



The Association periodically receives calls asking how long records need to be kept. Our auditors provided the schedule below and remind us that these are guidelines only and that there may be discrepancies between sources. File retention no longer means only paper copies since many company files are maintained electronically. This may include, but is not limited to items such as emails, tax software files, scanned images and any other form of information that is created and/or stored electronically. To develop your own schedule, make provisions for the types of documentation unique to your business and review it with your attorney.

Retention Period	Item
7 years	Accident reports/claims (settled cases)
7 years	Accounts payable ledgers and schedules
7 years	Accounts receivable ledgers and schedules
Permanently	Audit reports
2 years	Bank Reconciliations
3 years	Bank Statements
Permanently	Capital stock and bond records: ledgers, transfer registers, stubs showing issues, record of interest coupons, options, etc.
Permanently	Cash books
Permanently	Charts of accounts
7 years	Checks (canceled - see exception below)
Permanently	Checks (canceled for important payments, i.e. taxes, purchases of property, special contracts, etc. Checks should be filed with the papers pertaining to the underlying transaction.)
7 years Permanently	Contracts, mortgages, notes, and leases (expired) (still in effect)
7 years	Correspondence (general)
Permanently	Correspondence (legal and important matters only)
2 years	Correspondence (routine) with customers and/or vendors
Permanently	Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale
Permanently	Depreciation schedules
2 years	Duplicate deposit slips
3 years	Employment applications
7 years	Expense analyses/expense distribution schedules
Permanently	Financial statements (year-end, other optional)
7 years	Garnishments
Permanently	General/private ledgers, year-end trial balance
3 years	Insurance policies (expired)
Permanently	Insurance records, current accident reports, claims, policies, etc.
3 years	Internal audit reports (longer retention periods may be desirable)

<b>Retention Period</b>	<b>Item</b>
3 years	Internal reports (miscellaneous)
7 years	Inventories of products, materials, and supplies
7 years	Invoices (to customers, from vendors)
Permanently	Journals
1 year	Magnetic tape and tab cards
Permanently	Minute books of directors, stockholders, bylaws, and charter
7 years	Notes receivable ledgers and schedules
7 years	Option records (expired)
Permanently	Patents and related papers
7 years	Payroll records and summaries
7 years	Personnel files (terminated)
3 years	Petty cash vouchers
3 years	Physical inventory tags
7 years	Plant cost ledgers
Permanently	Property appraisals by outside appraisers
Permanently	Property records, including costs, depreciation reserves, year-end trial balances, depreciation schedules, blueprints, and plans
1 year	Purchase orders (except purchasing department copy)
7 years	Purchase orders (purchasing department copy)
1 year	Receiving sheets
1 year	Requisitions
Permanently	Retirement and pension records
3 years	Sales commission reports
7 years	Sales records
7 years	Scrap and salvage records (inventories, sales etc.)
1 year	Stenographers' notebooks
7 years	Stock and bond certificates (canceled)
1 year	Stockroom withdrawal forms
7 years	Subsidiary ledgers
Permanently	Tax returns and worksheets, revenue agents' reports, and other documents relating to determination of income tax liability
7 years	Time books/cards
Permanently	Trademark registrations and copyrights
Permanently	Training manuals
Permanently	Union agreements
7 years	Voucher register and schedules
7 years	Vouchers for payments to vendors, employee, etc. (includes allowances and reimbursement of employees, officers, etc. for travel and entertainment expenses)
7 years	Withholding tax statements