**Memorandum**

Date: April 10, 2016

To: **Pioneer Human Services**

From: Mallory Dudley

maldudley@gmail.com

(253) 389-0739

Subject: Music and Art Therapy Program Proposal - Mental Health Services for Adults Transitioning Out of Jail

In this memo I will make the case for music and art therapy program designed as a counseling tool for adults who have mental health needs and are transitioning out of jail.

**Purpose:**

People transitioning out of jail face substantial stress and challenges while reentering the community and have shown significant benefits from mental health services. An often-overlooked resource that offers a welcoming environment to encourage expression through a healing and imaginative tool is music and art therapy. This form of therapy can be an incredibly useful counseling strategy for this population as they are transitioning back into society and do not have many creative instruments and resources available to them. This will improve the client health and well being by providing a relaxing and insightful therapy for them to participate in.

**Background:**

In Washington State, 41 percent of the prison populations are reported to have a mental illness. While there are no exact statistics for Whatcom County, King County, and Pierce County there is an extensive number of people affected by mental illness in our current jail systems and Pioneer Human Services works closely with these individuals throughout Washington State. There are very few organizations that serve this large population with treatment and therapy, and there is a high need to serve those with mental health demands. As adults are transitioning out of jail and prison, not only almost half of them are experiencing mental illness symptoms, but they face additional stress learning how to support themselves outside of jail. This stress can cause additional effects that lead to harmful behavior and can be a threat to their mental health and overall health.

While traditional therapy methods are a viable option, there are few mediums and resources to reduce these life stressors through creativity and innovation. Through the improvement of current programs and more therapy options, clients will be in a better position through healing, learning, and exercising their brain in different ways. Art therapy improves the ability to separate the thinking mind from the observing mind, and uses observation, a different part of the brain to recreate. Art therapy can release the stress, anxiety, and depression that occur in the brain when feeling stressed and/or hopeless. Music therapy provides a similar alleviation, along with the ability to connect with memory, communication, emotion, and expression.

**Mission:**

Pioneer Human Services serves the people released from prison in Washington State and offers treatment, housing, and employment services, during this time of transition. The art and music therapy program will help expand the department of counseling and treatment and increase the diversity of options for the population Pioneer Human Services is serving.

**Next Steps:**

To implement this new therapy program, a program committee will have to be formed to develop plans for the actual program, materials and employees needed. A program model will be prepared if able to receive the funds, and will be implemented by the professional therapists, volunteers, and committee.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to help design and implement this music and art therapy program. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. My contact information is listed at the top of this memo.