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United States District Court  
Northern District of California

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
SAN JOSE DIVISION

BYRON JACKSON,  
Plaintiff,  
v.  
CEVA LOGISTICS, et al.,  
Defendants.

Case No. 19-CV-07657-LHK  
**ORDER GRANTING TESLA’S  
MOTION FOR JUDGMENT ON THE  
PLEADINGS WITH LEAVE TO  
AMEND**  
Re: Dkt. No. 36

Plaintiff Byron Jackson (“Plaintiff”) brings suit against Defendants CEVA Logistics (“CEVA”), Randstad Inc. (“Randstad”), and Tesla Motors (“Tesla”) (collectively, “Defendants”) for violations of California’s Fair Employment and Housing Act (“FEHA”), intentional infliction of emotional distress (“IIED”), and negligent infliction of emotional distress (“NIED”). Before the Court is Tesla’s motion for judgment on the pleadings. Having considered the parties’ submissions, the relevant law, and the record in this case, the Court GRANTS Tesla’s motion for judgment on the pleadings with leave to amend.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tesla’s motion for judgment on the pleadings contains a notice of motion paginated separately from the memorandum of points and authorities in support of the motion. ECF No. 36 at ii. Civil

1 **I. BACKGROUND**

2 **A. Factual Background**

3 In February 2018, Plaintiff Byron Jackson, an African American man, was hired by  
4 Randstad, a temporary staffing agency that contracts to provide workers to various industries in  
5 California. ECF No. 1-1 (“Compl.”) ¶¶ 1-2, 28. Randstad contracted with CEVA to provide  
6 employees and workers to CEVA. *Id.* ¶ 3. CEVA is a world-wide supply chain management  
7 company that designs and implements solutions for freight management and contract logistics. *Id.*  
8 CEVA contracted with Randstad for Plaintiff’s services at a CEVA “facility located at 1710 Little  
9 Orchard, in San Jose, Santa Clara County, California” (“the San Jose Facility”). *Id.* ¶ 3, 28.

10 Plaintiff alleges that the San Jose Facility where he worked was owned, operated, and  
11 controlled by CEVA “for the benefit of [Tesla].” *Id.* ¶¶ 4, 6. Plaintiff alleges that Tesla “contracted  
12 with [CEVA] and [Randstad], directly or indirectly for the services of Plaintiff . . . at facilities  
13 engaged in the manufacture and production of [Tesla] products.” *Id.* ¶ 7.

14 Plaintiff alleges that employees of CEVA “blatantly demonstrated that [] racist behavior  
15 would be tolerated at sites on which Randstad contracted to provide employees for [CEVA], and  
16 for the benefit of [Tesla].” Compl. ¶¶ 9–12, 26. According to Plaintiff, Randstad, CEVA, and  
17 Tesla “have allowed a racially hostile environment to exist on its worksite, without restraint,”  
18 especially with respect to “African American employees.” *Id.* ¶ 25. Plaintiff was constantly  
19 harassed and subjected to derogatory epithets. *Id.* ¶ 30. Despite Plaintiff’s pleas to his supervisors,  
20 who worked for Randstad and CEVA, the harassment continued unabated. *Id.* ¶¶ 32–33. Plaintiff  
21 also alleges that he “was exposed to similar treatment from the employees of [Tesla] who worked  
22 in the quality inspection area of the facility owned by [CEVA].” *Id.* ¶ 40.

23 Furthermore, Plaintiff alleges that on November 29, 2018, Plaintiff sustained a work-  
24 related injury but was refused an accommodation by Randstad. *Id.* ¶ 44. Plaintiff “believes that  
25 [his supervisors] intentionally failed to offer a reasonable accommodation both in response to his

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26 Local Rule 7-2(b) provides that the notice of motion and points and authorities should be  
27 contained in one document with the same pagination.

1 complaints regarding the racial harassment and discriminatory treatment, and in response to his  
 2 request for an accommodation.” *Id.* “Finding the continual onslaught of offensive conduct  
 3 unbearable, along with [Randstad’s] failure to accommodate his workplace injury, Plaintiff  
 4 . . . could no longer bear the conduct and resigned in January 2019.” *Id.* ¶ 39.

