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8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
9 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
10 SAN JOSE DIVISION

12 AMBASSADOR MARC GINSBERG and
13 COALITION FOR A SAFER WEB,

14 Plaintiffs,

15 v.

16 GOOGLE INC.,

17 Defendant.

) CASE NO.: 5:21-CV-00570-BLF

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**GOOGLE LLC'S NOTICE OF
MOTION AND MOTION TO
DISMISS PLAINTIFFS'
COMPLAINT**

Before: Hon. Beth Labson Freeman
Courtroom: 3
Hearing Date: October 7, 2021
Time: 9:00AM

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21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

NOTICE OF MOTION 1

STATEMENT OF REQUESTED RELIEF 1

STATEMENT OF ISSUES..... 1

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES 1

FACTUAL & PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND 3

ARGUMENT 5

I. SECTION 230 BARS PLAINTIFFS’ STATE LAW CLAIMS 5

 A. Plaintiffs Seek to Treat Google as a Publisher of Information Provided by
 Another Information Content Provider 6

II. PLAINTIFFS FAIL TO STATE A VIABLE CLAIM FOR RELIEF 8

 A. Plaintiffs Lack the Standing Required to Bring a UCL Claim..... 8

 B. Plaintiffs Have No Viable Claim for Negligent Infliction of Emotional
 Distress 10

CONCLUSION 12

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

CASES

1

2

3

4 *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*,
556 U.S. 662 (2009)5

5 *Barnes v. Yahoo!, Inc.*,
570 F.3d 1096 (9th Cir. 2009).....6, 7

6

7 *Batzel v. Smith*,
333 F.3d 1018 (9th Cir. 2003).....5

8 *Beckman v. Match.com, LLC*,
2017 WL 1304288 (D. Nev. Mar. 10, 2017).....12

9

10 *Bennett v. Google, LLC*,
882 F.3d 1163 (D.C. Cir. 2018)7

11 *Birdsong v. Apple, Inc.*,
590 F.3d 955 (9th Cir. 2009).....8

12

13 *Carter v. Rasier-CA, LLC*,
2017 WL 4098858 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 15, 2017).....11

14 *Clark v. Cty. of Tulare*,
755 F. Supp. 2d 1075 (E.D. Cal. 2010).....12

15

16 *Coffee v. Google, LLC*,
2021 WL 493387 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 10, 2021).....2, 5, 6, 8, 9

17 *Doe No. 14 v. Internet Brands, Inc.*, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 192144 (C.D. Cal.
Nov. 14, 2016).....11

18

19 *Doe v. Internet Brands, Inc.*,
824 F.3d 846 (9th Cir. 2016).....5

20 *Doe v. MySpace, Inc.*,
528 F.3d 413 (5th Cir. 2008).....7

21

22 *Dyroff v. Ultimate Software Grp., Inc.*,
934 F.3d 1093 (9th Cir. 2019).....3, 5, 6, 7, 11

23 *Ess v. Eskaton Props.*,
97 Cal. App. 4th 120 (Cal. App. 2002)10

24

25 *Fair Hous. Council v. Roommates.com,*
LLC, 521 F.3d 1157 (9th Cir. 2008) (en banc).....2, 5, 6

