

## **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