## **ReAlign 2.0 - Unified Design & Structure Guide**

**1. Introduction**

* **Purpose:** This document provides a unified set of guidelines for the design, user interface (UI), user experience (UX), navigation, and overall structure of the ReAlign 2.0 platform. It aims to ensure a consistent, intuitive, and professional experience for all users, addressing current issues with navigation and responsiveness.
* **Product Vision:** To be a transformative platform that actively guides users, automates complex paperwork, fosters collaboration among all stakeholders, and provides essential education within the loss mitigation ecosystem.
* **App vs. Website Clarification:**
  + **Public-Facing Website:** This encompasses all pre-login pages (Homepage, About Us, How It Works, Solutions Overview, Contact, Pricing, Login, Register, legal pages). Its primary goal is to inform, build trust, and convert visitors into registered users.
  + **Authenticated Web Application (The "App"):** This includes all post-login pages and modules (Dashboard, Tracker, Maker, Advisor, User Profile). It's the core SaaS platform where users manage their loss mitigation processes. While the navigation will differ, the overall brand identity and design language should be consistent across both.

**2. Core Design & UX Principles**

These principles, drawn from your PRD and Design Brief, should guide all design and development decisions:

* **Trust & Stability:** Conveyed through professional design, clear information, and reliable performance. Deep blue colors support this.
* **Hope & Financial Recovery:** Represented by calming and positive secondary colors (teal/green).
* **Empowerment & Clarity:** Users should feel in control, with straightforward processes and jargon-free language.
* **Guided Journeys:** Step-by-step assistance, progress indicators, and clear calls to action.
* **Calm, Actionable, & Stress-Free Use:** The UI should be reassuring, with simple inputs and well-defined buttons.
* **Accessibility:** Adherence to WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines is crucial to ensure usability for everyone. This includes color contrast, scalable text, and keyboard navigation.
* **Consistency:** Similar elements should look and behave in similar ways throughout the platform.
* **Simplicity:** Avoid clutter; prioritize clarity and ease of use.
* **Efficiency:** Streamline common tasks for all user roles, especially negotiators and agents.
* **Transparency:** Clearly distinguish AI-generated content/advice and its limitations.
* **Security:** Visual cues and clear policies to assure users of data safety.

**3. Brand Identity & Tone of Voice**

(Primarily from Design Brief - Gregory John inspo.docx)

* **Color Palette:**
  + **Primary Color:** Deep Blue (#1E3A8A) – for trust, stability, and professionalism. Use for primary CTAs, main navigation elements, and key headers.
  + **Secondary Colors:**
    - Teal/Green (#2D6A4F, #2CA58D) – for hope, financial recovery, success states. Use for secondary CTAs, supportive icons, success messages.
    - Muted Orange/Gold (#E76F51, #F4A261) – for accents, non-critical CTAs, adding urgency without stress.
  + **Neutral Colors:** Greys for text, backgrounds, disabled states.
    - Dark Gray (e.g., #2D3748 for text)
    - Light Gray (e.g., #A0A0A0 for disabled text/buttons, borders)
  + **System Colors:**
    - Error: Soft Red (e.g., #E63946 for error text, form error states)
    - Success: Teal Green (as above, #2CA58D)
  + **Avoid:** Bright red (anxiety-inducing), neon colors (unprofessional), excessive black (too corporate).
* **Typography:** (Reference: "Loan Modification SaaS - Typography Spec Sheet" section in Design Brief)
  + **Primary Font Family:** Inter (Preferred), Roboto, or Open Sans. Ensure system default sans-serif (Arial, Helvetica) as backups.
  + **Hierarchy & Sizing:**
    - H1 (Primary Page Titles): 32px - 40px, Extra Bold (800), 1.3 line height.
    - H2 (Section Titles): 24px - 28px, Bold (700), 1.4 line height.
    - H3 (Subsection Titles): 20px - 22px, Medium (600), 1.4 line height.
    - H4 (Minor Headings/Labels): 16px - 18px, Semi-Bold (500-600).
    - Body Text (Standard Paragraphs): 16px, Regular (400), 1.5 line height.
    - Secondary Text (Descriptions, Captions): 14px, Regular (400), 1.6 line height.
  + **Form Elements & Buttons:**
    - Input Fields: 16px, Regular (400), 1.5 line height.
    - Button Text (Primary CTA): 18px, Bold (700), consider All Caps if it fits the design.
    - Button Text (Secondary): 16px, Semi-Bold (600).
  + **Accessibility:** Maintain a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 or higher. Support browser text scaling up to 200%.
  + **Best Practices:** Avoid excessive capitalization. Use bold sparingly. Ensure form labels persist. Ample whitespace.
* **Iconography & Imagery:**
  + **Icons:** Use clean, minimal SVG icons (e.g., Material Icons, Heroicons, or a consistent custom set). Icons should support navigation and clarity, not overwhelm.
  + **Illustrations:** Use flat vector graphics to explain complex processes.
  + **Photography:** Use real, relatable homeowners for trust and testimonials (avoid fake stock images). A hybrid approach of illustrated guides and real photos can be effective.
* **Tone of Voice:**
  + Empathetic & Reassuring
  + Authoritative Yet Approachable
  + Action-Oriented & Empowering
  + Clear & Jargon-Free