26 *Fayer v. Vaughn*,
649 F.3d 1061 (9th Cir. 2011).....5

27

28 *Ginsberg v. Apple, Inc.*,
No. 5:21-cv-00425-EJD (Jan. 17, 2021)4

1 *Gonzalez v. Google, Inc.*,
 2 335 F. Supp. 3d 1156,1173 (N.D. Cal. 2018)7
 3 *Green v. Am. Online (AOL)*,
 4 318 F.3d 465 (3d Cir. 2003).....7
 5 *Hawkins v. Kroger Co.*,
 6 906 F.3d 763 (9th Cir. 2018).....8
 7 *Herrick v. Grindr, LLC*,
 8 306 F. Supp. 3d 579 (S.D.N.Y. 2018).....12
 9 *Huggins v. Longs Drug Stores Cal., Inc.*,
 10 6 Cal. 4th 124 (Cal. 1993).....10, 11
 11 *Kimzey v. Yelp! Inc.*,
 12 836 F.3d 1263 (9th Cir. 2016).....5, 7
 13 *Klayman v. Zuckerberg*,
 14 753 F.3d 1354 (D.C. Cir. 2014)6, 7
 15 *Kwikset Corp. v. Super. Ct.*,
 16 51 Cal. 4th 310 (2011).....2
 17 *Perfect 10, Inc. v. CCBill LLC*,
 18 488 F.3d 1102 (9th Cir. 2007).....5
 19 *Potter v. Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.*
 20 6 Cal. 4th 965, 984, 863 P.2d 795 (1993)11
 21 *Prager Univ. v. Google*,
 22 2018 WL 1471939 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 26, 2018).....5

STATUTES

19 47 U.S.C. § 230(c).....1
 20 47 U.S.C. § 230(c)(1) *passim*
 21 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200.....1
 22 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17204.....8

RULES

23 Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6).....1, 5
 24
 25
 26
 27
 28

1 **NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION TO DISMISS**

2 PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on October 7, 2021 at 9:00 AM, in the United States
3 District Courthouse, Courtroom 3, 5th Floor, 280 South 1st Street, San Jose, CA 95113, before the
4 Honorable Beth Labson Freeman, Defendant Google, LLC (“Defendant” or “Google”) will, and
5 hereby does, move this Court pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) for an order
6 dismissing with prejudice the Complaint brought by Plaintiffs Marc Ginsberg (“Ginsberg”) and
7 the Coalition for a Safer Web (“CSW”).

8 The motion is based upon this Notice of Motion and Motion; the Memorandum of Points
9 and Authorities in support thereof; the Proposed Order filed concurrently herewith; the pleadings,
10 records, and papers on file in this action; oral argument of counsel; and any other matters properly
11 before the Court.

12 **STATEMENT OF REQUESTED RELIEF**

13 Pursuant to Rule 12(b)(6) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and 47 U.S.C. § 230(c),
14 Google requests that the Court dismiss with prejudice Plaintiffs’ claims for violation of
15 California’s Unfair Competition Law, Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200, and negligent infliction of
16 emotional distress.

17 **STATEMENT OF ISSUES**

18 1. Whether Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (“CDA”), 47 U.S.C. §
19 230(c)(1), bars Plaintiffs’ claims.

20 2. Whether Plaintiffs’ Complaint should otherwise be dismissed under Rule 12(b)(6)
21 for failure to state a claim.

22 **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

23 Plaintiffs Ambassador Marc Ginsberg and the organization he founded, the Coalition for a
24 Safer Web, assert that several of Telegram’s 500 million third-party users have used Telegram to
25 send messages that contain hateful rhetoric or promote extremism. Neither Telegram nor any of
26 its users are parties to this case, and Plaintiffs have apparently not made any effort to pursue
27 claims against them.

1 Instead, Plaintiffs have sued Google. They seek to hold Google liable for the content of
2 messages exchanged through Telegram’s platform based on Google’s role as the operator of
3 Google Play, an online platform where users can access a wide variety of digital content and
4 download applications, including Telegram. Plaintiffs do not allege that Google played any role
5 in creating, operating, or moderating content on Telegram, or that it contributed to the
6 objectionable content disseminated by Telegram’s users. Plaintiffs nevertheless assert that Google
7 should have removed the Telegram app from Google Play, and that it violated California’s Unfair
8 Competition Law (“UCL”) and negligently inflicted emotional distress on Plaintiffs by failing to
9 do so. While Plaintiffs’ goals of combating anti-Semitism and hate speech are important, they
10 have chosen the wrong target for their campaign. Plaintiffs’ claims fail for multiple independent
11 reasons.

