CLARITAS
FINANCIAL PARTNERS

How Long to Keep Important Documents

Keeping your financial records organized and easily accessible can help give you a clearer snapshot of your financial situation. This can not only make it easier to pursue your financial goals but to make it less stressful and save time should you have to manage any inquiries or locate items.

Here is a guide of recommended retention periods for various documents. Please keep in mind that holding periods can vary from state to state.

Record	Retention Period
Permanent	
Estate and gift tax returns	Permanent (until the estate and gift plan pays out all benefits)
Wills	Permanent (until the Will pays out all benefits)
Contracts and leases still active	Permanent (until contract or lease is done)
Military papers (for Vet benefits)	Permanent
Deeds & title papers	Permanent (until sold and then 7 years after)
Trust agreements	Permanent (until the trust has paid all benefits)
Passports	Permanent (until expiration)
Vehicle records	Permanent (until the vehicle is sold)
Legal personal certifications (birth, adoption, marriage or divorce, naturalization, immigration, religious affiliation)	Permanent
Pension plan documents	Permanent
Legal or IRS correspondences	Permanent
IRA annual reports	Permanent (You should keep retirement plan records until the trust or IRA has paid all benefits and enough time has passed that the plan won't be audited.)
IRA nondeductible contributions (Form 8606)	Permanent (Until the IRA has paid all benefits and enough time passed that the plan won't be audited).
Divorce (alimony, custody, prenup documents)	Permanent
Warranties	Permanent (life of the product)
Photographs of valuables	Permanent (until item no longer owned)
Videos that might contain valuables	Permanent (until item no longer owned)

Record	Retention Period
7 Years +	
401(k)/Keogh statement	7 years from disposition, termination, or payoff
Tax returns (uncomplicated)	3 years from the filing date or 7 years if claiming loss from worthless securities or bad debt.
Accident reports and claims	7 years
Major Purchase receipts	7 years
W-2s	7 years
1099s	In most cases, the 1099 statute of limitations is 3 years However, it wouldn't hurt to keep them 7 years.
Schedules K-1 for Trusts, Partnerships or S-Corporations	7 years from distribution or disposition of interest
Canceled or substitute checks supporting tax deductions	7 years
Bank deposit slips	7 years
Bank statements	7 years
Charitable contribution documentation	7 years
Credit card statements (with tax significance)	7 years
Receipts, diaries, logs pertaining to tax returns	7 years
Investment purchase and sales slips	Ownership period + 7 years
Dividend reinvestment records	Ownership period + 7 years
Year-end brokerage statements	Ownership period + 7 years
Mutual fund annual statements	Ownership period + 7 years
Certificates of deposit	Ownership period + 7 years
Investment property purchase documents	Ownership period + 7 years
Insurance policies other than life insurance	7 years from when policy expires, lapses, or is replaced.
Other real estate documents (such as property appraisals by outside appraisers)	Ownership period + 7 years after selling the home
Home improvement receipts and canceled checks	Ownership period + 7 years after selling the home
Home repair receipts and canceled checks	Warranty period or until the home has been sold and then until 7 years have passed.
Loans	Term of loan + 7 years
1098 and mortgage interest receipts	7 years
Year-end brokerage statements	7 years
Insurance policies	Life of policy + 3 years (Check with your agent. Liability for prior years can vary.)

Generally speaking, non-tax-related financial documents only need to be retained for one year including bank statements, credit card statements, canceled checks, paid medical bills, investment statements, pay stubs, receipts for large purchases, etc. Similar statements listed above that suggest the retention of documents for specific time frames typically are tax significant.

If you have any questions or concerns about your financial documents, how long to hold them, which ones are most essential to focus on, and the financial impact each may have on your strategies, please contact us today so we can schedule a consultation. Let us do what we love to do and ensure your financial documents are in order, your strategies are up to date, and they align with your short- and long-term goals.

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