

Focus area	Typical Records	Legislation	Retention period	Tick
Quality	Accounting records	Companies Act, No 71 of 2008	7 years	
Occupational health and safety	A health and safety committee shall keep record of each recommendation made to an employer in terms of issues affecting the health of employees and of any report made to an inspector in terms of the recommendation	Occupational Health and Safety Act, No 85 of 1993	3 years	
Occupational health and safety	Records of incidents reported at work	OHSA, Annexure 1 of the General Administration Regulations, 2003	3 years	
Occupational health and safety	Handling of chemical hazards Records of assessments and air monitoring Medical surveillance records	Hazardous Chemical Substance Regulations, 1995, Regulation 9	30 years	
Occupational health and safety	Noise hazard All records of assessments and noise monitoring All medical surveillance records, including the baseline audiogram of every employee	Noise Regulations (R307 of 2003) Regulation 11	40 years	
Corporate social responsibility Quality Food safety Occupational health and safety	Employee records – name, date of birth, position, include training records here	Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No 75 of 1997	3 years after last entry, even after termination of employment	
Corporate social responsibility Quality Food safety Occupational health and safety	Employers should keep records for each employee specifying the nature of any disciplinary transgressions, the actions taken by the employer and the reasons for the actions	Labour Relations Act, No 66 of 1995	Indefinite	
Food safety Quality	Vendors are obliged to keep the following records: - record of all goods and services supplied by and to the vendor - invoices - tax invoices - credit notes - debit notes - bank statements - deposit slips - stock lists	Value Added Tax Act, No 89 of 1991	5 years after date of return	
Food safety Quality	Fresh produce records – all aspects of crop production Food safety programme	Agricultural products standards Act, Act 119 of 1990, standards regarding food hygiene and food safety for agricultural food products of plant origin destined for export	1 growing season 6 months	
Food safety Environment	Records of hazardous waste disposal – food that is no longer fit for human consumption	National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act no. 59 of 2008) Waste classification and management regulations	5 years	
Food safety Quality	Records of production, delivery, all aspects required for a recall of product and defending your strict liability requirements in the event of harm to the consumer	Consumer Protection Act, No 68 of 2008	3 years (please note this is irrespective of shelf life of the product)	

In certain instances, legislation requires that records be kept for an “indefinite” period. The term “indefinite” is not defined in the legislation, but clearly requires that documents be retained for as long as the relevant entity exists.

Where different legislation refers to the retention of the same records/information, business must consider adhering to the most stringent of the legislative requirements