12 As an initial matter, Plaintiffs’ claims run directly into Section 230 of the
13 Communications Decency Act (“Section 230”), which expressly bars all claims seeking to hold
14 interactive service providers liable for alleged harm caused by user-generated content. Section
15 230 “[was] enacted to protect websites against the evil of liability for failure to remove offensive
16 content.” *Fair Hous. Council v. Roommates.com, LLC*, 521 F.3d 1157, 1174 (9th Cir. 2008) (en
17 banc). That is precisely what Plaintiffs seek to do here. Their claims all turn on Google’s failure
18 to remove the Telegram app from the Google Play store. This Court recently dismissed an
19 analogous case under Section 230, finding that “Google cannot be held liable for merely allowing
20 [app] developers to provide apps to users through the Google Play Store, as ‘providing third
21 parties with neutral tools to create web content is considered to be squarely within the protections
22 of § 230.’” *Coffee v. Google, LLC*, 2021 WL 493387, at *8 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 10, 2021) (Freeman,
23 J.) (citation omitted). The same result is required here.

24 Even setting aside immunity under Section 230, Plaintiffs still fail to state a claim. First,
25 Plaintiffs lack standing to sue under the UCL. A UCL claim requires economic injury,
26 specifically “lost money or property,” resulting from the alleged misconduct. *Kwikset Corp. v.*
27 *Super. Ct.*, 51 Cal. 4th 310, 325-26 (2011). But Plaintiffs have alleged no such injury. Instead,
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1 they contend that Ginsberg’s phone supposedly declined in value because Google kept Telegram
2 on Google Play. This theory makes no sense. Ginsberg does not even allege that he downloaded
3 Telegram from Google Play or used the app on his device. He certainly offers no plausible
4 explanation of how his phone could have lost value merely because the Telegram app remained
5 available in Google Play for *other people* to download and use. Second, Plaintiffs’ claim for
6 negligent infliction of emotional distress (“NIED”) fails because, under established Ninth Circuit
7 law, online platforms like Google Play do not owe a duty of care to users. *See Dyroff v. Ultimate*
8 *Software Grp., Inc.*, 934 F.3d 1093, 1100-01 (9th Cir. 2019). Whether under Section 230 or on
9 their own terms (or both), Plaintiffs’ claims should be dismissed.

10 **FACTUAL & PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND**

11 Google is a provider of interactive computer services, including its search engine and
12 Google Play. ¶ 10. (Citations to “¶ _” are to the Complaint. ECF No. 1.) Google Play is an online
13 platform and marketplace from which users can download a wide variety of apps to their mobile
14 devices. *Id.* Before being made available on Google Play, apps must undergo a review process,
15 must agree to Google’s established terms of use, and must comply with Google’s policies and
16 guidelines. ¶¶ 25-26. Google has “full managerial discretion to remove apps that violate [its]
17 guidelines.” ¶ 94.

18 One of the apps that is available for download in Google Play is Telegram, a popular
19 messaging app. ¶ 30. The app allows users to exchange messages and other content, and uses
20 encryption to protect the privacy of user communications. ¶¶ 30-36. Telegram maintains policies
21 for regulating content or activity on its platform and may remove content that violates its policies.
22 ¶¶ 37-40. The Complaint identifies various examples of user content allegedly disseminated
23 through Telegram that Plaintiffs describe as reflecting hate speech, racism, anti-Semitism, or
24 incitement of violence. ¶¶ 51-71.

25 Plaintiff Ginsberg created the Coalition for a Safer Web “to compel social media
26 platforms to end their tolerance of anti-Semitism and their enabling of extremist groups to operate
27 with impunity over social media.” ¶ 8. He allegedly owns a Samsung Galaxy Express smartphone
28

1 running the Android operating system for personal and professional use. ¶ 4. While Android
2 devices can download apps from Google Play, Ginsberg does not assert that he downloaded the
3 Telegram app to his smartphone—or even that he ever used the Telegram app. Nor does he allege
4 that he actually viewed the content described in the Complaint.