**4. Overall Structure & Navigation**

This section addresses the immediate need for a new navigation system and combines information from website structure.docx and ReAlign (PRD) 2.0.docx.

* **A. Main Application Shell (Authenticated "App" Experience)** This is the consistent wrapper for all post-login pages.  
  + **Primary Navigation: Collapsible Sidebar (Left Vertical)**
    - **Concept:** A modern, space-saving sidebar that meets your requirement for an icon-first approach that expands on hover.
    - **Default (Collapsed) State:**
      * Appearance: Narrow vertical bar displaying only icons. Each icon should have a tooltip revealing its label on hover for accessibility and clarity.
      * Width: Just enough to comfortably fit the icons (e.g., 60-80px).
    - **Expanded State (On Hover/Focus):**
      * Trigger: When the user's mouse hovers over the sidebar area (or when an item within it receives keyboard focus).
      * Appearance: The sidebar smoothly expands horizontally to reveal both icons and their text labels.
      * Width: Wide enough for icons and short labels (e.g., 200-250px).
      * Content Display: Main content area of the page should adjust (push over) or be overlaid by the expanded menu (if using an overlay, ensure a slight shadow or background dimming for distinction). Pushing content is generally preferred for desktop.
    - **Interaction:**
      * Smooth, quick transition animation for expand/collapse (e.g., 0.2-0.3 seconds).
      * Clear visual indication of the active/selected page.
    - **Content/Links (example order):**
      * (Optional) ReAlign Logo (small, at the top of the sidebar)
      * Dashboard (Icon: e.g., Home/Dashboard)
      * Tracker (Icon: e.g., List/Track)
      * Maker (Icon: e.g., Edit/Build/Tools)
      * Advisor (Icon: e.g., Lightbulb/Help/Guidance)
      * (Separator)
      * User Profile / Settings (Icon: e.g., User/Gear)
      * Logout (Icon: e.g., Sign Out)
    - **Responsive Behavior:**
      * **Desktop (e.g., > 1024px):** Icon-only default, expands on hover as described.
      * **Tablet (e.g., 768px - 1023px):**
        + Option 1 (Preferred): Sidebar remains icon-only by default. Tapping an icon could navigate directly if labels are clear via tooltips, or it could expand the sidebar to show labels, requiring a second tap to navigate.
        + Option 2: A "hamburger" menu icon is shown in a top bar. Tapping it reveals the full sidebar (with icons and labels) as a slide-out panel from the left, overlaying or pushing content.
      * **Mobile (e.g., < 768px):**
        + The sidebar is hidden by default.
        + A "hamburger" icon is placed in a persistent top header bar.
        + Tapping the hamburger icon slides the full navigation menu (icons and labels) out from the left, typically overlaying the content with a dismissable background.
  + **Top Bar / Header (Authenticated App)**
    - Present on all authenticated pages, especially important for mobile/tablet.
    - Content:
      * Left: "Hamburger" icon (on tablet/mobile for sidebar). May show current module title on desktop if sidebar is collapsed.
