

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 30, 2026

Mr. Sundar Pichai
Chief Executive Officer
Google
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Dear Mr. Pichai:

I write with concern about the adequacy and reliability of Google Play Store age ratings. Incorrect age ratings can pose dangers to minors by facilitating minors' use of apps that enable communication with online predators or provide access to inappropriate sexual content or other harmful material.¹ Child safety advocates have raised serious concerns that app store ratings may give parents a false sense of security and encourage minors to access content that many families reasonably expect to be restricted.²

For apps sold in the Google Play Store, Google adheres to an age rating system set by the International Age Rating Coalition (IARC). IARC determines age ratings using an algorithm based on self-reported questionnaires from app developers.³ Google's lack of review or explanation of the age ratings raises concerns. Research suggests that some apps may be wrongly rated as appropriate for young ages by the IARC. According to the Digital Childhood Institute, 90% of Google's apps have the lowest possible age rating, 3+, while only 7% have a Teen rating (13+). There are no apps in the Play Store with an Adult Only rating.⁴

Given Google's gatekeeping role at the point of download, it is critical that Play Store age ratings, disclosures, and default protections function in a manner that parents and guardians understand and that is aligned with real-world risks.

To better understand Google's policies and enforcement, I request a response to the following questions by August 21, 2026:

¹ Canadian Centre for Child Protection, *Reviewing the Enforcement*, 2022.

² *Protecting Innocence in a Digital World* | United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Senate.gov, July 9, 2019, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/committee-activity/hearings/protecting-innocence-in-a-digital-world>; Christopher Makenna, *Senate Committee on the Judiciary 'Protecting Innocence in a Digital World' Testimony of Christopher (Chris) McKenna Founder and CEO, Protect Young Eyes*, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, July 9, 2019, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/McKenna%20Testimony.pdf>.

³ *FAQs*, International Age Rating Coalition (last visited June 16, 2026) <https://globalratings.com/faq/> ("Once a developer completes the questionnaire, the ratings are issued immediately. The questionnaire is programmed with unique algorithms that assign ratings for each of the participating rating authorities...").

⁴ Digital Childhood Institute, *FTC Complaint Against Google* at 19 (October 14, 2025) https://www.digitalchildhoodinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Google-FTC-complaint-FINAL_10.14.25.pdf.

1. Please describe Google's process for approving IARC's Play Store age ratings and content descriptors, including the role of developer self-reporting and review.
2. Please describe Google and IARC's process for changing an app's age rating after it has been listed.
 - a. What criteria trigger a review or re-rating?
 - b. What internal approvals are required?
3. How does Google evaluate the impact of a rating change on families relying on Screen Time or other parental controls?
4. How are minimum age limits identified in an app's terms of service factored into Play Store age ratings? What policies and procedures does Google have in place to address identified disparities between the minimum age limit identified in an app's terms of service and the app's Play Store age rating, beyond the IARC's process?
5. For large platforms that are widely used by minors but contain risk of sexual content, exploitation, or adult interactions, what additional review, labeling, and enforcement steps does Google take to ensure that IARC's age ratings and content descriptors reflect real-world exposure?
6. What mechanisms exist for parents, users, schools and advocates to report inaccurate age ratings or age-gating failures?
 - a. How many such reports did Google or IARC receive through these mechanisms in the past year, and what actions were taken in response?
7. How many Google personnel are dedicated to age rating integrity, enforcement, and investigations related to minors' safety on the Play Store?
8. What performance metrics does Google use to evaluate whether age ratings and parental controls are functioning as intended?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator