a legally binding contract, necessitating careful drafting, consistent application, and accurate tracking of accruals to avoid wage claims upon employee separation. Specific details regarding the accrual, carryover, and usage of PTO and vacation leave will be outlined in a separate, comprehensive company policy document.

B. Sick Leave Policy

Ohio law does not require employers to provide sick leave, whether paid or unpaid, for employees. Frame2Finish, at its discretion, may choose to offer sick leave as an employee benefit. If sick leave is provided, its availability and all specific details, including accrual rates, eligibility criteria, and usage procedures, will be clearly determined by Frame2Finish's written policies and any applicable employment contracts. Frame2Finish is committed to adhering strictly to its own established sick leave policies, ensuring consistency and fairness in their application. Since sick leave is not mandated by Ohio law, Frame2Finish's internal sick leave policy (if implemented) effectively becomes the primary legal authority governing sick leave for its employees. This highlights the critical importance of having a clear, well-defined, and consistently applied written policy to manage employee expectations and prevent disputes related to leave usage and eligibility. Without a state mandate, any policy offered by Frame2Finish must be meticulously crafted to avoid creating unintended obligations or liabilities.

C. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides eligible employees with the right to take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave within a 12-month period for specific family and medical reasons. It is important to note that Ohio does not have a separate state law that provides leave benefits beyond what the federal FMLA offers.

Qualifying Reasons for FMLA Leave: FMLA leave can be taken for one or more of the

following specified reasons :

- For the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth.
- For the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement.
- To care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- Because of a serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job.
- For any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status.
- **Military Caregiver Leave:** Eligible employees may also take up to 26 workweeks of job-protected leave in a "single 12-month period" to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness.

Eligibility Requirements for FMLA: To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must meet specific criteria :

- The employee must work for a covered employer. A covered employer is defined as one who employed 50 or more employees in 20 or more workweeks in the current or preceding calendar year, including joint employers and successors of covered employers.
- The employee must have worked for the employer for a total of 12 months. These months do not need to be consecutive.
- The employee must have worked at least 1,250 hours over the 12 months immediately preceding the start of the leave.
- The employee must work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within a 75-mile radius.

The FMLA eligibility criteria clearly state that an employer must have "50 or more employees" to be covered. This is a critical distinction. If Frame2Finish is a smaller company (which is common in the property maintenance and remodeling industry), it may not be legally obligated to provide FMLA leave. The handbook must accurately reflect this conditional applicability. Simply including an FMLA section without this crucial caveat could inadvertently create an expectation among employees that Frame2Finish is a covered employer, potentially leading to misunderstandings and disputes if leave requests are denied based on the company's size. This ensures the handbook's FMLA section is precise and legally accurate for Frame2Finish's specific circumstances.

Job Protection and Benefits: Upon returning from FMLA leave, an employee must be restored to their original job or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. It is unlawful for Frame2Finish to interfere with, restrain, deny, or retaliate against an employee for exercising their FMLA rights.

Intermittent Leave: FMLA leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule when it is medically necessary due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or a family member. However, intermittent leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child requires Frame2Finish's approval. Employees who require intermittent leave or a reduced schedule for a foreseeable medical treatment must provide timely notice to their immediate supervisor and/or Human Resources, and coordinate with their healthcare provider to schedule the leave in a manner that minimizes disruption to Frame2Finish's operations.

Use of Paid Leave: Employees are generally required to use any accrued but unused paid leave, such as sick leave, vacation leave, compensatory time, or personal leave, concurrently with FMLA leave before taking unpaid FMLA leave. If paid leave balances are insufficient to cover the entire FMLA period, the remaining portion of the leave will be unpaid.

Notice and Certification: Employees seeking to use FMLA leave must provide 30-day advance

notice when the need for leave is foreseeable. Additionally, medical certification supporting the need for FMLA leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee, spouse, child, or parent is required.

D. Bereavement Leave

Ohio law does not mandate that employers provide leave for the death of a family member. Frame2Finish may, at its discretion, choose to provide bereavement leave to support employees during difficult times. If provided, the specific details regarding eligibility, duration, and any conditions for bereavement leave will be outlined in a separate company policy.