      * Center/Left: ReAlign Logo (if not in the sidebar's top position).
      * Right: Notifications Icon, User Avatar (dropdown for Profile/Settings, Logout).
* **B. Public-Facing Website Navigation**
  + A traditional, responsive horizontal navigation bar at the top of the page.
  + **Desktop:** Full links visible (Logo, Home, About Us, How It Works, Solutions Overview, [Pricing], Contact Us, Login, Register).
  + **Tablet/Mobile:** Collapses into a "hamburger" menu, typically on the right, revealing a dropdown or slide-out panel with the navigation links.
  + Footer: Repeat important links (Privacy Policy, Terms of Service, Contact).
* **C. Page Structure** (This leverages the website structure.docx and integrates module details from ReAlign (PRD) 2.0.docx)  
  + **I. Public-Facing Pages (Pre-Login)**
    - Homepage (/)
    - About Us (/about)
    - How It Works (/how-it-works)
    - Solutions Overview (/solutions or /features) - detailing Tracker, Maker, Advisor.
    - Contact Us (/contact)
    - Pricing (/pricing) (If applicable)
    - Login (/login)
    - Register (/register) - with role selection (Homeowner, Negotiator, Agent).
    - Forgot Password (/forgot-password)
    - Privacy Policy (/privacy-policy)
    - Terms of Service (/terms-of-service)
  + **II. Authenticated User Pages (Post-Login - Core Application)**
    - **Main Application Shell / Layout** (as described above)
    - **Unified Dashboard** (/app/dashboard or /app/home) - Personalized by user role.
    - **User Profile & Settings** (/app/profile)
    - **Tracker Module** (/app/tracker)
      * Tracker Dashboard / Case List (/app/tracker or /app/tracker/cases)
      * Individual Case Overview (/app/tracker/cases/{caseId})
      * Create New Case (/app/tracker/cases/new)
      * Public Tracker View (/track/{magicLink}) (Publicly accessible)
    - **Maker Module** (/app/maker)
      * Maker Dashboard / Tool Library (/app/maker or /app/maker/tools)
      * Dynamic Document Checklist Generator (/app/maker/checklist-generator)
      * Form Pages (e.g., /app/maker/form/{form\_name} for 4506-C, BFS, HUD-1 Estimator)
      * Lender-Specific Form Template Library & Viewer
      * Document Drafter Pages (e.g., /app/maker/draft/{document\_type} for LOE, Contribution Letter)
      * Calculator Pages (e.g., /app/maker/calculator/{calculator\_name} for DTI, Insolvency, etc.)
      * Document Packaging & Download Center (/app/maker/package-download)
    - **Advisor Module** (/app/advisor)
      * Advisor Dashboard / Learning Hub (/app/advisor or /app/advisor/home)
      * "Am I Eligible?" Screener (/app/advisor/eligibility-screener)
      * Process Explainer Pages (/app/advisor/process/{topic})
      * Educational Content Library & Individual Content Page
      * FAQ / Knowledge Base & AI Chatbot Interface
    - **Experimental AI Agent Phone Call Interface** (Contextually integrated, e.g., within Tracker case actions)

**5. UI Components & Interaction Patterns**

(From Design Brief - Gregory John inspo.docx and ReAlign (PRD) 2.0.docx)

