

Question:

Customers have complained about an employee's hygiene. What should we do?

Answer from Daniel, SHRM-CP:



You should address the poor hygiene directly with the employee. A sensitive and straightforward approach is usually best.

If this will be your first conversation with the employee about their hygiene, then there shouldn't be any need for discipline. Simply explain to them how their hygiene is affecting the workplace, citing any relevant company policies.

A private location is best for this conversation.

Avoid trying to figure out the cause of the bad 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, bad hygiene may be the result of a disability or the consequence of a religious preference. If the employee indicates that their hygiene relates to one of these, please let us know.