### 5 **B. Procedural History**

6 On October 11, 2019, Plaintiff filed suit against Defendants in California Superior Court  
 7 for the County of Santa Clara. Notice of Removal ¶ 1. The Complaint alleges seven causes of  
 8 action: (1) discrimination based upon race in violation of California’s Fair Employment and  
 9 Housing Act (“FEHA”) against all Defendants, Compl. ¶¶ 52–57; (2) harassment based on race in  
 10 violation of FEHA against all Defendants, *id.* ¶¶ 58–65; (3) failure to engage in an interactive  
 11 process in violation of FEHA against Randstad, *id.* ¶¶ 66–70; (4) failure to provide reasonable  
 12 accommodation in violation of FEHA against Randstad, *id.* ¶¶ 71–75; (5) wrongful constructive  
 13 termination in violation of public policy and FEHA against Randstad, *id.* ¶¶ 76–80; (6) IIED  
 14 against all Defendants, *id.* ¶¶ 81–84; and (7) NIED against all Defendants, *id.* ¶¶ 85–90. Plaintiff  
 15 seeks lost wages, punitive damages, emotional distress damages, and reasonable attorney’s fees.  
 16 *Id.* at 19; *see also id.* ¶¶ 54–56, 62–64.

17 Plaintiff served the Complaint on all Defendants on October 21, 2019. ECF No. 1 ¶¶ 1-2  
 18 (“Notice of Removal”). On November 20, 2019, Defendants filed answers and removed the instant  
 19 case to this Court. *Id.*

20 On December 6, 2019, Plaintiff moved to remand the instant case to California Superior  
 21 Court for the County of Santa Clara. ECF No. 20. Plaintiff argued that the case had to be  
 22 remanded because (1) Tesla was a proper defendant with respect to Plaintiff’s causes of action  
 23 under FEHA, and (2) the inclusion of Tesla, which is considered a citizen of California, would  
 24 destroy complete diversity of citizenship. *Id.* at 3–6.<sup>2</sup> Defendants opposed Plaintiff’s motion to  
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26 <sup>2</sup> Plaintiff also argued that the case had to be remanded because the \$75,000 amount-in-  
 27 controversy requirement was not satisfied. ECF No. 20 at 7–10. The Court rejected this argument,  
 28 concluding that Defendants had shown by a preponderance of the evidence that the amount-in-  
 controversy requirement was satisfied. ECF No. 35 at 14–16.

1 remand, arguing that Tesla had been fraudulently joined. ECF No. 21 at 3.

2 On April 24, 2020, this Court denied Plaintiff’s motion to remand, holding that Tesla had  
3 been fraudulently joined. ECF No. 35 at 8. Specifically, the Court concluded that Plaintiff could  
4 not hold Tesla liable as an employer under FEHA because “Tesla was never Ranstad’s client,  
5 Tesla did not own or manage the facilities where Plaintiff worked, and Tesla did not in practice  
6 exercise ‘a comprehensive and immediate level of day-to-day authority over Plaintiff.’” *Id.* at 12–  
7 13 (quoting *Patterson v. Domino’s Pizza, LLC*, 60 Cal. 4th 474, 499 (2014)). Thus, the Court  
8 concluded that there was no possibility that Plaintiff could state a FEHA claim against Tesla, even  
9 if Plaintiff were given leave to amend. *Id.* at 7, 13.

10 On May 7, 2020, Tesla filed the instant motion for judgment on the pleadings. ECF No. 36  
11 (“Mot.”). Tesla argues that Plaintiff cannot state a FEHA claim, an IIED claim, or a NIED claim  
12 against Tesla. *Id.* at 3–6. On May 21, 2020, Plaintiff filed an opposition to Tesla’s motion for  
13 judgment on the pleadings. ECF No. 37 (“Opp.”). On May 28, 2020, Tesla filed a reply. ECF No.  
14 38 (“Reply”).