5 Based on these allegations, Plaintiffs assert two claims against Google, one arising under
6 the unlawful and unfair prongs of the UCL and the other for negligent infliction of emotional
7 distress. To support the emotional distress claim, Ginsberg notes that he “is a Jewish person
8 whose professional work requires him to maintain a presence in the public eye.” ¶ 81. According
9 to the Complaint, the anti-Semitic and other objectionable content on Telegram has caused him to
10 “live in apprehension of religiously motivated violence being perpetrated against him,” which has
11 in turn “caused him substantial emotional harm, including depression and anxiety.” ¶¶ 82-83. In
12 addition, Ginsberg claims to have suffered damages “through his purchase of his Samsung
13 [phone]” or from “being deprived of a key benefit of the purchase and use of” his phone. ¶¶ 13,
14 105. While Plaintiff CSW allegedly reimburses Ginsberg for his professional use of his Samsung
15 Galaxy Express (¶ 9), the Complaint does not suggest that CSW was in any way affected by any
16 content allegedly disseminated on Telegram. At the heart of Plaintiffs’ claims is the assertion that
17 Google should have removed the Telegram app from Google Play as a means of “compel[ling]
18 Telegram to improve its content moderation policies.” ¶ 49. To that end, Plaintiffs seek to enjoin
19 Google from making Telegram available on Google Play. ¶¶ 13, 105.

20 Around the same time that Plaintiffs sued Google, they filed a nearly identical complaint
21 against Apple. Compl., *Ginsberg v. Apple, Inc.*, No. 5:21-cv-00425-EJD (Jan. 17, 2021). There,
22 Ginsberg claims to own an Apple iPhone and complains about Telegram’s presence on Apple’s
23 App Store. *Id.* ¶¶ 4, 28. The factual allegations and causes of action against Apple are otherwise a
24 close copy of Plaintiffs’ Complaint against Google. There is no indication that Plaintiffs have
25 brought any claims directly against Telegram or any of the users who created the content
26 described in the Complaint.

1 **ARGUMENT**

2 To survive a motion under Rule 12(b)(6), “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause
3 of action, supported by mere conclusory statements, do not suffice.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S.
4 662, 678 (2009). Instead, Plaintiffs must allege “factual content that allows the court to draw the
5 reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Id.* The Court is not
6 required to “assume the truth of legal conclusions merely because they are cast in the form of
7 factual allegations.” *Prager Univ. v. Google*, 2018 WL 1471939, at *3 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 26, 2018)
8 (quoting *Fayer v. Vaughn*, 649 F.3d 1061, 1064 (9th Cir. 2011)).

9 **I. SECTION 230 BARS PLAINTIFFS’ STATE LAW CLAIMS**

10 Section 230(c)(1) states that “[n]o provider or user of an interactive computer service shall
11 be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content
12 provider.” 47 U.S.C. § 230(c)(1). This provision “protects websites from liability under state or
13 local law for material posted on their websites by someone else.” *Dyroff*, 934 F.3d at 1097
14 (quoting *Doe v. Internet Brands, Inc.*, 824 F.3d 846, 850 (9th Cir. 2016)). In enacting this
15 provision, Congress recognized that “[m]aking interactive computer services and their users liable
16 for the speech of third parties would severely restrict the information available on the Internet.”
17 *Batzel v. Smith*, 333 F.3d 1018, 1027-28 (9th Cir. 2003).

18 Courts have applied this provision “to establish broad federal immunity to any cause of
19 action that would make service providers liable for information originating with a third-party user
20 of the service.” *Coffee*, 2021 WL 493387 at *4 (quoting *Perfect 10, Inc. v. CCBill LLC*, 488 F.3d
21 1102, 1118 (9th Cir. 2007)). As this Court has explained, “the immunity extends to *all* claims
22 stemming from an interactive computer service provider’s publication of content created by third
23 parties.” *Id.* at *4. And because Section 230 is meant to protect “not merely from ultimate
24 liability, but from having to fight costly and protracted legal battles,” *Roommates*, 521 F.3d at
25 1175, it is well settled that Section 230(c)(1) is a proper basis for dismissing claims under Rule
26 12(b)(6). *See, e.g., Coffee*, 2021 WL 493387 at *8 (granting motion to dismiss under Section
27 230(c)(1)); *see also Kimzey v. Yelp! Inc.*, 836 F.3d 1263, 1266 (9th Cir. 2016) (affirming grant of
28

1 motion to dismiss under Section 230(c)(1)); *Klayman v. Zuckerberg*, 753 F.3d 1354, 1357 (D.C.
2 Cir. 2014) (explaining that dismissal under Section 230 is proper when “the statute’s barrier to
3 suit is evident from the face of the complaint”).