E. Holiday Leave

Under Ohio law, employers are not required to provide paid or unpaid leave for holidays. Frame2Finish may, at its discretion, offer paid holidays as part of its employee benefits package. Furthermore, Ohio law does not mandate additional pay for work performed on holidays, unless such a provision is explicitly specified in an individual employment contract or a company policy.

F. Jury Duty and Voting Leave

Frame2Finish supports its employees' civic duties by providing necessary time off for jury service and voting, in accordance with Ohio law.

Jury Duty Leave: Frame2Finish will not attempt to persuade any employee to avoid jury service, nor will it intimidate, threaten, or subject any employee to adverse employment action as a result of their jury service, provided the employee provides reasonable notice of their absence. Furthermore, Frame2Finish will not require or request employees to use their accrued annual, vacation, or sick leave for time spent responding to a summons for jury duty. It is important to note that Ohio law does not require Frame2Finish to compensate employees for time spent serving on a jury. While Ohio law does not mandate *paid* leave for jury duty, it explicitly prohibits employers from *requiring* employees to use their accrued paid leave (such as vacation, sick, or annual leave) for this purpose. This means that if an employee has no other paid leave available, Frame2Finish must grant the time off as unpaid leave, and the employee cannot be penalized for the absence itself, provided proper notice was given. This distinction ensures compliance while managing payroll expectations.

Voting Leave: Ohio law prohibits Frame2Finish from terminating or threatening to terminate an employee for taking a reasonable amount of time to vote on an election day. While the law does not specify whether an employer may designate the specific hours used for voting leave, Frame2Finish will work with employees to accommodate reasonable requests. Additionally, Frame2Finish may not refuse to permit an employee to serve as an election official on registration or election day. Violations of this law may result in fines ranging from \$50 to \$500.

Ohio Leave Types & Eligibility

Leave Type	Mandated/Discretionary (Ohio Law)	Key Eligibility/Conditions	Paid/Unpaid (Ohio Law)
FMLA	Mandated (Federal FMLA, if covered employer)	50+ employees within 75 miles, 12 months employment, 1,250 hours in prior 12	Unpaid

Leave Type	Mandated/Discretionary (Ohio Law)	Key Eligibility/Conditions	Paid/Unpaid (Ohio Law)
		months	
Sick Leave	Discretionary	Per company policy, if offered	Per company policy, if offered
Bereavement Leave	Discretionary	Per company policy, if offered	Per company policy, if offered
Holiday Leave	Discretionary	Per company policy, if offered	Per company policy, if offered
Vacation Leave	Discretionary	Per company policy, if offered; accrued must be paid on termination if written policy exists	Per company policy, if offered; accrued must be paid on termination if written policy exists
Jury Duty Leave	Mandated (Time off required)	Employee provides reasonable notice; cannot be forced to use accrued leave	Unpaid
Voting Leave	Mandated (Time off required)	Reasonable amount of time; cannot be terminated for taking	Unspecified

V. Workplace Safety and Health

A. General Safety Policy and OSHA Compliance

Frame2Finish is profoundly committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all its employees and any individuals who may frequent our job sites. In strict accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4101, Frame2Finish will undertake every measure reasonably necessary to protect the life, health, safety, and welfare of its employees, and will ensure that all places of employment are maintained in a safe condition. We adhere to all applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, particularly those relevant to the construction industry, which is inherently prone to various hazards.

Key Workplace Hazards in Property Maintenance & Remodeling

Given the nature of property maintenance and remodeling services, Frame2Finish recognizes the specific and significant risks inherent in our industry. These include, but are not limited to, what OSHA refers to as "The Fatal Four" :

- **Falls:** These are the leading cause of injury and death in construction, accounting for more than one-third of all construction-related fatalities. This category encompasses falls from ladders, scaffolds, rooftops, and into unguarded holes or openings.
- **Struck-by Objects:** Accidents in this category occur when a worker forcibly comes into contact with a falling, swinging, rolling, or flying object or piece of equipment.
- **Electrocution:** This refers to exposure to lethal amounts of electrical energy, often due to improper wiring, damaged equipment, or contact with power lines.
- **Caught-in or Between:** These injuries occur when construction workers are caught in or compressed by equipment or objects, or are struck, caught, or crushed in collapsing

structures, equipment, or materials. Beyond these "Fatal Four," other common injuries in our industry include muscle sprains and strains, broken bones, back injuries, traumatic brain injuries, and burns.