## 15 **II. LEGAL STANDARD**

### 16 **A. Rule 12(c) Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings**

17 “After the pleadings are closed—but early enough not to delay trial—a party may move for  
18 judgment on the pleadings.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(c). “Judgment on the pleadings is properly granted  
19 when, accepting all factual allegations in the complaint as true, there is no issue of material fact in  
20 dispute, and the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.” *Chavez v. United States*,  
21 683 F.3d 1102, 1108 (9th Cir. 2012) (brackets and internal quotation marks omitted). Like a  
22 motion to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6), a motion under Rule 12(c) challenges the legal sufficiency  
23 of the claims asserted in the complaint. *See id.* Indeed, a Rule 12(c) motion is “functionally  
24 identical” to a Rule 12(b)(6) motion, and courts apply the “same standard.” *Dworkin v. Hustler*  
25 *Magazine, Inc.*, 867 F.2d 1188, 1192 (9th Cir. 1989) (explaining that the “principal difference”  
26 between Rule 12(b)(6) and Rule 12(c) “is the timing of filing”); *see also U.S. ex rel. Cafasso v.*  
27 *Gen. Dynamics C4 Sys.*, 637 F.3d 1047, 1054 n.4 (9th Cir. 2011).

1 Judgment on the pleadings should thus be entered when a complaint does not plead  
2 “enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*,  
3 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). “A claim has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content  
4 that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the  
5 misconduct alleged.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009). “The plausibility standard is not  
6 akin to a probability requirement, but it asks for more than a sheer possibility that a defendant has  
7 acted unlawfully.” *Id.* (internal quotation marks omitted). For purposes of ruling on a Rule 12(c)  
8 motion, the Court “accept[s] factual allegations in the complaint as true and construe[s] the  
9 pleadings in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party.” *Manzarek v. St. Paul Fire &*  
10 *Marine Ins. Co.*, 519 F.3d 1025, 1031 (9th Cir. 2008).

#### 11 **B. Leave to Amend**

12 If the Court determines that judgment on the pleadings is warranted, it must then decide  
13 whether to grant leave to amend. *See Harris v. Cnty. of Orange*, 682 F.3d 1126, 1131, 1134-35  
14 (9th Cir. 2012) (affirming district court’s dismissal under Rule 12(c) but reversing for failure to  
15 grant leave to amend). Under Rule 15(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, leave to amend  
16 “shall be freely given when justice so requires,” bearing in mind “the underlying purpose of Rule  
17 15 to facilitate decisions on the merits, rather than on the pleadings or technicalities.” *Lopez v.*  
18 *Smith*, 203 F.3d 1122, 1127 (9th Cir. 2000) (en banc) (alterations and internal quotation marks  
19 omitted). When granting judgment on the pleadings, “a district court should grant leave to amend  
20 even if no request to amend the pleading was made, unless it determines that the pleading could  
21 not possibly be cured by the allegation of other facts.” *Id.* at 1130 (internal quotation marks  
22 omitted). Accordingly, leave to amend generally shall be denied only if allowing amendment  
23 would unduly prejudice the opposing party, cause undue delay, or be futile, or if the moving party  
24 has acted in bad faith. *Leadsinger, Inc. v. BMG Music Publ’g*, 512 F.3d 522, 532 (9th Cir. 2008).  
25 At the same time, a court is justified in denying leave to amend when a plaintiff “repeated[ly]  
26 fail[s] to cure deficiencies by amendments previously allowed.” *See Carvalho v. Equifax Info.*  
27 *Servs., LLC*, 629 F.3d 876, 892 (9th Cir. 2010). Indeed, a “district court’s discretion to deny leave

1 to amend is particularly broad where plaintiff has previously amended the complaint.” *Cafasso*,  
 2 *U.S. ex rel. v. Gen. Dynamics C4 Sys., Inc.*, 637 F.3d 1047, 1058 (9th Cir. 2011) (quotation marks  
 3 omitted).