4 **A. Plaintiffs Seek to Treat Google as a Publisher of Information Provided by**
5 **Another Information Content Provider**

6 There is an established three-part test for application of Section 230(c)(1). “Immunity
7 from liability exists for ‘(1) a provider or user of an interactive computer service (2) whom a
8 plaintiff seeks to treat, under a state law cause of action, as a publisher or speaker (3) of
9 information provided by another information content provider.’ When a plaintiff cannot allege
10 enough facts to overcome Section 230 immunity, a plaintiff’s claims should be dismissed.”
11 *Dyroff*, 934 F.3d at 1097 (quoting *Barnes v. Yahoo!, Inc.*, 570 F.3d 1096, 1100 (9th Cir. 2009)).
12 All three elements are readily met here.

13 *First*, Google is the provider of an interactive computer service. Plaintiffs acknowledge as
14 much in alleging that Google is engaged in the “distribution of applications on the Google Play
15 Store.” ¶ 12; *accord Coffee*, 2021 WL 493387, at *5 (finding that Google is an interactive
16 computer service in connection with its operation of Google Play); *Dyroff*, 934 F.3d at 1097
17 (explaining that “[w]e interpret the term ‘interactive computer service’ expansively and that
18 “[w]ebsites are the most common interactive computer services”).

19 *Second*, Plaintiffs’ claims treat Google as the publisher or speaker of the allegedly
20 unlawful content. In determining whether a plaintiff’s claims treat an interactive computer service
21 as a publisher, “courts must ask whether the duty that the plaintiff alleges the defendant violated
22 derives from the defendant’s status or conduct as a ‘publisher or speaker.’ If it does, section
23 230(c)(1) precludes liability.” *Barnes*, 570 F.3d at 1101-02. As this Court has explained,
24 “publication includes ‘any activity that can be boiled down to deciding whether to exclude
25 material that third parties seek to post online.’” *Coffee*, at *6 (quoting *Roommates*, 521 F.3d at
26 1170-71); *accord Barnes*, 570 F.3d at 1102 (“[P]ublication involves reviewing, editing, and
27 deciding whether to publish or to withdraw from publication third-party content.”).

28

1 Here, Plaintiffs plainly seek to hold Google liable as a publisher of apps on Google Play
2 (and, indirectly, of the content exchanged through those apps). The essence of Plaintiffs’ claims is
3 that Google should have removed (that is, ceased publishing) the Telegram app, or that it should
4 have used the threat of removal to force Telegram to more aggressively monitor or police user
5 messages on its app. ¶¶ 30-32, 47, 84-87. These claims target “the very essence of publishing”—
6 *i.e.* “making the decision whether to print or retract a given piece of content.” *Klayman*, 753 F.3d
7 at 1359; *accord Kimzey*, 836 F.3d at 1268 (“Kimzey’s claims are premised on Yelp’s publication
8 of Sarah K’s statements and star rating. In other words, the claim is directed against Yelp in its
9 capacity as a publisher or speaker.”); *Barnes*, 570 F.3d at 1103 (“[R]emoving content is
10 something publishers do, and to impose liability on the basis of such conduct necessarily involves
11 treating the liable party as a publisher of the content it failed to remove”); *Bennett v. Google,*
12 *LLC*, 882 F.3d 1163, 1168 (D.C. Cir. 2018) (“the decision to print or retract is fundamentally a
13 publishing decision for which the CDA provides explicit immunity”); *Doe v. MySpace, Inc.*, 528
14 F.3d 413, 420 (5th Cir. 2008) (Section 230 precludes liability for “decisions relating to the
15 monitoring, screening, and deletion of content”) (quoting *Green v. Am. Online (AOL)*, 318 F.3d
16 465, 471 (3d Cir. 2003)).