Safety Protocols and Best Practices

To mitigate these risks and ensure a safe working environment, Frame2Finish implements and enforces the following safety protocols and best practices:

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Employees are strictly required to wear appropriate PPE for specific tasks and work environments. This includes, but is not limited to, hard hats, eye protection (goggles or safety glasses), gloves, hearing protection, and harnesses when working at heights. Frame2Finish will assess workplace hazards and provide the necessary PPE to all employees.
- **Training and Education:** All employees will receive comprehensive training on identifying workplace hazards, understanding safe work procedures, and the proper and safe use of all equipment. This includes specialized training for tasks involving ladders, scaffolds, and hazardous materials. Regular safety briefings and ongoing training sessions are conducted to keep safety at the forefront of operations.
- **Hazard Identification and Control:** Employees are expected to be vigilant in identifying potential hazards on job sites. This includes guarding open shafts and holes to prevent falls and falling objects, maintaining clean and dry work areas to prevent slips and trips, and ensuring that all equipment is properly guarded and de-energized when not in use.
- **Regular Inspections:** Frame2Finish will conduct regular safety inspections of all job sites and equipment to proactively identify and address potential issues before they lead to accidents. This includes pre-operation checks and daily inspections of tools and equipment.
- **Accident Reporting:** All workplace accidents, injuries, or near-misses, regardless of how minor they may seem, must be reported immediately to a supervisor. Prompt reporting is crucial for initiating workers' compensation claims, ensuring timely medical care for injured employees, and critically, for allowing Frame2Finish to investigate incidents promptly, identify underlying safety gaps, and implement corrective measures to prevent future occurrences.

Given the extreme risks inherent in property maintenance and remodeling, as evidenced by the "Fatal Four" hazards and common injuries, Frame2Finish's commitment extends beyond mere legal compliance to the necessity of fostering a proactive "safety culture". This involves continuous training, empowering employees to identify and report hazards, and ensuring immediate accident reporting. This comprehensive approach is critical for mitigating severe injuries, reducing associated workers' compensation claims, and minimizing potential legal liabilities. This commitment to safety is not just a regulatory obligation but also aligns with Frame2Finish's stated values of quality and professionalism.

B. Hazardous Materials (Lead-Based Paint & Asbestos) Regulations

Working with older properties often involves encountering hazardous materials such as lead-based paint and asbestos. Frame2Finish adheres to stringent federal and state regulations governing the handling and abatement of these materials to ensure the safety of its employees, clients, and the environment.

Lead-Based Paint (RRP Rule)

Any renovation, repair, or painting (RRP) project undertaken by Frame2Finish in homes, child care facilities, or schools built before 1978 that disturbs painted surfaces must comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead-Based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule. In Ohio, the RRP rule is managed at the federal level by the USEPA. As a firm performing such work for compensation, Frame2Finish must be EPA-certified. Furthermore, all workers involved in paint-disturbing activities on pre-1978 properties must be certified and trained in lead-safe work practices. At least one RRP Certified Renovator must be assigned to each job site to oversee compliance. Before commencing any project subject to the RRP Rule, Frame2Finish will provide clients with the "Renovate Right" pamphlet and obtain a signed receipt confirming its delivery. Lead-safe work practices are mandatory when disturbing more than 6 square feet per room indoors or 20 square feet of painted surfaces outdoors, or during window replacement or demolition activities. These practices include meticulously setting up the work area to prevent the spread of lead dust, utilizing tools that minimize the generation of dust and heat, and performing thorough cleaning verification at the conclusion of the job.

Asbestos Abatement

Frame2Finish adheres to Ohio's stringent asbestos abatement laws, which are specifically designed to protect workers, residents, and the environment from the dangers of asbestos exposure. Before any construction or demolition project begins, a thorough inspection is legally required to determine the presence of asbestos-containing materials.

