One-page summary

Zoo record-keeping, at a glance

What the **Zoo Licensing Act 1981** and the **Standards of Modern Zoo Practice** require, and what changes on **24 May 2027** — condensed from the full guide at zoologplus.com.

Last checked 2 November 2026 against the 2027 Standards · a ZooLog+ guide

What every licensed collection must keep

- **Stock record** — numbers by species, plus every acquisition, birth, death, disposal and escape, with per-animal ID (species, sex, DOB, origin)
- **Daily husbandry record** — written by whoever is in direct charge of the animals: diet changes, health checks, unusual behaviour, remedial action
- **Veterinary record** — preventive and clinical care, post-mortem results, drug stock and disposal
- **Annual stock record** — sent to your local authority each year

How long to keep it

Six years, minimum. The 2027 Standards make this explicit: records kept for at least six years, and animal records for the animal's life plus at least six years after death or departure. The Zoo Licensing Act itself sets no retention period — six years comes from the Standards, enforced through your licence conditions.

The 24 May 2027 transition

Now, until 23 May 2027		From 24 May 2027
2012 Standards — England & Scotland	→	New GB-wide Standards — England, Wales & Scotland

- IUCN Red List conservation status added to every animal record
- Annual stock return to your local authority moves from 1 April to **1 March**
- Education, conservation and drug-stock records move from "should" to "must" keep

Sources

- GOV.UK: Keeping zoo animals
- GOV.UK: Standards of Modern Zoo Practice (2012 & 2027)

General information, not legal advice. Full guide and checklist at zoologplus.com/guides/zoo-record-keeping/.