



DATA PROTECTION DEPT
BYTE SIZED

Data Protection Toolkit for (Your Company Name)

Minimum Data Protection Requirements

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Document Retention

Explanation

Personal data should not be kept for any longer than is strictly necessary for the purpose for which it is processed, so all personal data should be regarded as having an “end date” after which it should be deleted or destroyed securely.

It is important to give employees guidelines on how long to keep different records for, some are needed to meet legal obligations, for example records of financial transactions are required for seven years to meet HMRC requirements. So a suggested policy on document retention is set out below.

Document Retention

Actions – Document retention

Document Retention		Initials/Date
1	Decide on appropriate retention periods for sets of personal data processed by the organisation. Retention periods should be set based on business needs, any legal guidance and the suggested retention period below.	
2	Document applicable retention periods and the reasons for each retention period.	
3	Tailor the wording of the Document Retention Policy to meet the organisation's requirements.	
4	Publish the policy to employees.	

Document Retention

Templates – Document retention policy

Statement of commitment

[Co Name] is committed to maintaining high standards of security and confidentiality for personal data and to compliance with the Data Protection Principles.

In accordance with the principle that personal data should not be retained any longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes for which it is processed, we undertake to follow a document retention schedule, deleting or destroying documents after the stated periods.

Scope

This policy is made under the [Co Name] Data Protection Policy and it shall apply to all directors, employees, and contract workers.

Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed in ____ [date].

Document retention periods

Business documents

Document	Suggested Period of Retention (see note)	Keep or delete on employee leaving
Client contracts	6 years from termination of contract	Delete/destroy
Supplier contracts	6 years from termination of contract	Delete/destroy
Insurance certificates and conditions of cover	Indefinitely	Do not destroy
Accounting records and supporting materials	7 years	Delete/destroy
Minutes of board meetings and company registers	Indefinitely	Do not destroy
Information relating to personal injury claims made against the company	3 years	Check with insurers before Delete/destroy
General correspondence	6 years	Delete/destroy
Tender documents	6 years after end of contract if successful 1 year after tender process if unsuccessful	Delete/destroy

Policies and procedures	Indefinitely and keep a note of the dates when they applied	Do not destroy
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Note: These are the recommended retention periods unless there are specific reasons to support a longer retention period.

HR documents

Document	Suggested Period of Retention (see note)	Keep or delete on employee leaving
Application form	Duration of employment	Delete/destroy
References	1 year	Delete/destroy
Payroll and tax information	6 years	Keep 6 years
Sickness records	3 years	Delete/destroy
Annual leave records	2 years	Delete/destroy
Unpaid leave/special leave records	3 years	Delete/destroy
Annual appraisal/assessment records	5 years	Delete/destroy
Records relating to promotion, transfer, training, disciplinary matters	1 year from end of employment	Keep 1 year
References given/information supporting the reference	5 years from giving reference	Keep 5 years from giving reference
Summary of record of service such as name, position held, dates of employment	10 years from end of employment	Keep 10 years
Records relating to accident or injury at work	12 years	Keep 12 years

Note: These are the recommended retention periods unless there are specific reasons to support a longer retention period

