

The length of time you should keep a document depends on the action, expense or event which the document records. A general guideline is to retain 7 years of documentation for any income or deductions related to your income tax return. If you do get selected for an audit, having these documents readily available can make the audit go smoother and less likely for additional tax to be imposed.

ACCOUNTING

Accounts payable ledgers & schedules	7 yrs
Accounts receivable ledgers & schedules	7 yrs
Audit reports of accountants	Indefinitely
Budgets	3 yrs
Cash receipts records	7 yrs
Chart of accounts	Indefinitely
Check register & cash books	Indefinitely
Depreciation schedules	Indefinitely
Expense analyses & expense distribution schedules	Indefinitely
Financial statements (end-of-year)	Indefinitely
General & private ledgers (& end-of-year trial balances)	Indefinitely
Internal audit reports	5 yrs
Internal reports (misc)	3 yrs
Invoices from vendors	7 yrs
Invoices to customers	7 yrs
Journals	Indefinitely
Low-income housing records	7 yrs
Notes receivable ledgers & schedules	7 yrs

ACCOUNTING (continued)

Petty cash vouchers	3 yrs
Plant cost ledgers	7yrs
Purchase orders (except purchasing dept. copy)	1 yr
Requisitions	1 yr
Sales records	7 yrs
Subsidiary ledgers	7 yrs
Tax returns, work papers & revenue agents reports	Indefinitely
Voucher register & schedule	7 yrs
Vouchers for payments to vendors	7 yrs

BANK

Bank deposits	4 yrs
Bank reconciliations	1 yr
Bank statements	7 yrs
Canceled checks (daily payments)	7 yrs
Canceled checks (major payments, ie: taxes, purchases of property, special contracts, etc)	Indefinitely
Duplicate deposit slips	1 yr



COMPUTERIZED RECORDS

Records must be maintained in a retrievable format according to these time guidelines. Additionally, documentation describing the application, procedures & controls utilized, as well as detail information for the records must be available.

DOCUMENTATION

Contracts & leases (expired)	7 yrs
Contracts & leases (still in effect)	Indefinitely
Deeds, mortgages & bills of sale	Indefinitely
Inherited property valuations	Indefinitely
Partnership agreements	Indefinitely
Property appraisals	Indefinitely
Property Records (including costs, depreciation reserves, end-of-the-year trial balances, depreciation schedules, blueprints & plans)	Indefinitely
Real estate records	Indefinitely
Trademark registrations	Indefinitely

EMPLOYEE

Employee benefit plan records	7 yrs
Employee personnel records (after termination)	4 yrs
Employment applications	3 yrs
Payroll & payroll tax records	7 yrs
Retirement & pension tax records	Indefinitely
Savings bond registration records of employees	3 yrs
Time records	7 yrs
Vouchers for payments to employees (including travel & entertainment)	7 yrs

INSURANCE

Accident reports & claims (completed)	7 yrs
Insurance policies (expired)	3 yrs
Insurance records, open or unresolved accident reports, claims, policies, etc.	Indefinitely

INVENTORY

Inventories of products, materials & supplies	7 yrs
LIFO inventory detail information	7 yrs to Indefinitely
Physical inventory tags	3 yrs
Receiving sheets	1 yr
Scrap & salvage records (inventories, sales, etc)	7 yrs
Stockroom withdrawal forms	1 yr

MISCELLANEOUS

Correspondence	3 yrs
Correspondence on legal, tax & major matters	Indefinitely

STOCK

Capital stock & bonds records, ledgers, transfer registers, stubs showing issues, records of interest coupons, options, etc	Indefinitely
Minute books of directors & stockholders including by-laws & charter, certificate of incorporation	Indefinitely
Options records (expired)	7 yrs
Stock & bond certificates (canceled)	7 yrs



RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR RETAINING RECORDS



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