DOT Record Retention Quick Reference

Selected federal minimums for U.S. motor-carrier records. Apply any longer legal, state, contractual, insurance, or company requirement. Keep current qualification evidence even when an older record reaches its minimum period.

Driver, trip, accident, and equipment records

Record category	Federal minimum / timing	Rule
Core driver qualification file	Employment plus 3 years after employment ends, subject to the specific removable-record exceptions below.	391.51(c)
Specified renewable DQ records	Annual MVR/review, medical qualification records, variance and examiner-verification records listed in 391.51(d): may be removed 3 years after execution.	391.51(d)
Safety performance histories for hired drivers	Employment plus 3 years after employment ends. Maintain controlled access.	391.53
RODS and HOS supporting documents	At least 6 months from receipt. Preserve accessible ELD records and required supporting documents.	395.8(k)
150-air-mile time records	6 months for the time records required by the applicable short-haul exception.	395.1(e)
DOT accident register and required reports	3 years after each reportable accident; include required governmental and insurer accident reports.	390.15
Vehicle inspection, repair, maintenance records	1 year where the vehicle is housed or maintained, and 6 months after it leaves the carrier’s control.	396.3(c)
Required DVIRs and certifications	3 months from the written report date. Applicability and exceptions matter.	396.11
Roadside inspection reports	12 months from inspection, with required correction certification.	396.9(d)
Periodic inspection reports	14 months from the inspection report date; see the rule for responsibility when another entity performed the inspection.	396.21

49 CFR 391.51 49 CFR 395.8 49 CFR 396.3 49 CFR 382.401 49 CFR 382.703

Selected federal minimums. Check the cited rule and preserve records subject to a hold.

DOT Record Retention Quick Reference | Continued

Drug/alcohol and Clearinghouse records

Record category	Federal minimum / timing	Rule
Positive drugs; alcohol 0.02 or higher; refusals	5 years. Also retain the evaluation/referral, calibration, program-administration and annual-summary records listed in the rule for 5 years.	382.401(b)(1)
Collection-process records	2 years, except evidential breath-testing calibration records fall under the 5-year category.	382.401(b)(2)
Negative/canceled drug tests; alcohol below 0.02	1 year, including the specified MRO reversals of canceled drug tests.	382.401(b)(3)
Required testing education/training records	While the individual performs the function requiring the training, plus 2 years afterward.	382.401(b)(4)
Clearinghouse query/response records	3 years. Since Jan. 6, 2023, maintaining a valid employer registration satisfies 382.701(e). This does not replace the separate consent requirement.	382.701(e)
Limited-query consent	3 years from the last query conducted under that consent. Keep the employer-held consent record.	382.703(a)

Before any routine disposal

- ☐ Confirm the record category, triggering date, and latest applicable requirement. Check overlapping rules before assigning a deletion date.
- ☐ Check for an accident claim, litigation hold, agency request, audit, or unresolved issue. Preserve affected records until authorized release.
- ☐ Keep sensitive driver and testing records access-controlled. Confirm records remain readable and retrievable when systems or vendors change.

Company retention review

Record category / storage location _____

Owner / longer retention or hold _____

Reviewer / next review date _____

49 CFR 391.51 49 CFR 395.8 49 CFR 396.3 49 CFR 382.401 49 CFR 382.703