

Businesses - Document Retention Guide

Maintaining proper records is essential for business entities to ensure compliance with tax laws and to support any claims or deductions on their tax returns. This guide provides an overview of the types of documents that should be retained and the recommended retention periods.

Accounting Records

Auditor's report and annual financial
Statements_____Permanent
Bank statements and reconciliations_____7 years
Cancelled checks_____7 years
Cash disbursements journal_____7 years
Cash receipts journal_____7 years
Chart of accounts_____Permanent
Deeds, mortgages, bills of sale_____Permanent
Depreciation schedules_____Permanent
Electronic payment records_____7 years
Employee expense reports_____7 years
Fixed asset records_____Permanent
Freight bills and bills of lading_____7 years
General journal reports_____7 years
General ledger_____7 years
Inventory listing and tags_____7 years
Invoices: Sales to customers
and credit memos_____7 years
Patent/Trademark and related papers_____Permanent
Payroll journal_____7 years
Production and sales reports_____7 years
Purchases: accounts payable_____7 years
Purchase journal_____Permanent
Purchase orders_____7 years
Sales or work orders_____7 years
Subsidiary ledgers (accounts receivable,
accounts payable, fixed assets)_____7 years
Time cards and daily time reports_____7 years
Training manuals_____Permanent
Trial balance (as of year end)_____Permanent

Insurance Records

Accident reports and settled claims_____6 years after
settlement
Fire inspection and safety report_____7 years
Insurance policies (after expiration)_____7 years

Legal Documents

Articles of incorporation and bylaws_____Permanent
Amendments to above_____Permanent
Buy-sell agreements_____Permanent
Contracts and leases (after expiration)_____7 years
Employment agreements after termination
_____7 years
Legal correspondence_____Permanent

Legal Documents (continued)

Minutes_____Permanent
Partnership agreements_____Permanent
Stock certificates and ledgers_____Permanent

Tax Records

IRS or State adjustments_____Permanent
Payroll tax returns_____Permanent
Property basis records_____Permanent
Sales and use tax returns_____Permanent
Tax returns and cancelled checks/proof
of payment for tax payments_____Permanent

Personnel Records

Child labor certificates and notices_____3 years
Employment application
(from date of termination)_____2 years
Employment eligibility verification
(I-9 Form) (from date of termination)_____3 years
Help wanted ads and job opening notices
_____2 years
Personnel files (from date of termination)
_____4 years
Records of job injuries causing
loss of work_____5 years
Safety: chemical and toxic
exposure records_____30 years
Union agreements and individual employee
contracts (from date of termination)_____3 years

Employee Benefit Plan Records

Actuarial reports_____Permanent
Allocation of compliance testing_____6 years
Brokerage/Trustee statements
supporting investments_____6 years
Financial statements_____Permanently
General ledger and journals
(for the trust)_____6 years
Information returns (Form 5500)_____6 years
Internal Revenue Service/Department
of Labor correspondence_____Permanent
Participant communications related to
distributions, terminations,
beneficiaries_____6 years
Plan and trust agreements_____Permanent