

Theory of Change



The Change We're Driving Toward

Far fewer people behind bars – especially from communities of color and low-income communities – and more people who've been justice-involved living with dignity, stability and purpose in the community.

How We Drive Change

Ending mass incarceration takes more than well-meaning programs. It takes a bold, unified strategy that fuses diversion, reentry, social enterprise and advocacy into one powerful engine for transformation. Our social enterprise model gives us the independence and agility to pursue deep, connected solutions – free from fragmented funding and outdated systems.

Diversion Services

We keep people out of jail by offering community-based alternatives that center treatment, healing and accountability – not punishment.

Services include:

- Crisis stabilization
- Detox
- Treatment
- Service planning and navigation
- Bail support
- Restorative justice
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Education
- Financial literacy
- Financial services
- Wage progression
- Path to livable wage and self-sufficiency



Reentry Services

We tackle the barriers people face after incarceration and build long-term stability through trusted relationships, access to resources and meaningful purpose – reducing recidivism and restoring opportunity.

Services include:

- Reentry planning and service navigation
- Connection to housing
- Treatment
- Access to meaningful income (employment with career advancement, entrepreneurship)
- Family preparedness and reunification or positive community connection
- Recovery support
- CBT
- Education
- Financial literacy
- Financial services
- Wage progression
- Path to livable wage and self-sufficiency





Advocacy

We fight for systemic change – transforming policies, challenging racial disparities, and pushing for investments in solutions that truly support safety, equity and opportunity.

Priorities include:

- Investment in community-centered alternatives to incarceration that reduce reliance on jails and prisons while promoting healing, stability and accountability
- Advancing equitable policy reforms that address sentencing disparities, reduce system churn and redefine public safety through prevention and care
- Ensure timely, fair release for people awaiting trial so that freedom is not determined by income or circumstance, and people aren't held in jail for extended periods without a conviction
- Storytelling that humanizes justice-involved individuals, amplifies impact and positions Pioneer as a national leader in integrated, transformative justice reform

Social Enterprise

Our mission-driven businesses generate revenue that fuels impact and create real jobs for people shut out by incarceration, poverty and systemic racism.

Priorities include:

- A diverse portfolio of business lines that offer resilience during market shifts
- Proceeds that support innovation in services, business capabilities and advocacy
- Expansion of job opportunities offering skill-building, wage progression and career growth
- Scaled growth aligned with customer needs and opportunity



Impact That Matters

We measure success by the outcomes that move the needle – not just for individuals but for entire communities and systems.

We aim for:



Fewer people caught in the justice system



Higher levels of well-being and self-sufficiency



Reduced risk factors linked to incarceration



Stronger pathways to lasting careers



Greater job satisfaction and personal growth



Policies that address and reverse racial inequities



Scaled-up community-led approaches to public safety

What We See Along the Way: Intermediate Outcomes

- **Fewer people** booked into jail for behavioral health crises or low-level offenses
- **Greater use of diversion courts** by police, prosecutors and judges
- **Increased community trust** in alternatives to incarceration
- **Reduced crime rates** and criminogenic risk factors
- **More individuals leaving incarceration** with comprehensive reentry plans
- **Reduced housing instability** and unemployment post-release
- **More justice-involved individuals employed** with career growth opportunities
- **Revenue** from social enterprise drives innovation
- **Expansion of second chance hiring practices** across industries
- **Legislation that reduces racial disparities** in sentencing and expands reentry support



What Grounds Us: Guiding Assumptions

Our Theory of Change is grounded in lessons learned from decades of direct service, policy reform and community partnerships.

- Intentionally prioritizing people who are most impacted – Black, Brown and low-income individuals – **drives the greatest systemic change**
- Jails and state prisons are key drivers of mass incarceration; **reducing their use is essential**
- Short-term needs are important, but **long-term change requires transformational support**
- With over 80% of people in jail not yet convicted, **reducing pretrial detention is critical**
- Social enterprise allows **innovation beyond** restrictive public funding
- **Services and advocacy are mutually reinforcing** and both are essential
- Sustainable, mission-driven revenue **strengthens our independence and impact**
- Racial and economic bias is baked into the system – **reform must be structural**
- Reducing recidivism requires **economic opportunity, healing and self-determination**
- **We can't do this alone** – focus, collaboration and strategic alignment are essential

What Must Exist: Conditions for Eradicating Mass Incarceration

- Over-policing of Black, Brown and poor communities **must end**
- **Alternatives to incarceration** must be funded, accessible and trusted
- **Sentencing laws must be equitable** and not deepen racial disparities
- Low-level offenses **should not** lead to incarceration
- People in prison must be treated with dignity and **prepared for reentry**
- Individuals returning home must have access to **housing, employment and care**
- **Reentry should not be blocked** by legal or systemic barriers
- Community-based solutions must be **adequately resourced**
- Justice must prioritize **healing and accountability** over punishment
- Public safety must center on **community wellness**, not incarceration
- Economic systems must be redesigned to **reduce poverty and expand opportunity**



Our Commitment

The path to ending mass incarceration is long – but necessary. At Pioneer, we are taking bold, coordinated steps toward a future rooted in equity, healing and opportunity. By aligning diversion, reentry, social enterprise and advocacy, we are building not just better programs, but better systems. **Together, we can create a society where justice is no longer about punishment, but about restoration, possibility and shared humanity.**



PIONEER
HUMAN SERVICES
A CHANCE FOR CHANGE

Pioneer Human Services
7440 West Marginal Way S.
Seattle, WA 98108

PioneerHumanServices.org