

Five questions before anyone treats your client's fabric.

PFAS rules now differ by state, and federal enforcement is moving in the opposite direction from the EU's. But every one of those laws regulates what's **in a product when it's sold** — not what gets applied to it after it reaches the home. That last step is the one you specify, and the one nobody documents. These five questions close the gap.

1 Is anything being applied to this piece after delivery?

Ask the receiving warehouse, the installer, and the cleaner — not just the vendor. A compliant fabric can still be treated with legacy fluorochemistry once it's on site, and **no state law reaches that step**.

2 What's the test method behind the claim?

"PFAS-free" on a label is marketing. Ask which standard, which laboratory, and for the report itself. Methods vary widely in what they actually screen for — **the method is the claim**.

3 Is it silica, or silicone?

One letter, entirely different chemistry. Silicone is a polymer that sits on the fiber surface — the reason many designers stopped recommending protection at all. Silica is silicon dioxide, the mineral in quartz and sand. **Get the answer in writing**.

4 What happens at the next professional cleaning?

Protection that fails on the first wet clean means your client paid for a season, not a system. Ask how many cleaning cycles it's rated through and what the re-application interval is — and **set that expectation at handover**, not later.

5 Who documents it, and what does the client receive?

If your client is asked in five years what's on that sofa, someone needs an answer on letterhead. Ask for a treatment record: product, applicator, date, and each piece treated. **If nobody can produce one, that's your answer**.

PASTE THIS INTO YOUR SPECIFICATION

Textile Protection. Any protective treatment applied to textiles, upholstery, drapery, or floor coverings under this project shall: (a) contain no intentionally added PFAS or fluorochemical compounds; (b) be substantiated by third-party laboratory documentation identifying the test standard and testing institute, furnished to the designer prior to application; (c) be applied by a trained applicator to the finished piece, with no alteration to hand-feel, color, or drape; and (d) be recorded in a treatment record delivered to the client at project close, identifying product, applicator, date, and each piece treated. No aftermarket treatment shall be applied to any specified piece without the prior written approval of the designer.