### 4 **III. DISCUSSION**

5 Plaintiff brings four claims against Tesla: (1) discrimination based upon race in violation  
 6 of FEHA, Compl. ¶¶ 52–57; (2) harassment based on race in violation of FEHA, *id.* ¶¶ 58–65;  
 7 (3) IIED, *id.* ¶¶ 81–84; and (4) NIED, *id.* ¶¶ 85–90. Tesla moves for judgment on the pleadings on  
 8 all four claims. The Court first addresses Plaintiff’s FEHA claims. The Court then addresses  
 9 Plaintiff’s IIED and NIED claims.

#### 10 **A. Plaintiff’s FEHA Claims**

11 Plaintiff brings two FEHA claims against Tesla: (1) discrimination based upon race in  
 12 violation of FEHA, Compl. ¶¶ 52–57; and (2) harassment based on race in violation of FEHA, *id.*  
 13 ¶¶ 58–65. For the reasons explained below, Plaintiff grants Tesla’s motion for judgment on the  
 14 pleadings on these claims.

15 “FEHA’s purpose is to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to  
 16 seek and hold employment free from discrimination.” *Jimenez v. U.S. Cont’l Mktg., Inc.*, 41 Cal.  
 17 App. 5th 189, 196 (2019). “To this end, FEHA makes it unlawful for an employer to harass or  
 18 retaliate against an employee.” *Id.* “To be entitled to relief for allegations of harassment and  
 19 retaliation, a FEHA claimant must first demonstrate an employment relationship with his or her  
 20 alleged employer.” *Id.*

21 “In determining whether a defendant is an employer, courts consider the ‘totality of  
 22 circumstances’ that ‘reflect upon the nature of the work relationship of the parties, with emphasis  
 23 upon the extent to which the defendant controls the plaintiff’s performance of work  
 24 duties.’” *Nepomuceno v. Cherokee Med. Servs., LLC*, 2013 WL 5670960, at \*4 (S.D. Cal. Oct. 16,  
 25 2013) (quoting *Vernon v. State*, 116 Cal. App. 4th 114, 124 (2004)). As the California Supreme  
 26 Court has noted, “[t]his standard requires ‘a comprehensive and immediate level of ‘day-to-day’  
 27 authority’ over matters such as hiring, firing, direction, supervision, and discipline of the

1 employee.” *Patterson*, 60 Cal. 4th at 499 (quoting *Vernon*, 116 Cal. App. 4th at 127-28).

2 “In the context of an individual who is employed by a temporary agency and assigned to  
3 work on the premises of the agency’s client, . . . the purpose of FEHA to safeguard an employee’s  
4 right to hold employment without experiencing discrimination is best served by applying the  
5 traditional labor law doctrine of ‘dual employers,’ holding both the agency and the client are  
6 employers.” *Mathieu v. Norrell Corp.*, 115 Cal. App. 4th 1174, 1183 (2004); Mot. at 5. In other  
7 words, “a worker employed by one entity [can] also [be] considered an employee of a second  
8 entity if that borrowing entity exercises certain powers of control over the employee.” *Hirst v. City*  
9 *of Oceanside*, 236 Cal. App. 4th 774, 783 (2015).

10 In situations involving temporary-staffing, “factors under the contractual control of the  
11 temporary-staffing agency (such as hiring, payment, benefits, and timesheets being handled by a  
12 temporary-staffing agency) are not given any weight in determining the employment relationship  
13 with respect to the contracting employer.” *Jimenez*, 41 Cal. App. 5th at 193. Rather, courts must  
14 look at employer relationships practically and under the totality of the circumstances. In this  
15 regard, plaintiffs must still allege that a purported employer exercised “‘a comprehensive and  
16 immediate level of ‘day-to-day’ authority’” over the employee. *Patterson*, 60 Cal. 4th at 499  
17 (quoting *Vernon*, 116 Cal. App. 4th at 127-28); *Bradley v. Dep’t of Corr. & Rehab.*, 158 Cal. App.  
18 4th 1612, 1626 (2008) (“[T]he employment relationship for FEHA purposes must be tied directly  
19 to the amount of control exercised over the employee.”). Nonetheless, “[t]he key is that liability is  
20 predicated on the allegations of harassment or discrimination involving the terms, conditions, or  
21 privileges of employment *under the control of the employer*, and that the employment relationship  
22 exists for FEHA purposes within the context of the control retained.” *Bradley*, 158 Cal. App. 4th  
23 at 1629. Put more simply, “the main factor is the second entity’s right to control job performance.”  
24 *Hirst*, 236 Cal. App. 4th at 783.

