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## Question of the Week

June 17, 2026

### Question

We've received complaints about an employee's hygiene. What should we do?

### ANSWER

As with any sensitive topic, you should address the poor hygiene privately, empathetically, and directly with the employee. A compassionate and straightforward approach is usually best.

Hold the conversation towards the end of the day so the employee doesn't have to spend too much of their workday feeling self-conscious. If this will be your first conversation with the employee about their hygiene, there shouldn't be any need for discipline or a formal write-up. Simply explain to them how their hygiene is affecting the workplace, citing any relevant company policies.

Avoid speculating about the cause of the poor hygiene or offering suggestions for how to improve it. Instead, focus on expectations, and leave it to the employee to figure out how to meet them. On rare occasions, poor hygiene may be the result of an illness, medication, disability, or the consequence of a religious preference. If the employee brings up any of those things, you may need to consider whether offering an accommodation is appropriate.

You can learn more about providing [accommodations](#) on the platform.

*This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.*

