

Accounting and Fiscal

Type of Document	Years	Type of Document	Years
Accounts payable ledgers	P ¹	Checks paid and cancelled	9
Accounts receivable ledgers	10	Checks payroll	7
Balance sheets	5	Donations	7
Bank deposit records	6	Expense reports employees	5
Bank reconciliation papers and statements	8	Financial statements, certified & periodic	P ¹
Bills collectible	7	Fixed capital records	P ¹
Bonds sales or transfers	15	General journal, ledger & supporting papers	P ¹
Bonds registered	P ¹	Income tax returns	4 ²
Building permits	20	Inventory records	3
Capital stock sales, certificates & ledgers	P ¹	Invoices to customers	7
Cash books	25	Invoices from sellers (vendors)	7
Cash receipts & disbursement records	10	Payroll register	7
Cash sales slips	3	Petty cash records	3
Charge slips	10	Profit and loss statements	P ¹
Check records	7	Buy/sell stock, bonds & mutual funds ³	4 ⁴
Check register, dividend, expense	10		
Corporate			
Annual reports	P ¹	Easements	P ¹
Capital stock certificates and stock ledger	P ¹	Election ballots	20
Charters, constitution, bylaws and amendments	P ¹	Election records	10
Contracts employee (years after termination)	P ¹	General cashbooks (treasurer and auditor)	25
Contracts government & labor unions (yrs after termination)	P ¹	Incorporation records & certificates	P ¹
Contracts vendor (years after termination)	10	Licenses & permits to do business (fed, state & local)	P ¹
Dividend checks	10	Retirement plan contributions (after assets have been withdrawn)	4
Dividend register	P ¹	Stock, stock transfer & stockholder records	P ¹
Insurance			
Accident reports	11	Claims group life and hospital	4
Appraisals	P ¹	Claims workmen's compensation	10
Claims automobile	10	Expired policies all types (after expiration)	3
Legal			
Affidavits	10	Copyrights	P ¹
Claims & litigation of torts & breach of conduct	P ¹	Mortgages	5
Personal Property			
Accident reports, injury claims & settlements	11	Injury frequency charts	10
Applications, changes, terminations	3	Insurance records (group & employee)	6
Attendance and time sheet records	6	Medical folders employee	5
Disability & sick benefits records	8	Payroll records after termination	P ¹
Earnings records	P ¹	Pension plan applications, claims & correspondence	P ¹
Employee service records	P ¹	Salary and rate changes	10
Employee contracts	P ¹	Withholding exemption certificates (after termination)	8
File for individual employee	3	Workmen's compensation reports	30
Garnishments	7		
Property			
Appraisals	P ¹	Maintenance and repair buildings	10
Damage reports	7	Maintenance and repair of machinery	5
Deeds and titles	P ¹	Equipment records & historical folders	P ¹
Depreciation schedules	3	Sales	7
Inventory records	16	Taxes	P ¹
Leases	6	Water rights	P ¹
Taxation			
Annuity or deferred payment plan	P ¹	Invoices to customers & from sellers (vendors)	7
Correspondence	20	Inventory reports	16
Depreciation schedules ⁵	3	Real estate	15
Dividend register	P ¹	Sales & use tax records	P ¹
Employee withholding certificates	8	Social Security	P ¹
Exemption status	P ¹	Tax bill statements	P ¹
Excise reports	5	Tax returns and working papers	P ¹

1 Permanent

2 Retain for at least 4 years and preferably 7 if space is not critical. Once the period has elapsed, the supporting documents may be discarded, but the returns and W-2s themselves should be retained indefinitely.

3 (also record of dividends, splits & reinvested dividends)

4 Retain for four years after the asset is sold.

5 For any rental real estate or depreciable business property you own, keep records of the property's cost, date acquired, and schedule of depreciation claimed in previous years. If the property is sold, keep the records for four years after the sale.