25 Applying these factors to the instant case, the Court concludes that the Complaint does not  
26 state a plausible FEHA claim against Tesla. Plaintiff alleges that “he was an employee of  
27 [Randstad].” Compl. ¶ 2. Plaintiff alleges that Randstad contracted with CEVA to provide

1 workers, including Plaintiff, to CEVA. *Id.* ¶¶ 2–3. Plaintiff alleges that he worked in a facility  
 2 “owned, operated, or controlled by” CEVA. *Id.* ¶ 4. In addition, Plaintiff alleges that he was  
 3 supervised by managers from Randstad and CEVA. *Id.* ¶ 9–11, 31–33, 43. Accordingly, Plaintiff’s  
 4 allegations establish that he was an employee of Randstad contracted by CEVA to work in a  
 5 CEVA facility under the supervision of Randstad and CEVA employees.

6 By contrast, Plaintiff’s allegations regarding Tesla are significantly thinner. Plaintiff  
 7 merely alleges that his work was performed “for the benefit of [Tesla].” *Id.* ¶ 6. Plaintiff alleges  
 8 that Tesla “contracted with [CEVA] and [Randstad], directly or indirectly for the services of  
 9 Plaintiff . . . at facilities engaged in the manufacture and production of [Tesla] products.” *Id.* ¶ 7.  
 10 However, Plaintiff never alleges that that he was Tesla’s employee. Nor does Plaintiff allege that  
 11 he was working in a facility owned, operated, or controlled by Tesla. Plaintiff also does not allege  
 12 that he was supervised by Tesla employees.

13 These allegations do not state a FEHA claim against Tesla. Indeed, the Ninth Circuit  
 14 affirmed a district court’s decision granting a motion to dismiss a FEHA claim against a defendant  
 15 in similar circumstances. In *Doe I v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, the plaintiffs were employed by  
 16 suppliers but alleged that they were Wal-Mart’s employees because their work for their employers  
 17 benefitted Wal-Mart. 572 F.3d 677, 683 (9th Cir. 2009). According to the plaintiffs, Wal-Mart  
 18 could be held liable under FEHA because “Wal-Mart contracted with suppliers regarding  
 19 deadlines, quality of products, materials used, prices, and other common buyer-seller contract  
 20 terms.” *Id.* The Ninth Circuit, however, held that “[s]uch supply contract terms do not constitute  
 21 an ‘immediate level of day-to-day’ control over a supplier’s employees so as to create an  
 22 employment relationship between a purchaser and a supplier’s employees.” *Id.* (quotation marks  
 23 omitted). Thus, the Ninth Circuit concluded that plaintiffs could not state a FEHA claim against  
 24 Wal-Mart. *Id.* The same conclusion follows here.

25 In sum, Plaintiff was not an employee of Tesla, Tesla did not own or control the facility  
 26 where Plaintiff worked, and Tesla’s employees did not supervise Plaintiff. This supports the  
 27 conclusion that Tesla did not exercise “a comprehensive and immediate level of ‘day-to-day’  
 28



1 authority’ over matters such as hiring, firing, direction, supervision, and discipline of [Plaintiff].”  
 2 *Patterson*, 60 Cal. 4th at 499 (quoting *Vernon*, 116 Cal. App. 4th at 127-28). Thus, Plaintiff cannot  
 3 hold Tesla liable as an employer under FEHA.