If asbestos is identified, Frame2Finish will ensure that only certified asbestos abatement professionals are engaged to follow specific procedures for its safe removal. These procedures include strict containment protocols, continuous air monitoring, and the mandatory use of appropriate personal protective equipment by all personnel involved. Frame2Finish will comply with Ohio EPA regulations (Ohio Administrative Code 3745-20) for controlling asbestos emissions from demolition and renovation projects. This includes providing necessary notifications, conducting thorough inspections, adhering to specific work practices, and ensuring the proper disposal of all asbestos-containing material. Furthermore, individuals and companies directly involved in asbestos abatement must be certified or licensed by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). Frame2Finish will ensure that all personnel involved in asbestos-related work hold the necessary certifications, such as Asbestos Hazard Abatement Worker, Asbestos Hazard Abatement Specialist, or Asbestos Hazard Abatement Contractor, as applicable to their roles.

Frame2Finish's services frequently involve working on older properties, making encounters with lead-based paint and asbestos highly probable. The regulations surrounding these materials are not just general safety concerns; they are highly specialized, requiring specific certifications for both firms and individual workers, distinct work practices, and strict disposal protocols. Failure to comply with these regulations can lead to severe health consequences, substantial fines, and project shutdowns. This necessitates that Frame2Finish maintains a robust internal system for identifying these materials, ensures that only certified personnel handle them, and adheres to all notification and work practice requirements. This may involve engaging specialized subcontractors if in-house certification for all types of abatement is not maintained.

C. Accident Reporting and Workers' Compensation

Frame2Finish prioritizes the health and safety of its employees. In the event of a work-related injury or illness, all incidents, no matter how minor, must be reported to a supervisor immediately. Prompt reporting is essential for ensuring timely medical attention and initiating the necessary processes.

Frame2Finish provides workers' compensation coverage for employees who become sick or injured while working, regardless of who was at fault for the incident. This is a "no-fault" system designed to provide benefits to injured workers.

Workers' Compensation Benefits: Workers' compensation benefits may include:

- **Medical Care:** Coverage for all medical treatment reasonably required to cure or relieve the effects of a work-related injury or illness, including first aid.
- **Temporary Total (TT) Compensation:** If an employee is unable to work for more than seven days due to their injury, they may qualify for weekly payments to compensate for lost wages. For the first 12 weeks of benefits, compensation is typically 72% of the employee's full weekly wage. After 12 weeks, payments are based on 66⅔% of the employee's average weekly wage.

Filing a Claim: To initiate a workers' compensation claim, employees must notify their employer as soon as possible after a work injury or illness. Following notification, a First Report of Injury (FROI) form must be filed to formally apply for benefits. It is important to note that there is a seven-day waiting period from the time of injury before an employee becomes eligible for wage benefits.

Disqualifying Conditions: Certain circumstances may disqualify an injury from workers' compensation benefits. These include, but are not limited to, situations where the employee was not working or performing their job duties at the time of the injury, was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, violated established safety rules, or was engaged in an activity that broke the law when the injury or illness occurred.

While workers' compensation operates as a "no-fault" system, the requirement for immediate employer notification and the prompt filing of a First Report of Injury (FROI) form underscore the critical importance of employee compliance with established reporting procedures. For Frame2Finish, clear communication of these steps in the employee handbook can significantly streamline the claims process, ensure that injured employees receive timely medical care, and potentially mitigate prolonged lost-time benefits. Furthermore, proactive reporting allows the company to investigate incidents promptly, identify any underlying safety deficiencies, and implement corrective actions to prevent future accidents, which directly impacts the company's workers' compensation rates and overall financial stability.

VI. Conclusion

This Employee Handbook serves as a foundational document for all Frame2Finish employees, outlining the company's commitment to its mission, vision, and values while ensuring strict adherence to all applicable Ohio labor laws and industry-specific regulations. It is designed to foster a clear understanding of employment terms, compensation, time off, and, critically, workplace safety and health protocols within the property maintenance and remodeling sector. The comprehensive nature of this handbook reflects Frame2Finish's dedication to creating a professional, equitable, and safe working environment. By clearly articulating policies on at-will employment, worker classification, anti-discrimination, wage and hour regulations, and critical safety measures concerning hazardous materials, Frame2Finish aims to mitigate legal risks, ensure operational efficiency, and protect the well-being of its workforce. The detailed attention

to Ohio-specific nuances, such as heightened child labor restrictions and the implications of discretionary benefits like vacation leave, underscores the company's proactive approach to compliance. Ultimately, this handbook is an essential tool for maintaining a productive workforce, fostering strong client relationships built on trust and quality, and upholding Frame2Finish's reputation as a leader in the Toledo, Ohio property maintenance and remodeling industry.

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