
Suggested Record Retention Guide for Businesses

It is extremely important to hold on to business records in the case of an IRS audit or other type of examination. However, retaining unnecessary records take up valuable storage space that could be made available for more important documents.

We have put together a general business record retention guideline for your reference. Please contact us if you have questions or uncertainties about destroying any tax document or accounting records: 847.395.6000 | 262.694.9541

DOCUMENT TYPE	SUGGESTED RETENTION TIMELINE
Accident reports/claims for settled cases	7 years from time of settlement
Accounts payable ledgers & schedules	7 years
Accounts receivable ledgers & schedules	8 years
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank statements	3 years
Capital stock & bond records	Permanently
Cash books	Permanently
Chart of accounts	Permanently
Cancelled Checks - Taxes & Contracts	Permanently
Cancelled Checks (except those noted above)	7 years
Contracts & Agreements	Permanently
Correspondence, general	2 years
Correspondence (legal and tax related)	Permanently
Deeds, mortgages & bills of sale	Permanently
Deposit Slips	3 years
Depreciation schedules	Permanently

Employee personnel records	7 years from time of termination
Employee applications	3 years from time of submission
Expense reports	7 years
Financial statements (year-end)	Permanently
General Ledger, year-end trial balance	Permanently
Insurance policies (expired)	3 years from time of expiration
Insurance records, accident reports, claims, policies, etc.	Permanently
Internal audit reports (miscellaneous)	3 years
Inventory Records	7 years
Invoices to customers or from vendors	7 years
IRA/Keogh plan contributions, rollovers, transfers & distributions	Permanently
Minute books of directors, stockholders, bylaws & charter	Permanently
Payroll records, summaries & tax returns	7 years
Petty cash vouchers	3 years
Purchase orders	3 years
Receiving sheets	1 year
Retirement plan records	Permanently
Safety records	6 years
Sales records	7 years
Subsidiary ledgers	7 years
Tax returns, revenue agents' reports & other documents relating to determination of income tax liability	Permanently
Time card and daily reports	7 years
Trademark registration, patents & copyrights	Permanently
Trial balances (monthly)	3 years
W-2 form	7 years