4 Arguing that Tesla is not entitled to judgment on the pleadings, Plaintiff argues that  
 5 Plaintiff’s FEHA claims meet the notice pleading standard because Plaintiff gave Tesla adequate  
 6 notice of the claims Plaintiff asserts against it. Opp’n at 1, 3, 4. However, the notice pleading  
 7 standard, which was established over sixty years ago in *Conley v. Gibson*, 355 U.S. 41, 47 (1957),  
 8 has been subsequently abrogated by the United States Supreme Court, which instead requires that  
 9 plaintiffs plead a claim to relief that is plausible. *See Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 561–63 (abrogating  
 10 notice pleading standard in *Conley v. Gibson* and establishing that plaintiffs must allege “enough  
 11 facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face”); *accord Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678 (holding  
 12 that to survive a motion to dismiss, “a complaint must contain sufficient factual matter . . . to ‘state  
 13 a claim to relief that is plausible on its face’”). For the reasons explained above, Plaintiff has not  
 14 plausibly alleged that Plaintiff had an employment relationship with Tesla, as required for  
 15 Plaintiff’s FEHA claims.

16 Plaintiff also argues that Plaintiff plans to file a motion for reconsideration of this Court’s  
 17 order denying Plaintiff’s motion to remand, which would moot the instant motion. Opp’n at 12. In  
 18 the alternative, Plaintiff requests that the Court hold the instant motion in abeyance until it rules on  
 19 the “soon-to-be-filed Request to file a Motion for Reconsideration.” Opp’n at 14–15. However,  
 20 more than six months after this Court’s April 24, 2020 order denying Plaintiff’s motion to remand,  
 21 Plaintiff has still not moved for leave to file a motion for reconsideration.

22 Moreover, the reason that Plaintiff would seek reconsideration lacks merit. Plaintiff states  
 23 that Plaintiff would seek reconsideration based on a February 14, 2020 order in another case in  
 24 this district, *Price v. CEVA Logistics U.S., Inc.*, which Plaintiff failed to present to this Court. *See*  
 25 *Price v. CEVA Logistics U.S., Inc.*, Case No. 19-cv-07595-CRB, ECF No. 26 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 14,  
 26 2020). In moving for leave to file a motion for reconsideration, the moving party must show that,  
 27 despite exercising reasonable diligence, the moving party did not know of a material difference in

1 fact or law at the time that the original order was issued. Civ. L.R. 7-9(b)(1). However, Plaintiff  
 2 cannot meet that bar because Plaintiff’s counsel represents the plaintiff in *Price*. See *Price v.*  
 3 *CEVA Logistics U.S., Inc.*, Case No. 19-cv-07595-CRB, ECF No. 1-1 (N.D. Cal. Nov. 18, 2019).  
 4 Accordingly, Plaintiff’s argument lacks merit.

5 The remaining question is whether judgment on the pleadings should be granted with  
 6 prejudice or leave to amend. Dismissal with prejudice is warranted when amendment would be  
 7 futile, unduly prejudice the opposing party, or cause undue delay, or the moving party has acted in  
 8 bad faith. See *Leadsinger*, 512 F.3d at 532. In the instant case, the Court is unsure whether  
 9 Plaintiff will be able to plead a FEHA claim against Tesla. However, Plaintiff has not yet had an  
 10 opportunity to amend his complaint. As a result, the Court cannot necessarily find that amendment  
 11 would be futile, unduly prejudice Tesla, or cause undue delay. In addition, Plaintiff has not acted  
 12 in bad faith. Thus, the Court GRANTS leave to amend.

13 **B. Plaintiff’s IIED and NIED Claims**

14 Plaintiff also brings an IIED claim, Compl. ¶¶ 81–84, and an NIED claim, *id.* ¶¶ 85–90,  
 15 against Tesla. For the reasons explained below, the Court grants Tesla’s motion for judgment on  
 16 the pleadings on these claims but grants Plaintiff leave to amend.

17 To state an IIED claim, a plaintiff must show: “(1) outrageous conduct by the defendant;  
 18 (2) the defendant’s intention of causing or reckless disregard of the probability of causing  
 19 emotional distress; (3) the plaintiff’s suffering severe or extreme emotional distress; and (4) actual  
 20 and proximate causation of the emotional distress by the defendant’s outrageous conduct.” *Yau v.*  
 21 *Santa Margarita Ford, Inc.*, 229 Cal. App. 4th 144, 160 (2014). To state an NIED claim, a  
 22 plaintiff must show the elements of negligence: (1) duty; (2) breach of duty; (3) causation; and (4)  
 23 damages. *Eriksson v. Nunnick*, 233 Cal. App. 708, 729 (2015).

