



# Record Retention Guidelines for Dealerships

When it comes to retaining records, it can be tough knowing what to keep and what to toss. Our dealership professionals can help you figure out which documents to hold on to or throw out.

## Accounting Records

Accounts payable ledgers and schedules.....	Permanently
Annual domestic corporate filing report.....	Permanently
Annual inventory records.....	7 years
Audit records.....	Permanently
Bank reconciliations and statements.....	7 years
Bills of lading.....	7 years
Canceled checks.....	7 years
Cash receipt and disbursement journals.....	Permanently
Check copies - asset purchase, tax payments, special contracts, etc.....	7 years
Credit memos.....	5 years
Credit applications - denied.....	5 years
Duplicate deposit slips.....	7 years
Expense ledgers.....	7 years
Expense reports.....	7 years
Factory warranty audit documents.....	3 years
Financial statements.....	Permanently
Fixed asset acquisition and disposition records.....	Permanently
Fixed asset and depreciation schedules.....	7 years
General ledger and journal.....	Permanently
Interdepartmental sales journal.....	7 years
Mortgages and notes.....	Permanently
New vehicle sales journal.....	7 years
Notes receivable ledger.....	7 years
Parts and service sales journal.....	7 years
Parts sales invoices.....	5 years
Payroll records and journal.....	7 years
Petty cash vouchers.....	7 years
Petty cash summary envelope.....	5 years
Prepaid and accrued expense journal.....	7 years
Purchase orders.....	7 years
Receipts for cash and other office receipts.....	5 years
Receiving reports.....	1 year
Sales invoices.....	7 years
Salespeople's commission reports.....	3 years
Subsidiary ledger.....	7 years
Trial balances.....	Permanently
Year end schedules.....	5 years

## Dealership Information

Car deal folders.....	7 years
Dealer license data.....	Permanently
Demo vehicle file.....	7 years
DMV report of sales books.....	7 years
Internal repair orders.....	5 years
Items possibly separated from car deal folders	
Credit applications.....	3 years
Customer files.....	7 years
Internal repair orders.....	5 years
Odometer statements.....	5 years
Retail installment contracts - assigned.....	10 years
Retail installment contracts - not assigned.....	10 years
Service contracts and extended warranties.....	10 years
Used vehicle buyer's guide.....	None
Vehicle invoice.....	7 years
Vehicle purchase orders.....	7 years
Repair estimates.....	3 years
Repair orders.....	7 years
Service history.....	5 years
Shipping and receiving reports.....	5 years
Underground storage tank - testing results and DNR correspondence.....	Permanently
Uniform hazardous waste manifests.....	3 years
Vehicle, parts and sundry invoices.....	7 years
Vendor's invoices.....	7 years
Vouchers for payments to vendors and employees.....	7 years
Warranty, incentive and rebate submission documents.....	7 years

## Personnel Records

Disability and sick benefit records.....	7 years
Employee handbook.....	Permanently
Employee required notifications.....	Permanently
Employment agreement/personnel contracts.....	7 years
Employment applications - terminated and not hired.....	3 years after termination
Payroll time cards.....	7 years
Personnel files.....	7 years after termination
Retirement and pension records.....	Permanently
Workmen's compensation - claims.....	7 years

[www.hhcupa.com/dealership](http://www.hhcupa.com/dealership)



# Record Retention Guidelines for Dealerships

## Tax Records

Blueprints for facilities.....	Permanently
Business valuation reports.....	Permanently
Contribution to charitable organizations.....	Keep with tax return
Employee tax liens.....	3 years
Excise tax return.....	7 years
Federal tax Form 970 - LIFO election.....	Permanently
Federal tax Form 3115.....	Permanently
Form 8300 - \$10,000 cash reporting form.....	7 years
Income tax return workpapers.....	Permanently
Income tax returns - federal and state.....	Permanently
Information returns.....	Permanently
IRS audit results.....	Permanently
LIFO calculations and supporting invoices (new and used vehicles, and parts inventories).....	Permanently
Payroll tax returns.....	7 years
Personal property tax statements.....	7 years
Property records.....	Permanently
Property tax bills or receipts.....	7 years
S-Corporation election with IRS approval (Form 2553).....	Permanently
Sales & Use tax returns.....	Permanently
Sales tax resale certificates.....	7 years
State income/franchise tax returns and examiners reports.....	Permanently
Unemployment tax returns - federal and state.....	Permanently
US revenue agents' reports and related papers.....	Permanently
Withholding tax returns and statements, federal and state.....	Permanently

## Insurance Records

Accident reports.....	7 years after settled
Insurance claims.....	7 years after settled
Insurance policies.....	7 years after expiration
Workmen's Compensation - proof of coverage.....	Permanently

## Legal Records

Business license and underlying computations.....	7 years
Capital lease agreements (equipment).....	7 years
Capital stock book.....	Permanently
Construction contracts.....	Permanently
Contracts and leases.....	7 years
Corporate minutes, by-laws, and other corporate records.....	Permanently
Correspondence - general.....	7 years
Correspondence - legal and tax related.....	Permanently
Deeds and easements.....	Permanently
Emergency action plans - evacuation.....	Permanently
Environment site test results and cleanup reports.....	Permanently
Fire inspection reports.....	6 years
Flooring agreements.....	5 years
Litigation papers.....	Permanently
OSHA records.....	7 years
Partnership and shareholder agreements.....	Permanently
Property appraisals by outside appraisers.....	Permanently
Purchase agreements - bills of sales, buy/sell and other assets.....	Permanently
Registrations - patents, copyrights and trademarks.....	Permanently
Safety reports.....	10 years
Stock option records - expired.....	Permanently
Truth in lending, evidence of compliance.....	5 years



[www.hhcpa.com/dealership](http://www.hhcpa.com/dealership)

These Record Retention Guidelines provide a general guideline for the retention of many records, but the specific holding periods for any record retention policy should be given careful scrutiny by management and legal advisors in light of any pending investigations, regulated industry requirements or contract covenants. The guidelines we have provided may vary by state, regulatory entities and are subject to occasional change. In addition to these general guidelines, each business should consider any industry standards which may affect the holding period of records due to the unusual legal circumstances.