17 *Third*, Plaintiffs’ claims are overtly based on information provided by another content
18 provider. Indeed, there are *two* distinct layers of third-party-provided content in this case: the
19 Telegram app itself and the allegedly harmful or offensive speech posted by users of Telegram.
20 *See* ¶¶ 29-42 (describing Telegram’s Terms of Service and Moderation policies); ¶¶ 48-70
21 (describing posts on Telegram). But none of the alleged content—neither the Telegram app itself
22 nor any of the messages exchanged through it—is alleged to have been created or developed by
23 Google. *See, e.g., Dyroff*, 934 F.3d at 1098 (“The third prong is also met because ... the content at
24 issue was created and developed by [third parties]”); *Bennett*, 882 F.3d at 1167 (“Bennett alleges
25 that only Pierson—and not Google—created the offensive content on the blog.”); *Klayman*, 753
26 F.3d at 1358 (“[T]he complaint nowhere alleges or even suggests that Facebook provided,
27 created, or developed any portion of the content that Klayman alleges harmed him”); *Gonzalez v.*
28

1 *Google, Inc.*, 335 F. Supp. 3d 1156,1173 (N.D. Cal. 2018), *appeal docketed*, No. 18-16700 (9th
2 Cir. Sep. 10, 2018) (Google was not the “information content provider” of videos allegedly
3 posted by third-party terrorist organizations).

4 This Court recently applied Section 230 to bar a similar set of claims arising from
5 Google’s alleged failure to remove third-party apps from Google Play. *Coffee*, 2021 WL 49338,
6 at *6. The plaintiffs there alleged that Google violated state consumer protection laws by allowing
7 certain video game apps to be published. The Court dismissed the claims as a matter of law,
8 explaining that, because plaintiffs “[sought] an order requiring Google to screen apps offered
9 through its Google Play store and exclude those containing [certain content],” they were
10 demanding that Google engage in “conduct that [was] squarely within the role of a publisher.” *Id.*
11 So too here: “Google cannot be held liable for merely allowing []developers to provide apps to
12 users through the Google Play store, as ‘providing third parties with neutral tools to create web
13 content is considered to be squarely within the protections of § 230.’” *Id.* at *8.

14 **II. PLAINTIFFS FAIL TO STATE A VIABLE CLAIM FOR RELIEF**

15 This Court need go no further to dismiss Plaintiffs’ claims—Section 230 presents a clear
16 bar. However, both of Plaintiffs’ causes of action also fail on their own terms.

17 **A. Plaintiffs Lack the Standing Required to Bring a UCL Claim**

18 Plaintiffs’ claim under the UCL fails for lack of standing. “A private person has statutory
19 standing under the UCL only if he or she ‘has suffered injury in fact and has *lost money or*
20 *property* as a result of the unfair competition.” *Coffee*, 2021 WL 493387, at *8 (emphasis added)
21 (quoting Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17204); *see also Hawkins v. Kroger Co.*, 906 F.3d 763, 768
22 (9th Cir. 2018) (citation omitted) (“A plaintiff is required to show some form of economic injury
23 as a result of his transactions with the defendant.”); *Birdsong v. Apple, Inc.*, 590 F.3d 955, 960
24 (9th Cir. 2009) (“[T]o plead a UCL claim, the plaintiffs must show, consistent with Article III,
25 that they suffered a distinct and palpable injury as a result of the alleged unlawful or unfair
26 conduct.”). To establish statutory standing, a complaint must allege facts showing both economic
27 injury and causation. *Coffee*, 2021 WL 493387, at *9.