24 Plaintiff’s IIED and NIED claims against Tesla are based on the respondeat superior  
 25 doctrine. Opp’n at 8. Under the respondeat superior doctrine, “an employer may be held  
 26 vicariously liable for torts committed by an employee within the scope of employment.”  
 27 *Patterson*, 60 Cal. 4th at 491 (quoting *Mary M. v. City of Los Angeles*, 54 Cal. 3d 202, 208 (1991)).

1 To determine whether a tort was committed within the scope of employment, courts must ask  
 2 whether the torts “were ‘engendered by’ or an ‘outgrowth’ of [the] employment.” *Lisa M. v. Henry*  
 3 *Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital*, 907 P.2d 358, 363 (Cal. 1995).

4 In the instant case, the Court concludes that Tesla is entitled to judgment on the pleadings.  
 5 Most of Plaintiff’s allegations against Tesla are conclusory and do not include “enough facts to  
 6 state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 570. With the exception  
 7 of one specific allegation, discussed below, the Complaint simply lumps Tesla in with the other  
 8 two Defendants and alleges that the employees of all three Defendants discriminated against and  
 9 harassed Plaintiff. *See* Compl. ¶¶ 25, 30, 31, 34, 37, 38, 41. These allegations are not sufficient to  
 10 state a claim against Tesla because allegations that lump multiple defendants together do not put  
 11 an individual defendant on notice of the conduct upon which the claims against it are based.  
 12 *Knoles v. Teva Pharmaceuticals, USA*, Case No. 17-cv-06580-BLF, 2019 WL 295258, at \*3 (N.D.  
 13 Cal. Jan. 23, 2019).

14 Plaintiff only singles employees of Tesla out from employees of the other two defendants  
 15 when Plaintiff alleges that he faced discrimination and harassment “from the employees of [Tesla]  
 16 who worked in the quality inspection area of the facility owned by [Ceva Logistics].” Compl. ¶ 40.  
 17 However, Plaintiff never alleges that he was assigned to work in the quality inspection area with  
 18 these employees. Rather, Plaintiff alleges that he worked exclusively with employees from  
 19 Randstad and CEVA. *Id.* ¶¶ 9–11, 31–33, 43. Accordingly, Plaintiff does not plausibly allege that  
 20 the torts that were committed were “engendered by” or “an outgrowth” of the employment of the  
 21 Tesla employees. *Lisa M.*, 907 P.2d at 363. Indeed, the Tesla employees never supervised or even  
 22 worked with Plaintiff.

23 In sum, Plaintiff’s allegations do not state an IIED and NIED claim against Tesla under the  
 24 respondeat superior doctrine. Thus, the Court grants Tesla’s motion for judgment on the pleadings  
 25 on Plaintiff’s IIED and NIED claims.

26 The Court must now consider whether to grant judgment on the pleadings with prejudice  
 27 or leave to amend. The Court is unsure whether Plaintiff will be able to plead an IIED or NIED

United States District Court  
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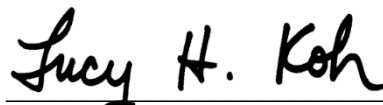
claim against Tesla. Nonetheless, because granting Plaintiff an opportunity to amend the complaint would not necessarily be futile, cause undue delay, or unduly prejudice Defendants, and Plaintiff has not acted in bad faith, the Court GRANTS leave to amend. *See Leadsinger*, 512 F.3d at 532.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, the Court GRANTS Tesla’s motion for judgment on the pleadings with leave to amend. Plaintiff shall file any amended complaint within 30 days of this Order. Failure to do so, or failure to cure deficiencies identified herein or identified in the instant motion for judgment on the pleadings, will result in dismissal of the deficient claims with prejudice. Plaintiff may not add new causes of action or add new parties without stipulation or leave of the Court. Plaintiff is directed to file a redlined complaint comparing the complaint to any amended complaint as an attachment to Plaintiff’s amended complaint.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

Dated: November 17, 2020



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LUCY H. KOH  
United States District Judge