

Retention Times For Records, Reports, and Specimens

The minimum required retention times for various records, reports, and specimens are listed below. These reflect retention periods required by federal and state regulations, as well as accreditation standards (CAP and Joint Commission).

Item/ Records	Retention Times
Clinical Lab Specimens	Serum/CSF/Body Fluids - 48 hours Urine - 24 hours Blood/body fluid smears - 7 days Permanently stained slides(gram, trichrome, etc) - 7 days
Discontinued procedures	5 years
Instrument/Equipment records	5 years - daily, weekly, or monthly checks Life of the equipment - major repairs, parts replacement, annual maintenance
Instrument Printouts	2 years, unless the recorded data are retrievable in an alternate manner
Proficiency Testing	5 years
Specimen Records	Disposition or disposal of the specimens Accession logs Records are retained on site for 2 years
Surgical Path/Histology	Gross specimen/wet tissue - 14 days after final report Slides & Blocks - 10 years
Test Reports (prelim & final)	10 years - histology, cytology & bone marrow 25 year - Cytogenetic 7 years - all others
Test Requisitions	7 years
Quality Control Records	5 years
<u>Laboratory Specific Times:</u>	
Blood Bank records	Indefinite retention - donor/recipient records; permanently deferred donor Specimens from blood donor units & recipients - 7 days post transfusion Donor and Recipient and patient records -10 years Records of employee signatures, initials and ID codes - 10 years
Cytology	Slides - 5 years from examination date Fine needle aspirates - 10 years
Cytogenetics	Permanently stained slide 3 years Fluorochrome stained slides - at discretion of lab director Fixed cell pellet - 14 days after final report Final report 20 years Diagnostic images - 20 years
Embryo Laboratory	As specified by law or 10 years beyond date of final
Flow Cytometry	Gated dot plots and histograms - 10 years
Tissue Banking	Indefinite retention