* **Buttons:**
  + Primary CTA: Deep Blue (#1E3A8A), clear text (e.g., 18px Bold, All Caps).
  + Secondary CTA: Teal/Green (#2D6A4F or #2CA58D), clear text (e.g., 16px Semi-Bold).
  + Disabled State: Light gray, non-interactive.
  + Hover States: Buttons slightly darken or shift subtly. No aggressive animations.
  + Clickable Targets: Minimum 44px height/width for accessibility.
* **Forms:**
  + Labels: Clear, persistent field labels (not just placeholders).
  + Input Fields: Legible text (16px Regular), adequate padding.
  + Auto-formatting for common fields (phone, dates) where helpful.
  + Error States: Inline, soft red (#E63946) messages near the field, not aggressive.
  + Validation: Inline hints (e.g., green checkmarks for correct inputs if desired, or clear error messages).
  + Simplicity: Optimize for stress-free use.
* **Containers & Spacing:**
  + Padding & Margins: Minimum 16px padding inside cards/forms. Use a 4pt grid system for consistent spacing.
  + Content Width:
    - Mobile: Full-width inputs/cards often appropriate.
    - Tablet/Desktop: Use max-width for text-heavy content areas (e.g., 600-800px for readability). Desktop can use a 12-column grid system.
  + Whitespace: Intentional "breathing room" is key to clarity and reducing overwhelm.
* **States, Interaction & Motion:**
  + Hover States: Subtle visual feedback (as noted for buttons).
  + Loading Indicators: Subtle spinners or progress bars. Avoid sudden blank screens.
  + Microinteractions: Smooth, purposeful transitions for modals, expanding sections. Motion should guide, not distract.
* **Notifications (In-App & Email):**
  + Critical Alerts: Prominent, clear, and actionable.
  + Reminders & Follow-ups: Gentle nudges.
  + Milestones & Encouragement: Positive reinforcement.
  + User Preferences: Allow customization of notification settings.
* **Handling Null/Empty Data States:**
  + Provide helpful defaults or guided prompts (e.g., "No documents uploaded yet. Here's what you need next.") instead of blank areas.
  + Encourage action with clear next steps or progress trackers.
  + Use illustrations or icons to make these states more engaging if appropriate.

**6. Responsiveness Guidelines**

* **Mobile-First Thinking:** Design for the smallest screens first, then scale up, can often simplify ensuring a good experience everywhere. However, given the complexity, adaptive design targeting key breakpoints is practical.
* **Key Breakpoints (adjust based on testing and design):**
  + Mobile: < 576px (from Design Brief) or < 768px
  + Tablet: 576px - 992px (from Design Brief) or 768px - 1023px
  + Desktop: > 992px (from Design Brief) or > 1024px
* **Navigation:** Follow specific behaviors outlined in Section 4 for the sidebar and public navigation.
* **Layout:**
  + Grid System: Flexible grid (like a 12-column for desktop) that adapts. Columns stack vertically on mobile.
  + Font Scaling: Headings and body text may need to be scaled down on smaller screens (e.g., headings ~20% smaller on mobile).
  + Touch Targets: Ensure all interactive elements are easily tappable (min. 44x44px).
* **Content Prioritization:** Ensure key information, primary actions, and forms are easily accessible and usable on mobile. Less critical information might be de-emphasized or hidden behind accordions/taps.
* **Images & Media:** Optimize for different screen sizes to ensure fast loading and appropriate display.

**7. Specific Guidance for Replit Implementation**

* **Priority - Fix Navigation:**
  + Implement the new collapsible sidebar navigation for the authenticated app section first.
  + Focus on achieving the icon-only (collapsed) and icon-with-label (expanded on hover/focus) states for desktop.
  + Then, tackle the tablet and mobile responsive versions (hamburger menu triggering a slide-out panel).
* **CSS Strategy:**
  + If you are already using Tailwind CSS (as suggested by tailwind.config.ts in your project files), continue leveraging its utility classes for styling and responsiveness. This is excellent for rapid UI development and consistency.
  + If using custom CSS, adopt a methodology like BEM (Block, Element, Modifier) for structuring your CSS to keep it maintainable and scalable.
  + Ensure your index.css or equivalent global stylesheet sets up the base typography, colors, and any reset/normalize rules.
* **Component-Based Development:**
  + Break down UI elements (buttons, cards, form inputs, navigation items