

Document Retention Policy

The actual period that records are kept will depend on a number of factors including:

- Legal and related requirements
- Costs
- The organisation's own need to access the document
- Historical value.



Each type of document needs to be assessed separately. In the case of many types of document, it will be sufficient to keep them only for the period required by statute; others will be essential reference material in future years and the choir might decide to keep them longer than the period required by law.

The tables that follow indicate the retention period for the documents most commonly held by charities and give a brief explanation of the retention period given.

Purchase invoices and supplier documentation		
Document	Retention period	Reason for retention period
Payments cash book or record of payments made	Six years from the end of the financial year in which the transaction was made	Companies Act Charities Act
Invoice - revenue		

Income/Monies received		
Document	Retention period	Reason for retention period
Bank paying in counterfoils	Six years from the end of the financial year in which the transaction was made	Companies Act Charities Act
Bank statements		
Remittance advices		
Correspondence re donations		
Bank reconciliations		
Receipts cash book		
Sales ledger		
Deeds of covenant/Gift Aid declarations	Six years after the last payment made. 12 years if payments outstanding or dispute regarding the deed	Data Protection Act

Insurance documents		
Document	Retention period	Reason for retention period
Policies	Three years after lapse	Data Protection Act
Claims correspondence	Three years after settlement	Data Protection Act
Employer's Liability insurance certificate	Five years	Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998
Accident reports and relevant correspondence	Three years after settlement	Data Protection Act

Other documents		
Document	Retention period	Reason for retention period
Trustee/director/governor minutes of meetings and decisions made as resolutions in writing	Minimum 10 years from the date of the meeting or from the date of passing a resolution in writing	Data Protection Act, Companies Act Charities Act
Minutes of general meetings and members' resolutions passed other than at a general meeting	Minimum 10 years after the date of the meeting/ resolution/decision	Companies Act Charities Act
Annual accounts and annual review	Permanently	Data Protection Act
Major agreements of historical significance		
Health and safety records	Three years for general records. Permanently for records relating to hazardous substances.	Personal injury actions must generally be commenced within three years of injury.
Safeguarding	Three years for general records. Five years for records relating to safeguarding issues.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Contract with customers, suppliers or agents, licensing agreements, rental/ hire purchase agreements, indemnities and guarantees and other agreements or contracts	Six years after expiry or termination of the contract. If the contract is executed as a deed, the limitation period is twelve years	Limitations Act 1980