28

1 Plaintiffs have alleged neither. There is no allegation in the Complaint that Plaintiffs
2 purchased anything from Google. Ginsberg does not allege that he bought his phone from
3 Google, and he does not allege that he downloaded any app, including Telegram, from Google
4 Play, much less that he paid Google any money to do so. ¶ 4. Plaintiff Ginsberg vaguely refers to
5 the “purchase [of] Google products” (¶ 104), but the Complaint does not identify anything that he
6 actually bought from Google, much less explain the connection of any such purchase to his
7 claims. For its part, CSW did nothing other than “reimburse” Ginsberg for his “professional use”
8 of his phone. ¶ 9.

9 In a gesture to the UCL’s standing requirement, the Complaint alleges that Ginsberg was
10 “deprived of a key benefit of the purchase and use of the Samsung Galaxy Express.” ¶ 105. But
11 this unexplained allegation does not plausibly establish a loss of money or property. Ginsberg
12 does not suggest that his phone has malfunctioned in any way or that he cannot access or use
13 Google Play to download apps or other content. His only issue seems to be that Telegram remains
14 available for download, which in his view is contrary to Google’s content moderation policies and
15 Plaintiff’s expectation that Google should enforce those policies. ¶¶ 104-05. But even crediting
16 that allegation, it does not create UCL standing. Plaintiff does not even try to explain how his
17 Samsung phone could have lost any value merely because Google Play contains a third-party app
18 that he dislikes. Nor could he: whether Telegram is or is not available for download on Google
19 Play has no conceivable effect on Plaintiffs’ economic interests.

20 In *Coffee*, this Court dispatched a similarly baseless UCL claim for lack of standing.
21 There, plaintiffs allegedly purchased virtual currency through Google Play while playing video
22 games downloaded from the app store. *Coffee*, 2021 WL 493387, at *9. The Court found no
23 economic injury based on those transactions: “Plaintiffs do not explain how their purchases of
24 virtual currency resulted in economic loss. . . . Nor do Plaintiffs allege . . . ‘that they were
25 deprived of an agreed-upon benefit in purchasing’ the virtual currency ‘If one gets the
26 benefit of his bargain, he has no standing under the UCL.’” *Id.* (citations omitted). This case is
27 even easier. The plaintiffs in *Coffee* actually paid money to Google, which they spent in
28

1 connection with the allegedly unlawful apps that they downloaded through Google Play. Still,
 2 they had no economic injury under the UCL. Here, Plaintiffs purchased nothing from Google—
 3 and never even claim to have downloaded or used the Telegram app (much less spent money to
 4 do so). There is nothing resembling monetary injury here. Accordingly, Plaintiffs cannot proceed
 5 under the UCL.

6 Plaintiffs’ UCL claim (which is asserted under the statute’s unlawful and unfair prongs)
 7 also faces multiple other hurdles, including the lack of any plausible allegations that Google
 8 engaged in unlawful or unfair conduct. But given Plaintiff’s obvious lack of standing (and the
 9 immunity afforded by Section 230), the Court need not address those additional problems here.

10 **B. Plaintiffs Have No Viable Claim for Negligent Infliction of Emotional Distress**

11 Plaintiffs also fail to state a viable claim for negligent infliction of emotional distress.
 12 Under California law, “[n]egligent infliction of emotional distress is not an independent tort; it is
 13 the tort of negligence to which the traditional elements of duty, breach of duty, causation, and
 14 damages apply.” *Ess v. Eskaton Props.*, 97 Cal. App. 4th 120, 126 (Cal. App. 2002); *accord*
 15 *Huggins v. Longs Drug Stores Cal., Inc.*, 6 Cal. 4th 124, 129 (Cal. 1993). The claim’s viability
 16 often turns on the “determination of the duty issue,” which is a question of law. *Ess*, 97 Cal. App.
 17 4th at 126. Here, Plaintiffs devote a single boilerplate allegation to the question of duty:
 18 “Defendant owes a duty of reasonable care to ensure that their services are not used as a means to
 19 inflict religious and racial intimidation.” ¶ 73.

20 This general allegation of duty—and with it Plaintiffs’ claim—fails as a matter of law.¹
 21 The California Supreme Court has expressly rejected the existence of a general duty of reasonable

22
 23 ¹ While the lack of duty is the most obvious defect in Plaintiffs’ claim for negligent infliction
 24 of emotional distress, they have equally failed to state each of the other elements. Moreover,
 25 Plaintiffs cite no harm or emotional distress caused to CSW as an organization, and so the claim
 26 fails as to CSW for that additional reason. Given Section 230 and Plaintiffs’ obvious failure to
 27 allege a duty of care, the Court need not reach these issues to dispose of Plaintiffs’ claim.
 28

1 care to prevent emotional distress. *See Potter v. Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.*, 6 Cal. 4th 965,
2 984, 863 P.2d 795 (1993) (“[T]here is no duty to avoid negligently causing emotional distress to
3 another, and . . . damages for emotional distress are recoverable only if the defendant has
4 breached some other duty to the plaintiff.”).

5 Nor has Plaintiff identified a more specific legal duty on which to base his negligence
6 claim. To the extent that Plaintiff tries to assign Google a duty of care as the operator of Google
7 Play, such a claim would fail as a matter of law. In *Dyroff*, the Ninth Circuit expressly held that a
8 website providing a forum for users to post and receive material owed them no duty of care. 934
9 F.3d at 1100-01. That case arose after the website allegedly notified a user of another user’s post
10 on a message board relating to heroin use. The notification eventually led to an illegal drug
11 transaction and the death of one of the users from a drug overdose. *Id.* at 1095. The Court of
12 Appeals explained that “[n]o website could function if a duty of care was created when a website
13 facilitates communication, in a content-neutral fashion, of its users’ content” and expressly
14 “decline[d] to create such a relationship.” 934 F.3d at 1101; *see also Doe No. 14 v. Internet*
15 *Brands, Inc.*, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 192144, at *14 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 14, 2016) (concluding that
16 website operator owed no duty to warn members of the website). Just so here: Plaintiffs cannot
17 allege a duty on Google’s part merely based on its operation of a platform that makes third-party
18 apps available for download.

19 *Dyroff* categorically forecloses Plaintiffs’ negligence claim. Indeed, Plaintiff’s threadbare
20 allegation of duty is even weaker than the one rejected in *Dyroff* because the relationship between
21 Plaintiffs and Google alleged in the Complaint is even more attenuated. Whereas the user in
22 *Dyroff* actually used and posted to the website at issue, Plaintiffs here do not claim that they ever
23 downloaded Telegram from Google Play or viewed content on Telegram, much less that Google
24 did anything to bring the app or its content to their attention. All Google is alleged to have done is
25 provide “content-neutral functions”—namely, making a broad array of third-party apps available
26 on Google Play, including Telegram. *Dyroff*, 934 F.3d at 1100.

1 Because Plaintiff fails to allege a relevant duty of care, the negligent infliction of
2 emotional distress claim fails as a matter of law. *See, e.g., Carter v. Rasier-CA, LLC*, 2017 WL
3 4098858, at *5 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 15, 2017), *aff'd*, 724 F. App'x 586 (9th Cir. 2018) (dismissing
4 claim for negligent infliction of emotional distress based on lack of duty of care); *Clark v. Cty. of*
5 *Tulare*, 755 F. Supp. 2d 1075, 1092 (E.D. Cal. 2010) (same); *see also Beckman v. Match.com,*
6 *LLC*, 2017 WL 1304288, at *3 (D. Nev. Mar. 10, 2017), *aff'd*, 743 F. App'x 142 (9th Cir. 2018)
7 (dismissing negligence claim and finding that Match.com had no duty to warn of dangers on the
8 website, because there was no “special relationship” between the website and its users); *accord*
9 *Herrick v. Grindr, LLC*, 306 F.Supp.3d 579, 598-99 (S.D.N.Y. 2018), *aff'd*, 765 F. App'x 586 (2d
10 Cir. 2019) (dismissing negligent misrepresentation claim against Grindr app on a similar basis).

11 CONCLUSION

12 For all these reasons, Plaintiffs’ Complaint should be dismissed with prejudice.

13
14 Respectfully submitted

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